

**HR 216 - Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) – Customer Service Policy**

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to address the accessibility requirements of *Ontario Regulation 429/07, Accessibility Standards for Customer Service* under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and to ensure employees of Gamma-Dynacare are knowledgeable, trained and committed to providing services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.

**Responsibility and Authority:**

**Paralegal, Regulatory Compliance and Insurance:** Responsible to ensure that feedback from the public regarding accessible customer service is addressed in accordance with the policy and related procedures.

**Executive Management and Managers:** Responsible to complete the Accessible Customer Service Training provided. Responsible to ensure employees, volunteers and any third parties who report to them or conduct business on their behalf are trained on accessible customer service following corporate standards. Responsible to ensure that procedures under this policy are communicated to staff and are carried out consistently. Responsible to ensure that feedback from the public regarding accessible customer service is addressed in accordance with the policy and related procedures.

**Gamma-Dynacare employees, students and others who interact or work with the public or third parties on behalf of Gamma-Dynacare:** Responsible to complete the Accessible Customer Service Training. Responsible to ensure that accessible customer service is provided to all clients in accordance with this policy and related practices and procedures. Responsible to ensure that feedback from the public regarding accessible customer service is addressed in accordance with the policy and related procedures.

**Definitions:**

**AODA -** Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

**Assistive Device:** An auxiliary aid such as technical aids, communication aids, cognition aids (reading, listening, talking aids), personal mobility aids and medical aids (i.e. canes, crutches, wheelchairs, hearing aids, etc.) that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional abilities of persons with disabilities to access and benefit from the goods and services offered by Gamma-Dynacare.

**Barrier:** As defined by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy, procedure or a practice.

**Disability:** As defined by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, means any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device, a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability, a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language, a mental disorder, or an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.

**Person with Disabilities** shall mean those individuals that are afflicted with a disability as defined under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

**Service Animals** as defined by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, shall mean an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability, if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

**Support Persons** as defined by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, shall mean any person, whether a paid professional, volunteer, family member or friend who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods and services

**Procedure:**  
**A. GENERAL**

Gamma-Dynacare Medical Laboratories is committed to our vision of:

**Providing Information, Impacting Lives, Caring for people.**

We are committed to providing quality health services and experiences to each member of the community we serve in a manner that respects dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity. Through every interaction, Gamma-Dynacare is committed to ensuring that persons with disabilities receive accessible goods and services with the same quality and timeliness as others.

In accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* and, as part of our commitment to excellence, we seek to recognize the needs of all our clients and remove the barriers faced by traditionally under-represented groups in order to facilitate their access to our services and provide equitable care. We respect and celebrate the diversity of people who use our services. This policy applies to all employees of Gamma-Dynacare, students, or any other individuals who interact with the public or other third parties, who represent or act on behalf of Gamma-Dynacare.

**B. PRINCIPLES FOR PROVIDING GOODS AND SERVICES TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

Gamma-Dynacare is committed to excellence in serving our diverse user community including persons with disabilities and we will carry out our service goals of anticipating information and service needs related to our patients, clinicians and service providers in the following areas:

**1. Communication**

Gamma-Dynacare will endeavor to communicate with persons with disabilities in a way that takes into account their disability. This means that staff will communicate in a manner that enables persons with disabilities to communicate effectively for the purposes of using, receiving and requesting Gamma-Dynacare goods and services.

We will train our staff on how to interact and communicate with our diverse user community and persons with various types of disabilities

**2. Assistive Devices**

Gamma-Dynacare is committed to serving persons with diverse disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain our services. The use of assistive devices by persons with disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from Gamma-Dynacare’s goods or services is recognized unless otherwise prohibited due to law, health and safety or privacy issues.

Clients will be permitted to bring and use assistive devices (i.e. wheelchair, cane, walker, oxygen tank, special communication devices, etc.) in Gamma-Dynacare facilities. It is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that his or her assistive device is operated in a safe and controlled manner at all times.

We will ensure that our employees are trained in the use of the various assistive devices provided by Gamma-Dynacare for persons with disabilities and will inform clients of the assistive devices that are available.

**3. Service Animals**

Persons with a disability may enter any Gamma-Dynacare facility accompanied by a service animal and keep the animal with them in all areas where the public has access, unless excluded by law. Gamma-Dynacare will ensure that all staff is trained in how to interact with persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal. While visiting Gamma-Dynacare it is the responsibility of the person with a service animal to control the animal at all times.

In the event that a service animal is otherwise prohibited by law from the premises, Gamma-Dynacare shall ensure other measures are made available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from Gamma-Dynacare’s goods or services.

In the event a client or Gamma-Dynacare staff member has an allergy to animals, Gamma-Dynacare shall make reasonable efforts to meet the needs of all individuals.

**4. Support Persons**

Gamma-Dynacare is committed to welcoming persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person in areas that are open to the public or other third parties. If a support person accompanies a visiting person with a disability, Gamma-Dynacare shall ensure that the person with a disability is not prevented from having access to that support person at all times.

