

HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY	Policy # 6.14 - Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)
Section: Workplace Behaviour	Effective: April 20, 2022
Application: Employees, Council, Volunteers	Approved: April 19, 2022
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Supersedes: Accessibility for Ontarians – Customer Service Policy, Eff. Feb. 7/12; AND Accessibility for Ontarians – Employment Standards, Eff. Feb. 7/12	Resolution:

PURPOSE

This policy and its related procedures demonstrate the Municipality of Port Hope’s (“Municipality”) commitment to the implementation of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (“IASR”) of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (“AODA”), which enables access to municipal goods, services, and facilities by the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers for persons with disabilities.

POLICY

The Municipality is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities so that persons of all ages and abilities can enjoy the same opportunities as they live, work, and visit our community.

The Municipality is guided by the four core principles of independence, dignity, integration, and equal opportunity, and will demonstrate their commitment to these principles to:

- Establish, maintain, and update Accessibility policies and procedures.
- Establish, maintain, and update a multi-year accessibility plan in accordance with the requirements of Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (“IASR”).
- Provide training on the requirements of the accessibility standards in accordance with the IASR, as well as the Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities.
- Incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities and remove barriers for persons with disabilities.
- Provide accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities.
- Communicate and provide workplace and employment practices that are accessible to potential or current employees with disabilities.
- Provide transportation services which are accessible to persons with disabilities.

- Design, develop and redevelop public spaces to be accessible for persons with disabilities.

In accordance with the requirements of the IASR, the Municipality will:

- Document the Accessibility policies in writing.
- Make the policies publicly available, and in an accessible format on request.
- Include a statement of the Municipality's commitment to accessibility.

The IASR establishes general requirements and accessibility standards specific to five (5) areas, for which a separate procedure document, as may be required, will be developed:

- 1) Customer Service Standard
- 2) Employment Standard
- 3) Information and Communication Standard
- 4) Transportation Standard
- 5) Design of Public Spaces Standard

DEFINITIONS

Accessible format - means presenting print information in an alternate method, such as but not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, braille, and other formats usable by persons with disabilities ("format accessible").

Accommodation - means providing an alternate arrangement or assistance, so that persons with disabilities can participate in the experiences available to people without disabilities. Accommodations will vary depending on the persons unique needs.

Alternate formats - may include any alternate approach to presenting print information.

Assistive devices - may include equipment or technologies a person with a disability uses to help them with daily living (e.g., wheelchairs, prosthesis, hearing aids, visual aids, oxygen tanks, electronic communication devices and specialized computer software and hardware.)

Barrier - Obstacles that keep persons with disabilities from accessing goods, services, and facilities because of their disability. Examples of barriers include structural, technology, information, communication, systemic and attitude.

Communications - means the interaction between two (2) or more persons or entities, or any combination of them where information is provided, sent, or received.

Communication supports - may include, but are not limited to, captioning, plain language, sign language, the use of a support person, and other supports that facilitate effective communications.

Disability – means any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation, or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness, including blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability, a learning disability, a mental disorder, and as fully defined in the *Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19*.

Guide dog - means a dog trained as a guide for a blind person and having the

qualifications prescribed by the Blind Persons' Rights Act and Regulations.

Information - includes data, facts, and knowledge that exists in any format, including text, audio, digital or images, and that conveys meaning.

Kiosk - means an interactive electronic terminal, including a point-of-sale device, intended for public use that allows users to access one or more services or products or both.

Service animal - means any animal that assists a person with a disability if the following conditions are met:

- the animal can be readily identified as one that is being used by the person for reasons relating to the person's disability, because of visual indicators such as the vest or harness worn by the animal, or
- the person provides documentation from one of the regulated health professionals listed in the O.Reg.191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards, confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

Service Animals include, but are not limited to guide dogs, hearing alert animals, comfort or therapy animals, and animals to alert oncoming seizures.

Support person - means another person who accompanies a person with a disability to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods, services or facilities. The support person may be a paid professional, volunteer, family member or friend.

Volunteers – means a person who voluntarily provides goods, services or facility on behalf of the Municipality.

ACCESSIBILITY - GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Municipality has established an Accessibility Advisory Committee ("Committee"), with some of the members being persons with disabilities. The Committee advises Council and departments about the requirements and implementation of the AODA accessibility standards. The Committee, work with municipal staff to:

- develop, review, and update the Municipality's Accessibility Plan at least every five years
- provide guidance on accessibility matters for which staff or Council may seek advice.

As requested, the Committee may review site plans and drawings for new facilities, as well as municipal facilities that are being redeveloped, and provide advice on the identification, removal and prevention of barriers.

