

THE CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF PORT HOPE

BY-LAW NO. 28/2009

Being a by-law to adopt a Customer Service Policy and Procedures in compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act: Customer Service Standard, Ontario Regulation 429/07.

WHEREAS Section 10(2) of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25, provides a Municipality may pass by-laws respecting accountability and transparency of the Municipality and its operations and of its local boards and their operations;

AND WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of Port Hope deems it desirable to adopt a Customer Service Policy and Procedures to comply with the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), Customer Service Standard – Ontario Regulation 429/07;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of Port Hope hereby enacts as follows:

1. That the Corporation's Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy and Procedures, attached hereto as Schedule "A" be adopted.
2. THAT this By-law shall come into force the day it is finally passed.

READ a FIRST, SECOND and THIRD time and finally passed in Open Council this 19th day of May, 2009.

Linda Thompson, Mayor

S.C. Dawe, Municipal Clerk

MUNICIPALITY OF PORT HOPE
ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY

*Prepared March 2009
Adopted by Council: May 19, 2009*

*Prepared by: Municipality of Port Hope Accessibility Work Group and
Municipality of Port Hope Accessibility Advisory Committee*



MUNICIPALITY OF PORT HOPE ACCESSIBILITY CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Customer Service Standards Policy is to establish procedures and best practices that are consistent with the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity to permit persons with disabilities access to Municipal goods and services.

STATEMENT

The Municipality of Port Hope shall use reasonable efforts to ensure that its procedures and best practices are consistent with the principles of

- Providing goods or services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- Providing goods or services to persons with disabilities, and others, in an integrated manner, to the best of the Municipality's ability where feasible and technically possible, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods or services.
- Providing persons with disabilities equal opportunity to obtain, use and benefit from the goods or services.
- Provide persons with disabilities and/or support persons the use of assistive devices in the access of goods and services.
- Ensuring that Municipal Staff communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

APPLICATION

This policy shall apply to every person who deals with members of the public or their agents on behalf of the Municipality of Port Hope, whether the person is an employee, agent, volunteer or otherwise.

DEFINITIONS

“Accessibility Coordinator” is the person appointed by Council as Accessibility Coordinator for the Municipality of Port Hope.

“Assistive devices” are aids used by persons with disabilities (e.g. canes, crutches, wheelchairs, or hearing aids).

“Disabilities” are as defined in the Ontario Human Rights Code.

“Employees” shall mean any person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the Municipality of Port Hope, whether the person does so as an employee, agent, volunteer or otherwise.

“Persons with Disabilities” are those afflicted with a disability as defined under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

“Service Animals” shall mean any animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability.

“Support person” 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 communications, personal care or medical needs, or with access to goods or services or mobility.

EXCLUSIONS

This Accessibility Customer Service Standards Policy shall not apply during any period where Council has declared a “State of Emergency” as defined under the **Emergency Management Act**.

DOCUMENTATION

The Municipality of Port Hope shall, upon request, provide a copy of the policies, practices and procedures identifying the Municipality’s commitment to provide access to goods, services and any documentation prepared and distributed by the Municipality in a form that takes into account the person’s disability as required under the Ontario Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service - and in accordance with the Municipality’s Documentation Standards Policy.

ACCESSIBLE MUNICIPAL FACILITIES

The Municipality of Port Hope is committed to ensuring access for its customers to all goods and services in the Municipality in a form and manner that takes into account their disability; and provide access to all Municipal facilities as required in accordance with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the Ontario Building Code.

NON-COMPLIANCE

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS

The Port Hope Public Works Department, with assistance from the Port Hope Accessibility Advisory Committee, shall be responsible for the regular review process and subsequent amendments to this policy document. Review and amendments (if required) shall take place within the **first year of each term of Council**.

ADOPTION

Adopted by Council this 19th day of May, 2009 by By-law No. 28/2009.

Mayor

Clerk

BEST PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

The Municipality of Port Hope Staff, volunteers and contract personnel shall be responsible in the administration and implementation of customer services practices to ensure equal opportunity to persons with disabilities:

- Ask how you can help
- Offer a variety of methods of communication
- Understand the nature and scope of the service you offer.

FEEDBACK

The Municipality of Port Hope is committed to making every effort to ensure persons with disabilities have access to Municipal goods and services. Similarly, the Municipality offers a mechanism to provide Feedback from our customers and provide the Municipality of Port Hope opportunities to learn and improve service delivery. The Municipality has provided a hard copy and electronic “Feedback” opportunity to capture comments and suggestions from persons with disabilities as they relate to service delivery in an effective and timely manner.

