
SUBJECT: ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

1.0 PURPOSE

Through the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), Ontario is working to make the province fully accessible to people with disabilities by 2025. Under the Act, standards have been developed that businesses and non-profits and public sector organizations must follow to identify, remove and prevent barriers so that people with disabilities have more opportunities to participate in everyday life.

This policy describes how the Municipality will meet its obligations under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, which includes requirements for Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation, Design of Public Spaces and Customer Service.

2.0 LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), the Integrated Accessibility Standards (Ontario Regulation 191/11) came into force on July 1, 2011, but since has been amended.

This policy and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation are not replacements or substitutions for the requirements established under the Ontario Human Rights Code or other laws in respect to accommodation of people with disabilities.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

“**Access Path**” – in reference to a Kiosk, includes reach ranges for people using mobility aids, the proximity of the Kiosk to other objects, etc.

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“Accessible Formats” – shall mean formats that are an alternative to standard print and are accessible to people with disabilities. Accessible formats may include but are not limited to, large print, audio and electronic formats, braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

“Amenities” – shall mean items that provide conveniences or services for use by the public, examples of which include drinking fountains, benches and garbage receptacles.

“Assistive Devices” – shall mean an auxiliary aid such as communication aids, cognition aids, Mobility Aids, Mobility Assistive Devices and medical aids.

“Beach Access Routes” – shall mean 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.

“Career Development” – shall include providing additional responsibilities within an employee’s current position and the movement of an employee from one job to another in the Municipality that may be higher in pay, provide greater responsibility or be at a higher level in the Municipality or any combination of them and, for both additional responsibilities and employee movement, is usually based on merit or seniority, or a combination of them.

“Communication Supports” – shall mean supports that individuals with disabilities may need to access information. 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 communications.

“Customer” – shall mean any person who receives or seeks to receive goods, services or facilities directly or indirectly from the Municipality.

“Exterior Paths of Travel” – shall mean paths of travel that are outdoor sidewalks or walkways designed and constructed for pedestrian travel and are intended to serve a functional purpose and not to provide a recreational experience but excludes paths of travel regulated under the Ontario Regulation 350/06 (Building Code).

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

“Mobility Aid” - shall mean a device used to facilitate the transport, in a seated posture of a person with a disability.

“Mobility Assistive Device” – shall mean a cane, walker or similar aid.

“Municipality” – shall mean the Corporation of Tay Valley Township.

“Off-Street Parking Facilities” – shall include open area parking lots and structures intended for the temporary parking of vehicles by the public, whether or not the payment of a fee is charged and includes visitor parking spaces in parking facilities.

“On-Street Parking” – shall include parking spaces located on highways, as defined in subsection 1 (1) of the *Highway Traffic Act*, that provide direct access to shops, offices and other facilities whether or not the payment of a fee is charged.

“Outdoor Play Spaces” – shall mean an area that includes play equipment, such as swings, or features such as logs, rocks, sand or water, where the equipment or features are designed and placed to provide play opportunities and experiences for children and caregivers.

“Outdoor Use Public Eating Areas” – shall mean areas that consist of tables that are found in public areas, such as in public parks, and are specifically intended for use by the public as a place to consume food.

“Performance Management” – shall mean activities related to assessing and improving employee performance, productivity and effectiveness, with the goal of facilitating employee success.

“Recreational Trails” – shall mean public pedestrian trails that are intended for recreational and leisure purposes.

“Redeployment” – shall mean the reassignment of employees to other departments or jobs with the Municipality as an alternative to layoff, when a particular job or department has been eliminated by the organization.

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“Service Animal” – shall mean a service animal and a guide dog as defined in Ontario Regulation 191/11, as amended.

“Support Person” – shall mean any support person as defined in Ontario Regulation 191/11, as amended.

“Structural Features” – in reference to a Kiosk, includes the height and stability of the Kiosk, headset jacks with volume control, and specialized keypads or keyboards, etc.

“Technical Features” – in reference to a Kiosk, includes the colour contrast on the display screen and the options to increase font size, as well as allowing for extra time to complete tasks. Other technical features include audio instructions, voice activating equipment and visual and non-visual modes of operation, etc.

4.0 STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

The Municipality is committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and equal opportunity. We are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner, and shall do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting the accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and its Regulations.

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5.0 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Accessibility Plans

- The Municipality’s multi-year accessibility plan shall outline the Municipality’s strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.
- The plan shall include procedures for preventative and emergency maintenance of the accessible elements in public spaces.
- The plan shall include procedures for dealing with temporary disruptions when accessible elements in public spaces are not in working order.
- The plan shall be posted on the Municipality’s website, and shall be provided in an accessible format upon request.
- The plan shall be reviewed and updated at least once every five years.
- The plan shall be established, reviewed and updated in consultation with persons with disabilities.
- An annual status report on the progress of measures taken to implement the organization’s strategy shall be posted on the website, and provided in an accessible format upon request.

Procuring or Acquiring Goods, Services or Facilities

- The Municipality shall incorporate accessibility design, criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so.
- Where it is not practicable to incorporate accessibility design, criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, upon request, an explanation shall be provided.