Accessibility Plans

The Municipality produces, implements, and maintains a multi-year Accessibility Plan (“Plan”), which outlines the Municipality’s strategy to achieve accessibility, prevent and remove barriers and promote inclusion.

The Municipality prepares an annual status report on the progress of the measures taken to implement the Plan. The Plan and the annual status updates will be posted on the municipal website and available, upon request, in accessible formats and with communication supports where required.

Documentation

The Municipality develops, implements, and maintains policies governing how the Municipality will achieve accessibility and meet or exceed its requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (“AODA”).

The Municipality shall upon request, provide a copy of the policies, practices and procedures identifying the Municipality’s commitment to provide accessible goods, services, and facilities and upon request, make these documents available in alternate accessible formats.

Procuring and Acquiring Goods, Services or Facilities

When procuring goods, services or facilities, the Municipality will incorporate accessibility design, criteria and features where reasonable, feasible and appropriate resources are available, unless it is not practicable – for example, if there are no accessible features in existence.

Where applicable, preference will be given to goods, services and/or facilities that are accessible. The Municipality will require materials to be provided in an accessible format where practicable. If not practicable, or in instances where an item is purchased without accessible design, criteria, and features where they exist, the Municipality will provide an explanation, upon request.

Self-serve Kiosks

If the Municipality designs, procures or purchases self-serve electronic kiosks, such as credit / debit payment devices, considerations will be given to the accessibility features to make kiosks available to the widest range of users. Preference will be given to devices that are accessible.

Training

The Municipality will provide training on the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in the IASR as it pertains to persons with disabilities, to all employees, Council, volunteers; persons who participate in developing municipal policies; and other persons who provide goods, services, and facilities on behalf of the Municipality.

New employees, Council and volunteers shall receive and complete training as soon as

practicable after starting work or taking on their role with the Municipality. Ongoing training shall be provided regarding changes to policies, procedures, and new equipment.

The method, type and degree of training shall be consistent with the employee or individual's role in the Municipality and aligned with the requirements of the O.Reg.191/11 Integrated Accessibility Standards and observe the core principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity.

NOTE: Additional details for the AODA Standards listed below, may be found in the Accessibility Procedure, specific to the Standard, and will be made available upon request.

CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD

Accessible Provision of Goods and Services

The Municipality will make every reasonable effort to ensure that its policies, practices, and procedures are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity by:

- Ensuring that all customers receive the same value and quality of service at no additional cost.
- Using alternative methods, when possible, to ensure that customers with disabilities have access to the same services.
- Considering and adapting to individual accommodation needs when providing goods and services.

Assistive Devices

Individuals may use their assistive devices when accessing Municipal goods, services, and facilities.

Where available, Municipal owned assistive devices will be kept in good working order and the Municipality will inform the public of the availability of such devices. Identify the availability, if any, of other helpful measures the Municipality offers for persons with disabilities to access goods, services, or facilities.

Service Animals

When accessing Municipal goods services or facilities, persons with disabilities may be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal and keep the animal with them in areas that are open to the public, unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law.

In situations where the service animal is prohibited by another law, provide another way for the person to access the goods, services, or facilities. The individual using the service animal is responsible for the care and supervision of the service animal.

Support Persons

When accessing goods, services and facilities provided by the Municipality, persons with disabilities may be accompanied by their support person in areas or premises that are open to the public.

Where the Municipality requires a support person to accompany a person with a disability, the Municipality will not charge the support person any fees.

Communicating with persons with disabilities

When communicating with persons with disabilities, municipal staff will take into consideration the persons disability and will determine what method of communication works best for them - see details in the AODA Customer Service Standard Procedure.

Customer Service Feedback

The Municipality provides the opportunity to submit feedback on the service they have provided to persons with disabilities.

The procedure for receiving and responding to customer feedback about the way the Municipality provides customer service to persons with disabilities will be available to the public on the municipal website and in the AODA Customer Service Standard procedure.

Service Disruption Notices

In the event of a planned or unplanned service disruption, that persons with disabilities typically use, are temporarily unavailable e.g., an elevator undergoing maintenance or accessible washroom that is out of service, the Municipality will give notice of the disruption to the public.

The notice will include the reason for the disruption and how long the service will be unavailable and if there are any alternatives for the service.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS STANDARD

Accessible Formats and Communications Supports

The Municipality strives to provide information in a format accessible to all people. Upon request and where feasible, accessible formats and communication supports will be provided in a mutually agreed upon timeframe which considers the circumstances of the person making the request, the urgency of the request and at no additional cost.

The Municipality will notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communications support through our website and through a posting in facilities.

Emergency Procedures, Plans, or Public Safety Information

The Municipality will ensure that all publicly available safety and emergency information is provided in an accessible format upon request.