Gamma-Dynacare may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person while on Gamma-Dynacare premises in situations where it is necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with a disability or the health and safety of others on Gamma-Dynacare premises.

Consent from the person with a disability is required when communicating private issues related to the person with a disability in the presence of the support person

**C. NOTICE OF TEMPORARY DISRUPTION**

Gamma-Dynacare will make every reasonable effort to provide our patients with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in facilities or services usually used by persons with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities where available. We may not be able to give adequate notice in case of an emergency temporary disruption but information will be provided as soon as possible.

Where possible, the notice will be displayed in a conspicuous place at the entrance to each location. Depending upon the nature of the disruption, notice may also be provided on outgoing telephone messages, posted on the Gamma-Dynacare website or by any other method as is reasonable under the circumstances.

Where possible, signs and printed notices will be clearly laid out, of sufficient size and easily readable.

**D. TRAINING FOR STAFF**

Gamma-Dynacare is committed to establishing, implementing and maintaining a program for training on how to provide customer service to persons with disabilities. Gamma-Dynacare will provide training as required under the AODA, to all persons whom this policy applies to as well as individuals charged with developing this policy and related practices and procedures. Records of the training completed will be maintained in accordance with the requirements of AODA. New staff and staff who commence new duties that involve interaction with the public or other third parties receiving Gamma-Dynacare’s goods and services will receive training as part of their orientation program, if they have not already done so, and on an ongoing basis in accordance with changes to this policy and its related practices and procedures.

Training will include:

- The purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- The requirements of the accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07)
- Information about Gamma-Dynacare policies, procedures and guidelines pertaining to the provision of lab services to persons with disabilities
- How to interact and communicate with persons with various disabilities
- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices or require the assistance of a service animal or assistance of a support person

- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing a Gamma-Dynacare goods or service
- How to use the equipment or devices available through Gamma-Dynacare or on Gamma-Dynacare premises that may help with the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities.

**E. FEEDBACK PROCESS**

The ultimate goal of Gamma-Dynacare is to meet and surpass client expectations while serving persons with disabilities. Gamma-Dynacare welcomes and appreciates all feedback, including feedback on how well we are meeting the delivery of services to persons with disabilities. Feedback can be made in person at any of our locations, by filling out a “Patient Survey” brochure at any of our Patient Services Centre (PSC) locations, calling Customer Service, by mail, by telephone, or through email on our website, [www.Gamma-Dynacare.com](http://www.Gamma-Dynacare.com), and clicking on “Accessibility” or “Contact Us” at the top right hand of the page.

**Feedback by telephone or through mail should be directed to:**

Paralegal, Regulatory Compliance and Insurance  
 Gamma-Dynacare Legal Department  
 Gamma-Dynacare Medical Laboratories  
 115 Midair Court, Brampton, Ontario L6T 5M3  
 Phone: 905-790-3515 Ext: 5373

**Gamma-Dynacare Customer Service:**

Toronto Area: 1-800-565-5721  
 Ottawa Area: 1-800-267-9514  
 London Area: 1-800-265-5946

All feedback received will be directed to the Paralegal, Regulatory Compliance and Insurance within Gamma-Dynacare’s Legal Department and will be used to identify areas that may require change and encourages continuous improvement in client service. In addition, should the client have chosen to supply his or her contact information, the author of the feedback will be provided a response in a timely fashion tailored in a format that takes the customer’s disability into account. All feedback will be resolved in a timely manner according to Company policy.

**F. MODIFICATIONS TO THIS OR OTHER POLICIES**

Gamma-Dynacare is an essential part of the health care circle and works hard to break down the barriers facing persons with disabilities. Gamma-Dynacare is committed to developing customer service policies that respect and promote the dignity, independence, integration and equality of opportunity to persons with disabilities. Therefore, no change will be made to this policy before considering the impact on persons with disabilities. Any policy of Gamma-Dynacare that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities will be modified or removed.

We undertake to consult with advocacy groups for persons with disabilities to provide, review and where possible improve our facilities or services for the disabled.

## **G. AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS**

Gamma-Dynacare will post this policy on its website and will ensure that this policy and any other documents required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service will be made available to anyone upon request.

If Gamma-Dynacare is required to provide a copy of a document to a person with a disability, consideration will be given to the person's disability and reasonable attempts will be made to accommodate the individual. Gamma-Dynacare and the person with a disability will agree on the format to be used.

## **H. QUESTIONS ABOUT AODA Legislation**

The purpose of this policy is to achieve service excellence to persons with disabilities. If anyone has questions about the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005 legislation an explanation will be provided by directing inquiries to:

Paralegal, Regulatory Compliance and Insurance  
Gamma-Dynacare Legal Department  
Gamma-Dynacare Medical Laboratories  
115 Midair Court, Brampton, Ontario L6T 5M3  
Phone: 905-790-3515 Ext. 5373

### **References:**

1. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), [www.aoda.ca/](http://www.aoda.ca/)
2. OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and OPS Accessibility Guideline