



POLICY No. 2013-04 Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy

Originating Department CMS-GM-05-2013

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Corporation of Haldimand County (the County) is committed to developing, implementing, maintaining, and enhancing accessibility in the areas of information and communications, employment, and transportation and Design of Public Spaces for all residents with disabilities, in a manner that:

- respects the individual's dignity and independence;
- provides an equal opportunity to utilize, and benefit from, the County's goods and services; and
- allows persons with disabilities to benefit from the same goods and services at the same time, and location, as all other residents.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the requirements established under the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11 of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, which relates to Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation and Design of Public Spaces.

The accompanying procedures will set out the actions the County will undertake to comply with these requirements.

3. SCOPE

Unless otherwise stated, this policy applies to all employees, including Volunteer Firefighters, Council members and Library Board employees, as well as volunteers. Contractors are expected to have practices that meet or exceed the overall requirements of this policy.

4. LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

This policy is legislated under section three (3) of the Integrated Accessibility Standards (Ontario Regulation 191/11 under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA), which requires broader public sector organizations, including municipalities, to develop and implement policies, procedures, and best practices governing how they will meet the requirements set out within the Regulation.

The following requirements are intended to support the purpose and application of the *Ontario Human Rights Code*. At no time will this policy replace or supersede the rights afforded to persons with disabilities under the Code.

5. DEFINITIONS

- 5.1. **Accessible Formats:** May include, but are not limited to, large print, plain language, recorded audio, or electronic, such as Word, PDF, Rich Text, or HTML, formats, Braille, and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.
- 5.2. **Beach Access Routes:** Routes that are constructed and are intended for pedestrian use by the public and that provide access from off-street parking facilities, recreational trails, exterior paths of travel and amenities to an area of a beach that is intended for recreational use by the public.
- 5.3. **Career Development and Advancement:** Providing additional responsibility within an employee's position, and the movement of an employee from one job to another within the organization that may be higher in pay, provide greater responsibility, or be at a higher level in the organization.
- 5.4. **Communication Supports:** May include, but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language, and other supports that facilitate effective communication.
- 5.5. **Communications:** The interaction between two or more persons or entities, or any combination of them, where information is provided, sent, or received.
- 5.6. **Conversion Ready:** An electronic or digital source document or format that facilitates conversion into an accessible format. For example, a Word or text-based document into large print, plain language, accessible PDF or Braille-ready format.
- 5.7. **Designated Authority:** An individual, or group of individuals, who have the ability to make decisions related to the administration and operation of a particular good, service, or facility.
- 5.8. **Disability:**
 - 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, muteness or speech 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*. – section 10, Ontario Human Rights Code, 1990.

- 5.9. **Information:** Data, facts, and knowledge that exist in any format, including text, audio, digital, or images, that convey meaning.
- 5.10. **Medical Aid:** An assistive device which may include, but is not limited to, respirators and portable oxygen supplies.
- 5.11. **Mobility Aid:** A device used to facilitate the transport, in a seated posture, of a person with a disability. Examples include, but are not limited to, wheelchairs, scooters, and walkers.
- 5.12. **Mobility Assistive Aid:** A cane, walker, or similar aid.
- 5.13. **Performance Management:** Assessing and improving employee performance, productivity, and effectiveness with the goal of facilitating employee success.
- 5.14. **Recreational Trails:** Public pedestrian trails that are intended for recreational and leisure purposes.
- 5.15. **Rest Area:** In respect of recreational trails and exterior paths of travel, a dedicated level area that is intended for public use to allow persons to stop or sit.
- 5.16. **Redeployment:** To assign an employee to another job or department, within the organization, as an alternative to layoff, when a particular job or department has been eliminated within the organization.
- 5.17. **Support Person:** Another person, identified by the service provider, who accompanies the person with a disability in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods, services or facilities.
- 5.18. **On-Demand Taxicab:** A motor vehicle as defined in the *Highway Traffic Act*, other than a car pool vehicle, having a seating capacity of not more than six persons, exclusive of the driver, hired for one specific trip for the transportation exclusively of one person or group of persons, one fare or charge only being collected or made for the trip and that is licensed as a taxicab by a municipality.
- 5.19. **Timely Manner:** An action or task performed and accomplished in an appropriate time frame, as determined by the staff identified in the corresponding procedure. For example, five business days to transfer a written document into an accessible format.

6. ESTABLISHMENT OF POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND BEST PRACTICES

The County shall develop, implement, and maintain policies governing how it achieves, or will achieve, accessibility through meeting the requirements referred to in the Regulation. Relevant policies shall include a statement of corporate commitment for meeting the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner.

6.1. Accessibility Plans

The County shall develop, implement, and document a multi-year accessibility plan outlining a corporate strategy for identifying, removing, and preventing barriers, and meeting the requirements set out in the Regulation.

6.2. Procuring or Acquiring Goods, Services, or Facilities

When procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities, the County shall incorporate accessibility guidelines or standards into relevant policies, procedures, by-laws, and/or specifications.

