



7490 Sideroad 7 W, PO Box 125,
Kenilworth, ON N0G 2E0
www.wellington-north.com

519.848.3620
1.866.848.3620 FAX 519.848.3228

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ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS

DEPARTMENT	CLERK	POLICY NUMBER	06-17
EFFECTIVE DATE	November 6, 2017	LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY	Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Ontario Human Rights Code
APPROVED BY:	RESOLUTION: 2017-415		

POLICY STATEMENT

The Corporation of the Township of Wellington North (the Township) is committed to eliminating barriers and improving accessibility for persons with disabilities in a manner that respects dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

The Township recognizes the diverse needs of all our residents and customers and will respond by striving to provide goods, services, programs and facilities that are accessible to all. The Township is committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner, and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all persons who deal with members of the public on behalf of the Township, whether the person does so as an employee, member of Council, or student placement.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

POLICY STATEMENT	1
SCOPE	1
DEFINITIONS	2
GENERAL STANDARDS	2
CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD	4
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS STANDARDS	5
EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS	6
DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES STANDARDS (ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT) ...	7

DEFINITIONS

Alternate Formats: may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, Braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

Assistive Device: are used to replace, compensate or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. They include a broad range of items including mobility such as; prosthetics, wheelchairs, canes, walkers, medical such as; ventilators, respiratory equipment and sensory such as; communication aids, reading and writing devices and hearing aids.

Disability: as defined in Section 10 of the Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990

Communication Supports: may include, but not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communications.

Service Animals: as defined by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability

- a) if it is readily apparent as a result of visual indicators such as the vest or harness worn by the animal that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability;
OR
- b) if the person provides documentation from one of the following regulated health professionals confirming the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability:
 - i. A member of the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario
 - ii. A member of the College of Chiropractors of Ontario
 - iii. A member of the College of Nurses of Ontario
 - iv. A member of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario
 - v. A member of the College of Optometrists of Ontario
 - vi. A member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
 - vii. A member of the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario
 - viii. A member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario
 - ix. A member of the College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario

Support Person: as defined by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 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 communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods, services or facilities.

Temporary Disruption: means a short term planned or unplanned disruption to facilities or services that people with disabilities usually use to get goods and services.

GENERAL STANDARDS

As a designated public sector organization under the AODA the Township is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of people with disabilities.

Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Township participates in the County of Wellington's Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC). The AAC advises Council about the requirements and implementation of the AODA accessibility standards, preparation of accessibility reports, including access for persons with disabilities to a building or premises, and other matters for which Council may seek advice.

Accessibility Plan

The Township has established, implemented and maintained a multi-year accessibility plan in accordance with the AODA. The multi-year accessibility plan outlines the Township's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet the requirements of the standards developed under the AODA. The multi-year accessibility plan is reviewed and updated at least once every five years in consultation with persons with disabilities and the County AAC. The plan is posted on the Township's website and is made available in an alternate format as requested.

Procuring or Acquiring Goods, Services or Facilities

Township staff take into account the accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities, including self-service kiosks.

When not practicable to incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, staff shall provide an explanation, upon request.

Training

The Township is committed to ensuring training is provided on the requirements of Ontario's accessibility laws and aspects of the Ontario Human Rights Code that relate to persons with disabilities. The Township keeps records of the training, including the date on which training is provided and the names of individuals trained.

Accessibility Training will include the following elements:

- a) How to provide goods, services or facilities in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities;
- b) How to interact and communicate with persons in a manner that takes into account their disabilities;
- c) The process for people to provide feedback to the Township about its provision of goods, services or facilities to persons with disabilities;
- d) How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person to access goods, services or facilities;
- e) A review of the purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005;
- f) What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing the Township's goods, services or facilities.
- g) Aspects of the Ontario Human Rights Code that relate to persons with disabilities.

Feedback Process

The process for receiving and responding to feedback on the manner in which the Township provides goods, services, and facilities to persons with disabilities is set out in this document. The Township will ensure that the feedback process is accessible to persons with disabilities by providing or arranging for the provision of alternate formats and communication supports, upon request.

Members of the public may provide feedback through the Customer Feedback Form (Appendix A) posted on the Township's website, through the General Enquiries email address, by telephone, and/or in person.

All feedback received from the public regarding the accessibility of services will be provided to all relevant Department Heads who will take appropriate action when possible.

The Township will provide, upon request, accessible formats and communication supports when seeking public input, feedback, and advice, when practicable.

Should Township staff be unable to provide a requested accessible format or communication support, they will work with the citizen to determine alternate means for participation in citizen feedback.

CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD

Assistive Devices

A person with a disability may provide their own assistive device for the purpose of obtaining, using and benefiting from the Township's goods, services or facilities. Exceptions may occur in situations where the Township determines the assistive device may pose a risk to the health and safety of a person with a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises. In these situations, and others, the Township may offer a person with a disability other reasonable measures of assistance in obtaining, using and benefiting from the Township's goods, services or facilities, where the Township has such other measures available.

It is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure his/her assistive device is operated in a safe and controlled manner at all times.

Notice of Temporary Disruptions

Temporary disruptions in Township services or facilities may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the Township's control or knowledge.

The Township will make reasonable efforts to provide notice of the disruption to the public, including information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, which may be available.

If the disruption is anticipated, the Township will provide a reasonable amount of advance notice of the disruption by any method that may be reasonable under the circumstances, as soon as possible, including but not limited to: website, twitter, facebook, local radio station or newspapers.

Support Persons

Persons with disabilities may enter premises owned or operated by the Township with a support person and have access to the support person while on the premises.

The Township may require a person with a disability be accompanied by a support person while on Township premises in situations where it is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises.