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- The Municipality shall require a declaration from all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the Municipality that they are compliant with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and its Regulations.

Self-Service Kiosks

- The Municipality shall incorporate accessibility features when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service Kiosks.
- The Municipality may consider technical features, structural features, and the access path to the Kiosk.

Training

- The Municipality shall ensure that training is provided on the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act , the accessibility standards referred to within the Integrated Accessibility Standards (Ontario Regulation 191/11), the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities and on Municipal policies and procedures related to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and its Regulations to:
 - all employees and volunteers;
 - all persons who participate in developing the Municipality’s policies; and
 - all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the Municipality.
- The training provided shall be appropriate to the duties of the employees, volunteers and other persons.
- The training shall be provided as soon as practicable.
- Where there are changes to the Accessibility Policy, or any other Municipal policy, practice or procedure relating to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and its Regulations, training shall be provided with regard to those changes.
- The Municipality shall keep a record of the dates of when training is provided and the number of individuals to whom it was provided.

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6.0 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS STANDARDS

Feedback

- The Municipality shall ensure that feedback processes are accessible to persons with disabilities and shall provide or arrange for the provision of Accessible Formats and Communication Supports, upon request.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

- The Municipality shall, upon request, provide or arrange for the provision of Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for persons with disabilities.
- Provision of Accessible Formats and Communication Supports shall be provided:
 - in a timely manner that takes into account the person’s accessibility needs due to disability;
 - at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons; and
 - in consultation with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an Accessible Format or Communication Support.
- The Municipality shall notify the public about the availability of Accessible Formats and Communication Supports.
- Where the Municipality is not able to convert the information or communication into an Accessible Format, an explanation shall be provided, along with a summary of the content.

Emergency Procedure, Plans or Public Safety Information

- Where the Municipality prepares emergency procedures, plans or public safety information and makes the information available to the public, the information shall be provided in an Accessible Format or with appropriate Communication Supports, as soon as practicable, upon request.

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Accessible Websites and Web Content

- The Municipality shall make its internet websites and web content conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, initially at Level A and increasing to Level AA, in accordance with the schedule set out in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.

7.0 EMPLOYMENT STANDARD

Recruitment

- The Municipality shall notify its employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment processes.
- During the recruitment process, applicants who are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process shall be notified that accommodations are available upon request in relation to the materials or processes used.
- If a selected applicant requests an accommodation, the Municipality shall consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for the provision of a suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant’s accessibility needs due to a disability.
- When making an offer of employment, the Municipality shall notify the successful applicant of its policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

Informing Employees of Supports

- The Municipality shall inform its employees of its policies used to support its employees with disabilities, including, but not limited to, policies on job accommodation that take into account an employee’s accessibility needs due to a disability.
- New employees shall be informed as soon as practicable after they begin their employment.

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- Where there are changes to existing policies on the provision of job accommodations, all employees shall be provided updated information.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees

- Where an employee with a disability requests it, the Municipality shall consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for:
 - information that is needed in order for the employee to perform the employee's job; and
 - information that is generally available to employees in the workplace.
- The Municipality shall consult with the employee making the request in determining the suitability of an Accessible Format or Communication Support.

Workplace Emergency Response Information

- The Municipality shall provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability:
 - if the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary; and
 - the Municipality is aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability.
- If an employee who receives individualized workplace emergency response information requires assistance and with the employee's consent, the Municipality shall provide the workplace emergency response information to the person designated by the Municipality to provide assistance to the employee.
- Individualized information shall be provided as soon as practicable after the Municipality becomes aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability.

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- The Municipality shall review the individualized workplace emergency response information:
 - when the employee moves to a different location;
 - when the employee’s overall accommodation needs or plans are reviewed; and
 - when the Municipality reviews its general emergency response policies.

Documented Individual Accommodation Plans

- The Municipality shall have a written process for the development of documented Individual Accommodation Plans for employees with disabilities.

Return to Work Process

- The Municipality shall have a documented return to work process for its employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work.

Performance Management

- The Municipality shall take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, when using its performance management process.

Career Development and Advancement

- The Municipality shall take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, when providing career development and advancement to its employees with disabilities.

Redeployment

- The Municipality shall take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, when redeploying employees with disabilities.

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8.0 DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES STANDARD

Recreational Trails and Beach Access Routes

- The Municipality shall consult with the public and persons with disabilities on the following before constructing new or redeveloping existing recreational trails:
 - the slope of the trail;
 - the need for, and location of, ramps on the trail;
 - the need for, location and design of,
 - rest areas,
 - passing areas,
 - viewing areas,
 - Amenities on the trail, and
 - any other pertinent feature.
- The Municipality shall ensure that any Recreational Trails or Beach Access Routes that the Municipality constructs or redevelops, and that the Municipality intends to maintain, meet the technical requirements set out in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, as amended.

Outdoor Public Use Eating Areas

- The Municipality shall ensure that where the Municipality constructs or redevelops Outdoor Public Use Eating Areas that the Municipality intends to maintain, the Outdoor Public Use Eating Areas shall meet the requirements set out in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, as amended.