Accessible Websites and Web Content

The Municipality will ensure that its internet websites, and where applicable web content, conforms to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (“WCAG”), at level A and AA in accordance with the schedule set out in the AODA IASR.

Exceptions

The Information and Communications Standard does not apply to:

- Products and product labels
- Unconvertable information or communications
- Information that the Municipality does not control either directly or indirectly through a contractual relationship.

Unconvertable Information or Communications

If it is determined, in consultation with the requesting party, that information or communications are unconvertable, the Municipality will ensure that the individual who made the request is provided with an explanation and a summary of the information.

The Municipality will classify information or communications as unconvertable where:

- It is not technically practicable to convert, or
- The technology required to make the conversion is not readily available.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARD

Recruitment, Assessment and Selection

The Municipality will notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodations for job applicants who have disabilities. Applicants will be informed that these accommodations are available, upon request, for the interview process and for other candidate selection methods.

Employee supports

The Municipality will inform all employees of its policies and procedures used to support employees with disabilities and provide this information to new employees during workplace orientation training.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees

Upon an employee’s request, the Municipality will consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communications support for:

- Information needed to perform their job.
- Information that is generally available to all employees in the workplace.

Workplace Emergency Response Information

Where required, the Municipality will create individualized workplace emergency response plans for employees with disabilities.

In addition, this information shall be provided, with the employee's consent, to the person(s) designated by the Municipality to assist the employee during a workplace emergency.

Documented Individual Accommodation Plans

The Municipality will have a written procedure on the development of an individual accommodation plan for employees with disabilities. The accommodation plan is to incorporate the elements and considerations detailed in the Integrated Accessibility Standard.

Individual accommodation plans will include information regarding accessible formats and communication supports if they have been requested, the employee's individualized workplace emergency response information, and any other accommodation that is to be provided.

Return to Work

The Municipality will have in place a documented return-to-work process for employees who are absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations to return to work.

This process will outline the steps the Municipality will take to enable a smooth return to work for the employee. All steps and individual accommodation plans will be documented and created in consultation with the employee.

Performance Management and Career Changes

The Municipality will consider the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities, including any documented individual accommodation plans, during the Municipal performance management process. These will also be considered in the event of redeployment, or when offering career development or advancement opportunities.

TRANSPORTATION STANDARD

The Municipality provides conventional and specialized transportation services for the community. The conventional transportation services are available to all persons and the specialized transportation services may be scheduled for 'origin to destination' transportation on an 'as requested' basis for persons with disabilities.

Service Requirements

The conventional and specialized transportation services will include mobility aids for maneuvering within the vehicle, lifting devices or ramps for mobility equipment access, grab bars/handrails, lighting, warning indicators and alarms, identified seating for persons

with disabilities, safe storage for mobility aids or assistive devices, and audio and visual communication regarding the route and stop location and transit drivers trained on accessible service and assistance with mobility devices.

The Municipality will include these principles in the provision of accessible transportation services:

- Communicate information to the public on accessible equipment, accessible vehicle features, routes, and services.
- Train employees and volunteers on providing service to persons with disabilities.
- Not charge the support person a fare when a person with a disability requires a support person to access the transportation services.
- Not charge an additional fare for the transit of a person with disability or storage of their equipment.
- Provide on board audio and visual announcements.
- Provide clearly marked seating for persons with disabilities.
- Implement the taxicab licensing requirements for accessibility in the licensing procedure and requirements for operation.
- Provide accessible bus stops and shelters.

DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES STANDARD

The Municipality will meet or exceed the AODA Design of Public Spaces Standards, including consultation requirements, when undertaking construction and redevelopment of public spaces in the following areas:

- Recreational trails and beach access routes
- Outdoor public use eating areas
- Outdoor play spaces
- Exterior paths of travel
- Accessible parking
- Obtaining services (e.g. service counters, fixed queuing guides and waiting areas)
- Maintenance of accessible elements

The Municipality will identify and prevent accessibility barriers when designing and constructing / reconstructing public spaces and will incorporate accessibility design, criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities.

The AODA requirements will be incorporated into the design of parking spaces, sidewalks, ramps, surfaces of stairs, pedestrian curb ramps, pedestrian streetlights, rest areas, and spaces in which service is accessed (e.g. counters), to name a few of the public space design matters that would be addressed using this Standard.

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY REVIEW

The review of the Integrated Accessibility Standard Policy and any other accessibility related policy which may be established, is to occur every three (3) years and upon legislative changes. Any changes to accessibility related policies are to consider the provision of services, goods and facilities to persons with disabilities, and are to promote their dignity and independence.

REFERENCES

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11
Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (O. Reg. 191/11)
Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19
Blind Persons' Rights Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. B.7.