In writing, in person, e-mail, or telephone, submitted to:

Public Works Department
c/o 56 Queen Street
Port Hope, ON L1A 3Z9
Phone : (905) 885-2341
Fax: (905) 885-7698
E-mail: accessibility@porthope.ca

The Director of Works and Engineering, or designate, will respond either in writing, in person, by e-mail or telephone acknowledging receipt of feedback and will set out the action to be taken in response to any complaints in a form that is technically feasible and in a manner which takes into account the person’s disability.

SERVICE ANIMALS, SUPPORT PERSON(S)

Service animals, such as guide dogs shall be permitted anywhere customers have access, except where Provincial Statute prohibits animals; including but not limited to food preparation areas.

- When a service animal is unruly or disruptive (jumping on people, biting, or other harmful behavior) an employee may ask the owner to remove the animal from the area or refuse access to goods or services. In order to provide goods and services to the person with the disability other reasonable arrangements shall be explored.
- Service Animals shall include, but limited to: guide dogs, hearing alert animals, comfort or therapy animals, animals to alert oncoming seizures.
- Customers are responsible for the care and supervision of the Service Animals and are permitted to keep the animal with him /her unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law.

Support persons assisting people with disabilities shall be permitted complimentary access to services when rendering assistance.

- Every employee shall use reasonable efforts to allow persons with disabilities to use their own assistive devices to access goods and/or services.

ADMISSION FEES – ADVANCE NOTICE

In the event that admission fees are charged, advance notice of applicable fees shall be posted on the Municipal web site and published in the Corporation's Fees and Charges By-law, and there will be no applicable charges to a support person providing assistance to persons with disabilities.

SERVICE DISRUPTION - NOTICE

If a disruption to access of goods and services is planned, and expected, the Municipality shall provide reasonable notice in a manner prescribed in the Corporation's Public Notice Policy and use the prescribed form in Appendix "# 3".

TRAINING

- The Municipality of Port Hope will provide appropriate training to all employees and volunteers in providing goods and services to persons with disabilities; and will ensure that all contract service personnel (third parties) have received accredited Accessibility customer service training as part of their contractual obligations.
- New employees, agents, volunteers and management shall receive training as soon as “practicable” after being assigned.
- 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’s role in the Municipality and the in terms of Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Standards, and observing the core principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

TRAINING RECORDS

Training records shall be maintained and shall include the names of employees, volunteers and management and the dates of specific training received and in what manner, and shall be recorded using the prescribed training record format in Appendix “A”.

APPROPRIATE TERMINOLOGY AND COMMUNICATION STYLES WHEN ADDRESSING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.

The Municipality of Port Hope adopts the guiding principles of acceptable communication styles in addressing persons with disabilities from the Ministry of Community and Social Services. The terminology is found on their website:

http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass/english/how/howto_choose.htm

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. We will train staff who communicate with customers on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

Talk about Disabilities – Chose the Right Word

Words can influence and reinforce the public’s perception of people with disabilities. They can create either a positive view of people with disabilities or an indifferent, negative depiction.

Here are some general tips that can help make your communication and interactions with or about people with all types of disabilities more successful.

- Use *disability* or *disabled*, not *handicap* or *handicapped*.
- Never use terms such as *retarded*, *dumb*, *psycho*, *moron* or *crippled*. These words are very demeaning and disrespectful to people with disabilities.
- Remember to put people first. It is proper to say *person with a disability*, rather than *disabled person*.
- If you don’t know someone or if you are not familiar with the disability, it’s better to wait until the individual describes his/her situation to you, rather than to make your own assumptions. Many types of disabilities have similar characteristics and your assumptions may be wrong.

Telephone services

We are committed to providing fully accessible telephone service to our customers. We will train staff to communicate with customers over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly.

We will offer to communicate with customers by email or relay services through an appropriate means, where available in the community, that takes into account their disability if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs or is not available.

Assistive devices

We are committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services. We will ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods or services.

We will also ensure that staff know how to use the following assistive devices used by our customers when on our premises, to remove potential barriers, ensure Staff awareness and ensure assistive devices are offered in a manner that respects person's dignity and independence:

- Wheelchairs
- Pad & Paper
- Walkers
- Listening Devices
- White Canes
- Computers
- Portable Magnifiers
- Recording Machines

The following preferred words and phrases will help you choose language that is neither demeaning nor hurtful. People with disabilities prefer these terms.

