

## **Appendix B – Accessibility Policy (2003)**

# **Accessibility Policy**

## **Policy**

Oakville Public Library (hereinafter referred to as the Library) is committed to improving accessibility by eliminating barriers for people with disabilities in a manner that respects dignity and independence.

This policy is intended to address the requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* and related Standards and Regulations introduced under the legislation, ensuring that persons with disabilities are provided equal opportunities and standards of service. It includes the accessibility standards developed by the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario Standards Development Committees as listed below:

- Accessible Customer Service
- Accessible Information and Communications
- Accessible Built Environment
- Employment Accessibility
- Accessible Transportation

## **Scope**

This policy applies to Library Board Members, employees, and volunteers, as well as agents or contractors representing or performing any function on behalf of the Library.

## **Procedure**

This procedure addresses the accessibility requirements of *Ontario Regulation 429/07 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service* under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

Reasonable efforts shall be made to provide all persons with the equal opportunity to obtain, use and benefit from Library goods and services. To ensure that goods and services are provided in a manner and format that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities, the Library shall:

1. Incorporate best practices in accessibility as part of standard business operations whenever possible
2. Welcome the use of assistive devices, service animals and support persons unless prohibited by law or for reasons of health and safety
3. Reinforce accessibility requirements and procedures through the training of personnel
4. Provide notice of service disruption when required
5. Provide access to a feedback process

## **Assistive Devices**

The Library welcomes the use of assistive devices by individuals unless otherwise prohibited due to health, safety or privacy issues. Where possible, the Library shall make assistive devices available in the form of lifts, audio enhancements and visual enhancements.

## **Service Animals**

The Library welcomes service animals in areas/premises that are open to the public unless otherwise prohibited by law. In the event that a service animal is excluded from the premises by law, the Library shall endeavour to make other provisions available in order to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use, or benefit from the Library's goods and services.

## **Support Persons**

The Library welcomes support people who accompany an individual with a disability when accessing Library goods and services. The Library shall ensure that both persons are permitted to enter the premises together and the person with a disability is not prevented from having access to the support person while on the premises (O. Reg. 429/07, s 4 (4)).

## **Training**

The Library shall provide accessibility training to all staff, volunteers, agents/contractors and any other individuals who interact with the public or other third parties on behalf of the Library. Training shall be commensurate with the level of public contact and shall include:

1. The purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07
2. How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
3. How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person

4. How to use assistive devices, if applicable, which may be available at Library facilities
5. How to help if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing the Library's goods and services.

Training shall be provided in a timely manner upon hiring and on an ongoing basis to meet staff needs and to ensure compliance with applicable legislation.

The Library shall keep records of the training provided in accordance with Ontario Regulation 429/07.

### **Service Disruption Notification**

In the event of a planned service disruption at any Library facility, or of any Library service or system, notice shall be provided on the Library website and posted at the affected location.

Where a person with a disability uses such a facility, service or system, and has registered with the Library, the person with a disability shall receive notice (in the manner determined at the time of registration) of the service disruption.

Notice may be provided by one of the following ways:

- by telephone, or
- by email, or
- by mail

The notice shall include the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities, services or systems that may be

available.

In the event of an unexpected disruption, notice shall be posted in a conspicuous place at the facility or service location, or posted on the Library website and/or by another method as is reasonable under the circumstances.

## **Feedback Process**

The Library shall maintain a feedback process to enable members of the public to comment on the provision of goods and services to people with disabilities. The Library shall respond to feedback within a reasonable time frame.

## **References and Related Documents**

- Accessibility for Ontarians Disabilities Act, 2005
- Accessible Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07
- Town of Oakville Accessibility Policy
- Town of Oakville Accessible Customer Service Procedure

## **Definitions**

**Assistive Device** - is a technical aid, communication device, or medical aid modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. An assistive device may be provided by the individual or may be provided by the Library in the form of lifts, ramps, audio and visual enhancements, etc.

**Barrier** - as defined by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including

a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

**Disability** - as defined by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the Ontario Human Rights Code, is:

1. 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,
2. a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
3. a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
4. a mental disorder, or
5. an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

**Service Animal** - As reflected in Ontario Regulation 429/07 - an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

**Support Person** - As reflected in Ontario Regulation 429/07 - a support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

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Next Review Date: 2013