A support person, when assisting a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Township's goods, services or facilities, will be permitted to attend at no charge where an admission fee is applicable.

Service Animals

Persons with a disability may enter premises owned and operated by the Township accompanied by a service animal and keep the animal with them if the public has access to such premises and the animal is not otherwise excluded by law. If the service animal is excluded by law from the premises, the Township will make every reasonable effort to provide other means of assistance in order for the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Township's goods, services or facilities.

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, the Township may ask the person with a disability for a letter from a qualified regulated health professional which consists of doctors, nurses, psychologists, audiologists, chiropractors and optometrists, or a certificate of training or a valid identification card.

It is the responsibility of the person with the disability to be in care and control of the service animal, at all times.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS STANDARDS

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

Upon request, the Township will provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats or communication supports for persons with disabilities.

These accessible formats and communication supports will be provided in a timely manner and in a way that takes into account the individual needs of a person with a disability. The Township will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication support. Such accessible documents and communication supports will be provided at a cost no greater than the regular costs charged to others.

Emergency Procedures, Plans or Public Safety Information

Upon request, the Township will provide emergency procedures, plans and public safety information in an accessible format or with communication support, as soon as practicable.

Websites and Web Content

The Township will ensure the website and web content conforms to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). Except where meeting this requirement is not practicable, this conformity applies to websites, web content and web-based applications that are controlled directly or through a contractual relationship that allows for the modification of the product and to web content.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Recruitment, Assessment and Selection

The Township is committed to equal consideration of candidates during the recruitment, assessment and selection process. Job applicants, including the public and current Township employees, will be notified of the availability of accommodations for persons with disabilities in its application process.

Individuals selected to participate in assessment or selection processes, such as an interview or testing, will be notified of the availability of accommodations, upon request, during such an assessment or selection process. In cases where accommodations due to disability are requested, the Township will consult with the individual and provide or arrange for suitable accommodations in a manner that takes into account the applicant's disability needs. Accommodations will be provided with respect to the materials or processes used in recruitment. When making offers of employment, the Township will notify the successful applicant of its policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

Informing Employees of Supports

The Township will inform employees of its policies, and any updates to such policies, used to support employees with disabilities and will provide this information to new employees as soon as practicable after commencing employment. This includes policies on providing job accommodations that take into account the employee's accessibility needs due to disability.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees

The Township, upon request by an employee with a disability, consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for information that is required in order to perform the job, as well as information that is generally available to employees in the workplace. The Township shall consult with the employee making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

Workplace Emergency Response Information

The Township is committed to ensuring the safety of its employees. Individualized workplace emergency response information shall be provided to employees who have a disability, if the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary and the employer is aware of the employee's need. This information shall be provided as soon as practicable after the Township becomes aware of the need for accommodation.

When an employee requires assistance in an emergency, the Township shall, with the employee's consent, provide such information to the person designated by the Township to provide assistance.

The Township shall review the individualized workplace emergency response information when the employee moves to a different location in the organization, when the employee's overall accommodation needs and plans are reviewed, and when the Township reviews the general

emergency policies.

Documented Individual Accommodation Plans

The Township shall develop a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities. The individual accommodation plan shall include:

- If requested, any information regarding accessible formats and communication supports provided to the employee;
- If required, individualized workplace emergency response information; and
- Any other accommodations that are to be provided

Return to Work Process

The Township shall maintain its documented return to work process for employees with a disability and who require disability-related accommodation in order to return to work.

The return to work process shall outline the steps the Township will take to facilitate the return to work and will include documented individual accommodation plans as part of the process.

The return to work process does not replace or override any other return to work process created by or under any other statute (i.e. the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997).

Performance Management, Career Development and Advance and Redeployment

The Township shall take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities and any individual accommodation plans when providing any performance management, career development and advancement. When redeploying employees (reassigning employees to other departments or jobs within the Township as an alternative to layoff when a particular job or department has been eliminated), the Township shall also take into account the employees accessibility needs due to disability and any individual accommodation plan.

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

The Township shall comply with the AODA Design of Public Spaces Standards (Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment) when undertaking new 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
- Maintenance of accessible elements



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Customer Feedback Form

The Township of Wellington North is committed to providing you, our customer, with excellent service and to show how much we value, and appreciate you, by meeting and exceeding your expectations. Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions about the service you received today. If you require an alternative format in order to provide your feedback, please let us know.

Please take a few moments to share your experience with us today.

1. Date of your visit: _____
2. Approximate time of your visit: _____
3. Department/Facility visited: _____
4. Were you satisfied with our customer service today? Yes No

If no, please explain:

5. Did you have any problem(s) with accessing our services, goods or facilities? Yes No

If Yes, please explain:

6. What, in your opinion, can we do to resolve this problem(s)?

7. Is this problem a common occurrence, and if so, in your opinion, what can we do to remedy the problem(s)?

8. May we contact you for additional information? Yes No

If yes, please provide your phone number and/or email:

Phone: _____ Email: _____

In order for us to resolve this problem effectively and to help us better serve you and others in the future, please complete the following information:

Do you currently have a disability? Yes No If yes, please explain:

I agree to allow the Township of Wellington North to use the information collected on this form:

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please send completed form to Township of Wellington North, Box 125, 7490 Sideroad 7 W, Kenilworth, ON N0G 2E0 or email: kwallace@wellington-north.com

Personal information on this form is being collected under the authority of Ontario Regulation 191/11 Integrated Accessibility Standards under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and will be used for the purpose of collecting feedback, and used in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Questions about this collection should be directed to the Clerk, Township of Wellington North, Box 125, 7490 Sideroad 7 W, Kenilworth, ON N0G 2E0 or email: kwallace@wellington-north.com