300-034 Accessibility - Client Service Policy

Date of Revision: 20 November 2026

Introduction/Purpose

Careica Health's (Careica) accessible client service policy is consistent with the principles of independence, dignity and equality of opportunity for persons disabled by barriers.

Manitoba is the only province where Careica operates that currently sets accessibility standards for private organizations. The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA) became law on December 5, 2013. It is built on the requirements of The Human Rights Code (Manitoba). Its Accessible Customer Service Standard Regulation came into effect for businesses and non-profits on November 1, 2018.

We are committed to the Accessibility for Manitobans Act and its Accessible Customer Service Standard Regulation. This policy reflects its ongoing practices and measures of the eight requirements of the Accessible Customer Service Standard. Any current or future policy or practice not respecting and promoting the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for persons disabled by barriers, will be reviewed, modified or removed.

Scope and Applicability

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers and contractors who provide services to clients on behalf of Careica. To provide consistent service, Careica applies the Accessible Customer Service Standard in every province where it operates (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba). This policy will be reviewed if another of these provinces introduces accessibility standards that apply to Careica.

Definitions

Barrier: Anything that prevents a person disabled by barriers from fully participating in society, including physical, communication, attitudinal, technological and systemic barriers.

Assistive device: A device used by a person disabled by barriers to help with daily living, such as a wheelchair, walker, oxygen equipment or communication device.

Support person: A person who accompanies a person disabled by barriers to help with communication, mobility, personal care or access to goods and services.

Service animal: An animal that has been trained to provide assistance to a person with a disability that relates to that person's disability, as defined in The Human Rights Code (Manitoba).

PIF: Problem Identification Form. The form used to record and track issues, including accessibility feedback, under policy 200-002 (Problem Identification Policy and Process).

Tools/Materials Required

- N/A

Policy and Practices

1) **Communication and information**
   We ask clients how they prefer to communicate and adjust our approach to meet their needs. We communicate with persons disabled by barriers in ways that take into account the nature of the barrier.

Practices:

- Have patience and find a quieter space if required.
- Have easy to read fonts and plain language documents.
- Have paper and pen available if required.
- Signage or verbal greeting will begin with “How can we help?”
- The website will include alt tags for use with screen readers.

2) Assistive devices

Persons disabled by barriers may use their personal assistive devices when accessing our goods, services or facilities. In cases where the assistive device presents significant and unavoidable health or safety concerns, we will attempt to use other measures to ensure the person disabled by barriers can access our goods, services or facilities.

Practices:

- Staff are trained to support clients who use assistive devices, including devices Careica provides and the client’s own devices.
- Training includes appropriate interaction of staff with clients using assistive devices. For example, staff will not touch or move assistive devices without the client’s permission.

3) Support persons

We welcome clients accompanied by a support person.

Practices:

- Training includes appropriate interaction of staff with clients accompanied by support persons. For example, staff will address the client, not the support person, unless requested to do otherwise.

4) Service animals

We are committed to meeting the requirements of the human rights legislation in each province where Careica operates, including The Human Rights Code (Manitoba), the Human Rights Code (British Columbia), the Alberta Human Rights Act and The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code, 2018, and we welcome clients accompanied by service animals.

The Human Rights Code (Manitoba) defines a service animal to be “an animal that has been trained to provide assistance to a person with a disability that relates to that person's disability.”

A service animal can often (but not always) be identified through visual indicators, such as its harness or vest, or through the assistance it is providing. In some cases, a person’s disability may prevent the individual from maintaining physical control of the animal. In these cases, the person is expected to maintain control of the animal through voice, signal or other means.

Practices:

- When it is not easy to identify if an animal is a service animal, staff may ask:
  - Is the animal assisting you?
  - What assistance has the animal been trained to provide related to your disability?
- Staff are NOT permitted to directly ask if the animal is a “service animal”.
- Staff will not pet, feed or play with a service animal without permission of its handler.
- Training ensures staff understand the rights of persons accompanied by service animals.

5) Maintain barrier free access

We are committed to maintaining barrier free access to our goods and services.

Practices:

We maintain barrier free access and ensure accessible features are available as intended by:

- Keeping hallways, ramps, waiting and meeting rooms clear of clutter such as boxes.
- Keeping entranceways cleared of snow and ice.
- Ensuring the placement of standing signage is not a tripping hazard.
- Allowing space for mobility devices.

6) Notice of temporary disruption

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption of services or facilities affecting clients disabled by barriers, we will promptly post notices and, when possible, announce the disruption. A clearly posted notice or announcement will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

Services/Facilities that are affected by this policy include:

- Accessible washroom.
- Elevator (in some Careica buildings).
- Automatic doors.

Practices:

The notice will be publicly available in the following ways, with a timeline given, if known:

- Posted on website and posted at entrance.
- Immediately explained by service provider.

7) Feedback process

We welcome feedback on how we provide accessible client service. Client feedback will help us identify barriers and respond to concerns.

Practices:

- Clients can provide feedback in the following ways:
- By phone.
- At the front reception desk of each office.
- By email.
- Phone and email addresses are available on the Careica website under “Contact”.

The client will be thanked for providing the feedback and told to expect a response within 30 days. The person receiving the feedback will fill out a PIF and send it to their Manager/Director. When prompted to choose a category for the PIF, select “Accessibility Feedback”. See policy 200-002 (Problem Identification Policy and Process)

The Manager/Director will have two weeks to investigate and close the PIF. The client will be contacted by the Manager/Director with the outcome within one week of closure of the PIF.

8) Training

All employees, volunteers and contractors who provide services to clients on behalf of Careica receive training on accessible client service. New employees are trained within two weeks after being hired.

Training includes:

- the purpose of The Accessibility for Manitobans Act and the requirements of the Accessible Customer Service Standard Regulation.
- the policies and actions related to the Accessible Customer Service Standard.
- how to interact and communicate with persons disabled by barriers, including persons who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person.
- what to do if a person disabled by barriers is having difficulty in accessing our goods, services or facilities.
- a review of the human rights legislation in the province where the employee works, including the duty to provide reasonable accommodation.

- how to use equipment or devices available at Careica locations that help persons disabled by barriers access our goods, services or facilities.

If there are any changes to our accessible client service policies, we will inform and train staff.

9) Availability of this policy

This policy is available to the public on request, at no cost. A notice that it is available is posted on the Careica website. If a person disabled by barriers requests a copy, we will provide it within a reasonable time and in a format that takes their barrier into account.

Reference

- The Accessibility for Manitobans Act, C.C.S.M. c. A1.7
- Accessible Customer Service Standard Regulation, M.R. 171/2015
- Manitoba Accessibility Office, Accessible Customer Service Standard Regulation Handbook (November 2025)
- The Human Rights Code (Manitoba), C.C.S.M. c. H175
- Human Rights Code (British Columbia), R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 210
- Alberta Human Rights Act, R.S.A. 2000, c. A-25.5
- The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code, 2018, S.S. 2018, c. S-24.2
- Careica Policy 200-002, Problem Identification Policy and Process

Version and History

Date	Version	Who	Changes
17 AUG 2018	0.1	Sharon Flood	Created and approved by SLT
12 SEP 2018	1.0	Sharon Flood	Implemented
05 FEB 2021	2.0	Brent Peters	Reformatted to Careica Health / no other changes were required
20 NOV 2026	3.0	Sharon Flood	Updated legislation, regulation name and references / revised scope / added definitions, training content and availability of policy / changed feedback response time to 30 days / wording and formatting edits

Approval Authority: Director, Human Resources & People Development