Common Reference	Preferred Reference
Afflicted by cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, arthritis, etc.	Person who has cerebral palsy. Person who has multiple sclerosis. Person who has arthritis, etc. Person with a disability.
Aged (the)	Seniors
Autistic	A person with autism. A person who has autism.
Birth defect, congenital defect, deformity	A person who has a congenital disability. A person with a disability since birth.
Blind (the), visually impaired (the)	A person who is blind. A person with a vision disability. A person with vision loss. A person with a visual impairment A person with low vision.
Brain damaged	A person with a brain injury. A person with a head injury.
Confined to a wheelchair, wheelchair bound	A person who uses a wheelchair.
Crazy, insane, lunatic, psycho, mental, mental patient, maniac, neurotic, psychotic, unsound mind, schizophrenic	A person with a mental health disability. A person who has depression. A person with schizophrenia.
Cripple, crippled, lame	A person with a disability. A person with a mobility impairment or, more specifically, a person who walks with crutches. A person who uses a walker. A person who uses a mobility aid. A person with arthritis, etc.
Deaf (the), hearing impaired (the)	A person who is deaf (person with profound hearing loss who communicates using sign language.) A person who is deafened (deaf later in life.) A person who is hard of hearing (person with hearing loss who communicates primarily by speech.) A person with a hearing loss. When referring to the deaf community and their culture (whose preferred mode of communication is sign language) it is acceptable to use "the Deaf."
Deaf and dumb, deaf mute	A person who is deaf without speech.
Deaf-Blind (the)	Person who is deaf-blind (person who has any combination of visual and auditory

Common Reference	Preferred Reference
	impairments.)
Differently Abled	A person with a disability.
Disabled (the)	People with disabilities.
Elderly (the)	Seniors, older adults.
Epileptic	Person who has epilepsy.
Fits, spells, attacks	Seizures.
Handicapped (the)	Person with a disability. The term handicapped may be used when referring to an environmental or attitudinal barrier as in "a person who is handicapped by a set of stairs leading to the entrance."
Hidden disability	Non-visible disability.
Invalid	Person with a disability.
Learning disabled, learning disordered, the dyslexics	A person with a learning disability or people with learning disabilities
Mentally retarded, idiot, simple, retarded, feeble minded, imbecile	A person with an intellectual disability. A person with a developmental disability.
Midget, Dwarf	A person of short stature. A person who has a form of dwarfism. A little person. A person diagnosed with "Achondroplasia, SED, or what ever their specific diagnoses is", a form of dwarfism.
Mongoloid, Mongolism	Person with Down Syndrome. One can use this terminology only when it is directly relevant. A person with an intellectual or developmental disability.
Normal	Person who is not disabled. Person who is able bodied. Specifically, a person who is sighted, a hearing person, a person who is ambulatory.
Patient	Person with a disability. The word patient may be used when referring to a relationship between and medical professional and a client.
Physically challenged	Person with a physical disability.
Spastic	Person who has muscle spasms.
Stutterer	A person with a speech impairment or impediment.
Victim of/suffers from/stricken with cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, arthritis, etc.	Person who has cerebral palsy. Person who has multiple sclerosis, etc. Person with a disability.
Visually impaired (the)	A person with a visual impairment. A person with low vision. A person with vision loss. A person with a vision disability

For additional information visit the Ministry of Community and Social Services website at [<http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/mcss>]

PHYSICAL disabilities include a range of functional limitations from minor difficulties in moving or coordinating one part of the body, through muscle weakness, tremors, and paralysis. Physical disabilities can be congenital such as Muscular Dystrophy; or acquired, such as tendonitis. A physical disability may affect an individual's ability to:

- Perform manual tasks such as holding a pen, turning a key or gripping a door knob
- Move around independently
- Control the speed or coordination of movements
- Reach, pull or manipulate objects
- Have strength or endurance

Best practices and procedures for Customer Service:

There are many types and degrees of physical disabilities, and not all require a wheelchair. It may be difficult to identify a person with a physical disability.

