Communications Checklist

Personal Communication Tips

- ➤ Speak directly to the customer to ask, "How can I help?"

- ➤ Do not assume what a person can understand or do.

- ➤ If necessary, use a gentle tap or wave to gain attention of someone who cannot hear you. Do not shout.

- ➤ Identify yourself as you approach someone with low or no vision.

- ➤ Welcome support people, there to assist your client with physical or communication needs. Face your client as you speak.

- ➤ Be patient. Some people may take a little longer to respond.

- ➤ Provide information in a way that works for the customer: writing it down, speaking calmly, or moving away from a busy, noisy area.

- ➤ Use plain language. Provide one piece of information at a time using words that are easy to understand.

- ➤ If someone requests assistance reading, speak clearly and respect the person's privacy when others are nearby.

- ➤ If you are unsure what was said, or that the customer understood you, repeat or rephrase the information and confirm it is correct.

- ➤ Allow customers to communicate using a cell phone, iPad or computer, which can all become "assistive devices."

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➢ Allow customers who understand the meaning of a document to use another way of signing, this may include a stamp, or their authorization of a legally appointed person to sign on their behalf.

Written Communication Tips

➢ Use plain language. Make your message easy to understand by using common words and short sentences.

➢ Have white space on the page by writing short paragraphs, indenting examples, or using bullet points to make your message stand out.

➢ Use contrasting colours (black on white).

➢ Choose clear lettering and a sans serif font (this is Arial font).

➢ Write public documents in 12 font or larger (this is 14 font).

➢ Avoid *italics,* underlining, or **bold script** that will make it difficult for many people to read your message.

➢ Keep a master copy of your document in "Word" or another easily modified version to correct any issues with inaccessibility.

➢ Use the heading options available, instead of just increasing font size, and create a hierarchical heading structure with headings, sub-headings etc. This allows readers with disabilities, including people using screen readers, to jump from heading to heading, rather than scrolling through the complete document to find the topic they are searching.

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- Provide "alternative text" for website images by including a brief description and/or message represented by an image, including any words. Computer software provides options for reserving these descriptions for users who are blind and use screen readers.

- Offer other ways of receiving the written information, or filling a form, or registering, with an "active offer" on documents and on-line. For example, include above contact information "This information is available in alternate formats upon request."

- For more tips, including Visit "How to create accessibility?" http://www.accessibilitymb.ca/resources.html

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