Outdoor Play Spaces

- The Municipality shall consult with the public and persons with disabilities on the needs of children and caregivers with various disabilities before constructing new or redeveloping existing Outdoor Play Spaces.
- Where the Municipality constructs new or redevelops existing Outdoor Play Spaces that the Municipality intends to maintain, the Municipality shall meet the design requirements set out in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, as amended.

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Exterior Paths of Travel

- The Municipality shall ensure that any Exterior Paths of Travel that the Municipality constructs or redevelops, and that the Municipality intends to maintain, meet the requirements set out in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, as amended.

Accessible Parking

- The Municipality shall consult with the public and persons with disabilities on the need, location and design of accessible On-Street Parking spaces when constructing or redeveloping existing On-Street Parking spaces.
- The Municipality shall ensure that when constructing new or redeveloping Off-Street Parking Facilities that the Municipality intends to maintain, the Off-Street Parking Facilities meet the requirements set out in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, as amended.

Obtaining Services

- For all newly constructed service counters and fixed queuing guides and all newly constructed or redeveloped waiting areas the Municipality shall meet the requirements set out in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, as amended.

9.0 TRANSPORTATION STANDARD

Not applicable. The Municipality does not provide transportation services.

10.0 CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD

Policies, Practices and Procedures

- The Municipality shall use reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following principles:
 - Goods, services or facilities shall be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities;
 - The provision of goods, services or facilities to persons with disabilities shall be integrated with the provision of goods, services or facilities to others, unless an alternative measure is necessary, whether temporary or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods, services or facilities;
 - Persons with disabilities shall be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the goods, services or facilities;
 - The Municipality shall communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability;
- A copy of any documents describing the policies established under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation shall be provided to any person, upon request.
- The Municipality shall notify any persons to whom it provides goods, services or facilities that the documents required by the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation are available on request.

Notice of Temporary Disruptions

- The Municipality shall provide notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the goods, services or facilities normally used by people with disabilities.



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Use of Assistive Devices, Support Persons and Service Animals

- The use of Assistive Devices or other measurers, if any, by persons with disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from the goods, services or facilities shall be permitted.
- Support Persons and/or Support Animals may accompany a person with disabilities in the access of goods, services or facilities.
- If a Service Animal is excluded by law from the premises, the Municipality shall ensure that other measures are available to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Municipality's goods, services or facilities.
- If a person with a disability is accompanied by a Support Person, the Municipality shall ensure that both persons are permitted to enter the premises together and that the person with a disability is not prevented from having access to the Support Person while on the premises.
- The Municipality may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a Support Person when on the premises, but only if, after consulting with the person with a disability and considering the available evidence, the Municipality determines that:
 - a Support Person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises; and
 - there is no other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability and the health or safety of others on the premises
- Where there is an amount payable for a person's admission to the premises owned or operated by the Municipality or in connection with a person's presence on the premises, advanced notice about the amount payable, if any, in respect of the Support Person shall be provided.
- If the Municipality requires a person with a disability to be accompanied by a Support Person when on the premises, the Municipality shall waive payment of the amount, if any, payable in respect of the Support Person's admission to the premises or in connection with the Support Person's presence on the premises.

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Customer Service Training

- The Municipality shall ensure that training is provided about the provision of the Municipality's goods, services or facilities, as the case may be, to persons with disabilities to:
 - all employees and volunteers;
 - all persons who participate in developing the Municipality's policies; and
 - all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the Municipality.
- Training shall include the following:
 - how to provide goods, services and facilities in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities;
 - how to interact and communicate with persons in a manner that takes into account their disabilities;
 - how to interact with persons with disabilities who use an Assistive Device or require the assistance of a Service Animal or the assistance of a Support Person to access goods, services and facilities;
 - how to use equipment or Assistive Devices available on Municipal premises or otherwise provided by the Municipality that may help with the provision of goods, services or facilities to persons with disabilities;
 - what to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the Municipality's goods, services or facilities;
 - the process for people to provide feedback to the Municipality about its provision of goods, services and facilities to persons with disabilities, and how the Municipality responds to the feedback and takes action on any complaint.

Customer Service Feedback Process

- Feedback from our customers gives Municipal employees and Council opportunities to learn and improve. The Municipality shall establish a procedure for receiving and responding to feedback about the manner in which it provides goods, services and facilities to persons with disabilities and shall make information about the procedure readily available to the public.

11.0 POLICY REVIEW

This Policy shall be reviewed at least once per term of Council.

12.0 AMENDMENTS TO THIS OR OTHER POLICIES

12.1 The Municipality is committed to developing policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. All changes to this policy will consider the impact on people with disabilities.

12.2 Any Municipal policy that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities shall be modified or rescinded.

13.0 REFERENCES

Forms

Notice of Temporary Service Disruption
Customer Service Feedback Form

Policies and Procedures/Documents

Procurement Policy
Individual Accommodation Plan Policy
Return to Work Policy
Customer Service Guidebook

Other Resources

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
Integrated Accessibility Standards – Ontario Regulation 191/11
Ontario Human Rights Code
Building Code - Ontario Regulation 350/06