Here are some tips on serving customers who have physical disabilities:

- Speak normally and directly to your customer. Don't speak to the person who is with them.
- People with physical disabilities often have their own way of doing things. Ask before you help.
- Wheelchairs and other mobility devices are part of a person's personal space; don't touch, move or lean on them
- Provide information about the accessible features of the immediate environment (automatic doors, accessible washrooms, etc.)
- Keep ramps and corridors free of clutter
- If a counter is too high or wide, step around it to provide service
- Provide seating for those that cannot stand in line

Be Patient. Customers will identify their needs to you.

HEARING loss can cause problems in distinguishing certain frequencies, sounds or words. A person who is deaf, deafened or hard-of hearing may be unable to:

- Use a public telephone
- Understand speech in noisy environments
- Pronounce words clearly enough to be understood by strangers

Best practices and procedures for Customer Service:

Like other disabilities, hearing loss has a wide variety of degrees. Remember, customers who are deaf or hard of hearing may require assistive devices when communicating.

Here are some tips on serving customers who are deaf or hard of hearing:

- Attract the customer's attention before speaking. The best way is a gentle touch on the shoulder or gently waving your hand
- Always ask how you can help. Don't shout. Speak clearly
- Be clear and precise when giving directions, and repeat or rephrase if necessary. Make sure you have been understood
- Face the person and keep your hands and other objects away from your face and mouth
- Deaf people may use a sign language interpreter to communicate- always direct your attention to the Deaf person –not the interpreter
- Any personal (e.g. financial) matters should be discussed in a private room to avoid other people overhearing
- If the person uses a hearing aid, try to speak in an area with few competing sounds
- If necessary, write notes back and forth to share information

DEAF-BLIND is a combination of hearing and vision loss. A person who is deaf-blind has significant difficulty accessing information and performing daily activities. Deaf-blindness interferes with communication, learning, orientation and mobility. People who are deaf-blind communicate using various sign language systems, Braille, telephone devices, communication boards and any combination thereof.

Many people who are deaf-blind use the services of an Intervener who can relay information and facilitate auditory and visual information and act as sighted guides.

Best practices and procedures for Customer Service:

Most people who are deaf-blind will be accompanied by an intervener, a professional who helps with communicating.

Interveners are trained in special sign language that involves touching the hands of the client in a two-hand, manual alphabet or finger spelling, and may guide and interpret for their client.

Here are some tips on serving customers who are deaf-blind:

- Do not assume what a person can or cannot do. Some people who are deaf-blind have some sight or hearing, while others have neither.
- A customer who is deaf-blind is likely to explain to you how to communicate with them or give you an assistance card or a note explaining how to communicate with them
- Never touch a person who is deaf-blind suddenly or without permission unless it's an emergency
- Understand that communication can take some time- be patient.
- Direct your attention to your customer, not the Intervener.

VISION disabilities reduce one's ability to see clearly. Very few people are totally blind. Many have limited vision such as tunnel vision, where a person has a loss of peripheral or side vision, or a lack of central vision, which means they cannot see straight ahead. Some can see the outline of objects while others can see the direction of light.

Vision loss can result in:

- Difficulty reading or seeing faces
- Difficulty maneuvering in unfamiliar places
- Inability to differentiate colours or distances
- A narrow field of vision
- The need for bright light, or contrast
- Night blindness

Best practices and procedures for Customer Service:

Vision disabilities can restrict your customers' abilities to read signs, locate landmarks or see hazards. In some cases, it may be difficult to tell if a person has a vision disability. Others may use a dog guide or white cane.

Here are some tips on serving customers who have vision disabilities:

- Verbally identify yourself before making physical contact
- **If the person uses a service animal- do not touch or approach the animal- it is working.**
- Verbally describe the setting, form, location as necessary
- Offer your arm to guide the person. Do not grab or pull.
- Never touch your customer without asking permission, unless it is an emergency
- Don't leave your customer in the middle of a room. Show them to a chair, or guide them to a comfortable location
- Don't walk away without saying good-bye

INTELLECTUAL disabilities affect a person's ability to think and reason. It may be caused by genetic factors such as Down Syndrome, exposure to environmental toxins, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, brain trauma or psychiatric disorders. A person with an intellectual disorder may have difficulty with:

- Understanding spoken and written information
- Conceptual information

- Perception of sensory information
- Memory

Best practices and procedures for Customer Service:

People with intellectual or developmental disabilities may have difficulty doing many things most of us take for granted. These disabilities can mildly or profoundly limit one's ability to learn. You may not know that someone has this disability unless you are told; in some cases you may know by the way people act, ask questions or use body language.