6.3. Training

The County shall provide training to all paid employees and volunteers on the requirements of the accessibility standards within the Regulation, and the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, as they pertain to persons with disabilities. Furthermore, training shall be appropriate to the duties of paid employees and volunteers. Third party contractors shall continue to provide proof that contractors have had the required training as required by legislation.

7. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS REQUIREMENTS

7.1. Feedback

The County shall ensure its process for receiving and addressing feedback is accessible for persons with disabilities by providing, or arranging for, the provision of any document, related to this service, in an accessible format or communication support upon request.

7.2. Accessible Formats

The County shall, upon request, provide, or arrange for the provision of, any of its documents in an accessible format or communication support in a timely manner. When providing accessible formats, the County shall take into account the person's disability and individual communication needs by consulting the person directly. This does not apply to products and product labels, unconvertible information or communications and information that the County does not control directly or indirectly through a contractual relationship. If it is determined that information or communications are unconvertible, the County shall provide the person requesting the information or communication with:

- a) an explanation as to why the information or communication is unconvertible;
- b) a summary of the unconvertible information or communications

The cost for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports shall be no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

7.3. Emergency Procedure, Plans, or Public Safety Information

The County shall provide its emergency procedures, plans, and public safety information to the public, as soon as practicable upon request, in an accessible format or communication support, and shall do so in a timely manner that takes into account the person's disability and communication needs.

7.4. Accessible Websites and Web Content

The County shall make its website, and web content, conform to the Worldwide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, initially at level A and increasing to level AA. All new websites, and web content, shall conform to level A by January 1, 2014, and level AA by January 1, 2021.

7.5. Public Libraries

The Haldimand County Public Library shall inform the public of the availability of accessible materials, and provide these materials in an accessible format or appropriate communication support upon request.

8. EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS

Note: The requirements found in this section do not apply to volunteers.

8.1. Availability of Accommodations

The County shall provide written notification to the public of the availability of accommodations for persons with disabilities, upon request, throughout the hiring process, including:

- all employment postings;
- upon participation in the interview process;
- when an offer of employment is made.

When arranging for the provision of accommodations, the County shall consult with the applicant to determine his or her specific accessibility needs.

8.2. Informing Employees of Supports

The County shall inform all employees of its policies and procedures used to support employees with disabilities, including, but not limited to, the provision of workplace accommodations. In doing so, the County shall provide this information to new employees during their workplace orientation training.

8.3. Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees

When requested, the County shall consult the employee with a disability when providing, or arranging for the provision of, accessible formats or communication supports for information related to the employee's job performance, and information generally provided to all employees.

8.4. Workplace Emergency Response Information

The County shall provide individualized emergency response information to employees with disabilities.

8.5. Individualized Accommodation Plans

The County shall establish a written policy for the development of individualized accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.

8.6. Return-to-Work Process

The County shall develop, and have in place, a return-to-work process for employees who have been absent due to a disability, and require workplace accommodations in order to return-to-work.

8.7. Performance Management

The County shall take into consideration the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, and all individualized accommodation plans, when developing its performance management documents, tools, and resources.

8.8. Career Development and Advancement

When providing career development and advancement opportunities to its employees, the County shall take into consideration the accessibility needs, as well as any individualized accommodation plans, of its employees with disabilities.

8.9. Redeployment

The County shall take into consideration the accessibility needs, as well as any individualized accommodation plans, when redeploying employees with disabilities.

9. TRANSPORTATION REQUIREMENTS

9.1. Duties of Municipalities: Accessible Taxicabs

The County shall consult with the Haldimand County Accessibility Advisory Committee, the public, and persons with disabilities on the appropriate proportion of on-demand accessible taxicabs.

9.2. Duties of Municipalities: Taxicabs

By licensing taxicabs, the County will ensure that brokers and operators of taxicabs are:

- not charging a higher fee to persons with disabilities than the fee charged to persons without disabilities for the same trip or distance;
- not charging a fare for the storage and transportation of assistive devices or mobility assistive devices.

In addition, the County shall ensure that brokers and operators of taxicabs place vehicle registration and identification information on the rear bumper of the taxicab, and that this information be made available, in an accessible format, to persons with disabilities who are passengers.

10. DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES STANDARDS (ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT)

The County is committed to designing public spaces that are free from barriers and accessible to all persons we serve. The County will comply with the Design of Public Spaces Standards with respect to public spaces that are newly constructed or redeveloped, including:

- Recreational trails and beach access routes
- Outdoor public use eating areas
- Outdoor play spaces
- Exterior paths of travel
- Accessible parking
- Obtaining services

11. REFERENCES

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11 of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)
- Ontario Human Rights Code
- The Highway Traffic Act
- Worldwide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines
- Haldimand County Annual Accessibility Plan

REVISION HISTORY					
REPORT	CIC		COUNCIL		DETAILS
	Date	Rec#	Date	Res#	
	Date	Rec#	Date	Res#	
	Date	Rec#	Date	Res#	
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