As much as possible, treat customers with an intellectual or developmental disability the way you would treat anyone else. They may understand more than you think, and they will appreciate you treating them with respect.

Here are some tips on serving customers who have an intellectual or developmental disability:

- Don't assume what a person can or cannot do
- Use clear, simple language
- Be prepared to explain and provide examples regarding information
- If the person is an adult assume that he or she can make decisions unless you are informed otherwise
- Be patient and verify your understanding
- If you can't understand what is being said, don't pretend. Just ask again
- Provide one piece of information at a time
- Speak directly to your customer, not to their companion or attendant

SPEECH disabilities may involve the partial or total loss of the ability to speak. Disabilities may include problems with:

- Pronunciation
- Pitch and loudness
- Hoarseness or breathiness
- Stuttering or slurring

Best practices and procedures for Customer Service:

Some people have problems communicating. It could be the result of cerebral palsy, hearing loss, or another condition that makes it difficult to pronounce words, causes slurring or stuttering, or not being able to express oneself or understand written or spoken language. Some people who have severe difficulties may use communication boards or other assistive devices.

Here are some tips on serving customers with speech or language impairments:

- If possible communicate in a quiet environment
- Give the person your full attention. Don't interrupt for finish their sentences.
- Ask them to repeat as necessary, or to write their message.
- If you are able, ask questions that can be answered 'yes' or 'no'
- Verify your understanding

Patience, respect and willingness to find a way to communicate are your best tools

LEARNING disabilities include a range of disorders that effect the understanding, processing and retention of information. People with a learning disability may have average or above average intelligence, but take in and process information and express knowledge in different ways. Learning disabilities can result in difficulties with:

- Reading
- Problem solving
- Time management
- Way finding
- Processing information.

Best practices and procedures for Customer Service:

- Learning disabilities are generally invisible and ability to function varies greatly; respond to any requests for verbal information, assistance in filling in forms and so on with courtesy.
- Allow extra time to complete tasks if necessary.

MENTAL HEALTH disabilities include a range of disorders however there are three main types of mental health disability:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Behavioral disorders

People with mental health disabilities may seem edgy or irritated; act aggressively; be perceived as pushy or abrupt; be unable to make a decision; start laughing or get angry for no apparent reason.

Best practices and procedures for Customer Service:

- Treat each person as an individual. Ask what would make him/her the most comfortable and respect his/her needs to the maximum extent possible.
- Try to reduce stress and anxiety, particularly in difficult situations.
- Stay calm and courteous and even if the customer exhibits unusual behavior, focus on the service they need and how you can help.

SMELL disabilities can involve the inability to sense smells or a hypersensitivity to odors and smells. A person with a smell disability may have allergies to certain odors, scents or chemicals or may be unable to identify dangerous gases, smoke, fumes and spoiled food.

TOUCH disabilities can affect a person's ability to sense texture, temperature, vibration or pressure. Touch sensations may be reduced or heightened resulting in a hypersensitivity to touch, temperature, or the opposite: numbness and the inability to feel touch sensations

TASTE disabilities can limit the experience of the four primary taste sensations; sweet, bitter, salty and sour. A person with a taste disability may be unable to identify spoiled food or noxious substances.

INVISIBLE DISABILITIES are not always easy to distinguish: for example, anxiety, depression, accidents, illnesses and diseases including ALS, asthma, diabetes, cancer, HIV/AIDs, environmental sensitivities, seizure disorders, heart disease, stroke and joint replacement.

APPENDICES

Sample Forms

- A. Notice – Training Record
- B. Service Disruption Notice
- C. Pamphlet - Understanding Accessible Customer Service



APPENDIX "B"

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE
POLICY

NOTICE OF DISRUPTION OF SERVICE

TYPE OF DISRUPTION:

REASON FOR DISRUPTION:

DURATION OF DISRUPTION:

From:

To:

Time(s):

Time(s):

ALTERNATIVE FACILITIES OR SERVICES:

CONTACT:

Please post in a conspicuous place with appropriate notice as prescribed in the Corporation's Public Notice Policy (examples include: accessible parking, accessible washrooms, computer software programs, elevators, grab bars, lighting, pool lifts, ramps, sidewalks).



MUNICIPALITY OF PORT HOPE DOCUMENTATION STANDARDS

To Provide Access to Municipal Information for Persons with Disabilities (As Part of the Municipal Customer Service Standard Policy)

POLICY STATEMENT

The Documentation Standards policy shall be established to provide for certain requirements in printed materials (i.e. date and time standard; spelling conventions; measurements); and to ensure that documents generated by the Municipality are consistent with the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity.

STANDARDS

The Municipality shall make every effort to:

1. Provide the most effective solution for the end-user to provide Municipal information in a format that reflects his or her needs, on a request basis. The person requesting the information will contact the Department responsible for the information and its publication. Staff will discuss the person's specific needs, and provide the information in a suitable format, as long as it is technically feasible to do so.

Alternate formats could include any of:

- Web access including HTML, Adobe PDF or Plain Text
- Large print, such as 16 point
- Electronic Text (via CD or e-mail) – enabling various computer programs to convert the information into a “readable” format
- Audio Cassette

2. Adopt web accessibility standards outlined by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). W3C develops interoperable technologies (specifications, guidelines, software, and tools) to lead the Web to its full potential. Corporate Services Department has oversight of Corporate Communications and is responsible to monitor and ensure that standards are met.
 - a. The Municipality's web site uses a preset font type and size for optimal layout. In all cases, the font and size is configurable by users to meet their specific needs.
 - b. Standards for creating web pages have been developed and are to be adhered to by all staff who prepare web pages. Accessibility was, and continues to be, a factor in developing these standards. The Municipality's policy should clearly state that accessibility must be a consideration in developing web page standards.
 - c. Permit users to configure their internet browser to further enhance the web content to meet their needs. For example, “Browse Aloud” free download software to permit the user to scan written material with their mouse and the software “reads” the text aloud. Further, information is readily available in HTML format with Adobe PDF as the standard for documents, forms and reports.

3. Provide assistive listening devices which can be used for Municipal meetings or events held in Council Chambers. The Municipality's Procedural By-law should be updated to reflect the availability of assistive listening devices. These devices will be made available for public meetings or events, when a participant requests that one be made available.
4. Allow persons with disabilities to use their own assistive devices to access documents and use Municipal services.
5. Make provisions for persons with disabilities to utilize a guide dog or other service animal in gaining access to locations where documents are made available; and alternatively, permit support persons to access goods / services and / or obtain copy of Municipal documents on behalf of a person with disabilities in the same manner and form requested by the person with disabilities, where feasible. Where a support person is requesting personal information on behalf of a person with disabilities, the support person will be required to sign an acknowledgement of confidentiality.
6. Provide any document produced by the Municipality in an alternative format upon request, unless it is not technically feasible to do so and all documents, in any form, is subject to the provisions of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Alternative formats can include, but are not limited to, Web access, large print versions of the document, or a text-only electronic file which can then be read by a computer. Requests for information in alternate formats are to be forwarded to the Department most responsible for the document. Staff will consult with the requester to determine the most appropriate format, and will make every effort to provide the information in the preferred format as soon as possible.
7. Update the Public Notice Policy to require notice to persons with disabilities by advertisement on the Municipal web site, community pages and posting in municipal facilities, to identify when, where and how access to municipal documents, goods and services may be temporarily interrupted, suspended or discontinued; the reason for the disruption of services, the duration of the disruption of services; and identify alternative facilities or services, if they are known to exist.
8. Include on the Municipal web site "Feedback" option, specific opportunity for feedback on accessibility to Municipal goods and services.
9. Update the Information and Technology Use policy by adding the following paragraph:

The Corporate Services Department is responsible for oversight and the consistent design and format of the Municipality's Internet site. Standards for the design of corporate web pages (page layout, colours, fonts, etc.) have been developed in consideration of accessibility for as many users as possible. Individual Departments must comply with these standards. Corporate Services Staff are responsible for monitoring to ensure that standards are met.

10. Post the Documentation Standards policy to the Municipality's web site.
11. To advise the Accessibility Advisory Committee of the approved Documentation Standards policy, the Information and Technology Use policy amendment, and the Procedural By-law amendment to include the Documentation Standards for Council agendas and assistive hearing devices for public meetings and Council / Committee meetings.
12. To amend the Communication Policy to include the Documentation Standards Policy in the promotion of "*Access to Municipal Information for Persons with Disabilities*" and provide guidelines to staff in responding to requests for information in alternative formats; and to include the requirement that communications generated by the Municipality must be made available upon request and where technically feasible, in a form that takes into the person's disability into account.
13. Ensure existing applications, which do not use these standards, must be converted as new stock is required or maintenance initiated.