

Appendix D – Town of Oakville Procedures

Accessible Customer Service Procedure

Purpose statement

This procedure addresses the Accessible Customer Service Standards requirements of Ontario Regulation 191/11 for the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*.

Scope

This procedure applies to municipal goods, services and facilities provided by Town Council and town employees as well as by volunteers, agents, contractors (personnel) or any individual representing or performing any function on behalf of the town.

The requirements set out in this procedure are being implemented by the town in accordance with the standards and timelines established in the AODA.

Procedures

Assistive devices

Individuals may use their assistive devices as required to access town goods, services and facilities unless otherwise prohibited due to health and safety or privacy issues. In such cases, other measures will be used to ensure the individual can access town goods, services or facilities.

Where assistive devices are available in town facilities, staff will be trained on how to use them.

Service animals

Guide dogs and other service animals may be used in all town areas/premises that are open to the public unless otherwise prohibited by law.

If a service animal is excluded from the premises by law, town staff will inform the individual of the reasons why and discuss alternative methods for the person to access town goods, services and facilities. When town employees cannot easily identify that an animal is a service animal, they may ask the person to provide documentation (template, letter or form) from a regulated health professional confirming the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

Support persons

People with disabilities can access their support person when using goods, services and facilities provided by the town.

Where admission fees for the support person are applicable, advance notice of the fee will be made available.

The town may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person to protect the health and safety of that person or of others on the premises. This will only occur after consultation with the person with a disability and when it is the only way to allow the person with a disability to access the town's goods, services and facilities. If the town determines that a support person is required, the town will waive any fee or fare for the support person.

Training

Training will be provided to all town employees, volunteers, anyone who provides goods, services or facilities on behalf of the town and anyone involved in developing town policies and procedures. Training will be appropriate to the duties of employees, volunteers and other persons and include:

- The purpose of the AODA and the requirements of the Customer Service Standards
- The town's procedure on providing accessible customer service
- The Ontario Human Rights Code, where it relates to people with disabilities
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- How to interact with people who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
- How to use town equipment or assistive devices available to help provide goods, services or facilities to people with disabilities (e.g. screen readers, wheelchairs, pool lifts, sound amplifiers etc.)
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing town goods, services and facilities.

The town shall keep records of training in accordance with *Ontario Regulation 191/11*.

Service disruption notification

In the event of a service disruption at any town facility, service, program or system, notice shall be provided on the town website and posted at the location, where possible. There is a designated web page and RSS feed on the town's website for service disruptions and the town uses social media to notify its followers about service disruptions.

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

Feedback process

The town will maintain a process for receiving and responding to feedback on how the town provides goods, services and facilities to people with disabilities. The town will ensure the process is accessible by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports, upon request.

Receipt of feedback shall be acknowledged by the end of the next business day and answered within 15 business days. If the town requires additional time, the estimated date for response will be provided to the submitter.

Notice of availability of documents

The town will notify the public that documents related to accessible customer service are available in an accessible format or with communication support, upon request. Notice will be posted on the town's website.

Definitions

Assistive Device - is a piece of equipment or aid that a person with a disability uses to help with daily living (e.g. wheelchair, screen reader, hearing aid, cane or walker, oxygen tank).

Barrier - 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 is:

- 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*.

Service Animal – an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if,

- the animal can be readily identified as one that is being used by the person for reasons relating to the person's disability, as a result of visual indicators such as the vest or harness worn by the animal or
- the person provides documentation from one of the following regulated health professionals confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability:
 - College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario
 - College of Chiropractors of Ontario
 - College of Nurses of Ontario
 - College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario
 - College of Optometrists of Ontario

- College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
- College of Physiotherapists of Ontario
- College of Psychologists of Ontario
- College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario

In addition to a registered health professional, the town will also accept an identification card from the Attorney General or an officer of their Ministry, which confirms the identity of a blind person and their guide dog. R.S.O. 1990, c. B.7, s. 4 (2).

Support Person – a support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods, services or facilities.

Responsibilities

Strategy, Policy and Communications is responsible for:

- Administration of and ensuring compliance with this procedure

Human Resources is responsible for:

- Providing accessibility training in accordance with the AODA and relevant policies and procedures

All departments are responsible for:

- Ensuring the Accessible Customer Service Standard procedure is followed
- Providing or arranging for accessible documents and communication supports upon request
- Tracking accessibility requests
- Providing information about service disruptions that will be posted on the town's website and social media tools as required
- Budgeting for accessibility requirements
- Communicating and coordinating, when applicable, with a person with a disability regarding the use of a support person or service animal

User (person with a disability) is responsible for:

- Supervising and keeping service animals in control when used to access the town's goods, services and facilities
- Providing documentation confirming the service animal is required for reasons related to the individual's disability, if requested.

Accessible Employment Procedure

Purpose statement

This procedure addresses the Accessible Employment Standards requirements of Ontario Regulation 191/11 for the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*.

Scope

This procedure applies to employees or potential employees of the town. It does not apply to agents or contractors who act on behalf of, or represent the town, volunteers or any unpaid individuals.

The requirements set out in this procedure are being implemented by the town in accordance with the standards and timelines established in the AODA.

Procedures

Recruitment

The town shall:

- Notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodations for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment process
- Notify job applicants who are selected for an interview and/or testing that accommodations are available upon request in relation to the materials or processes to be used
- Consult with any applicant who requests an accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's disability
- Notify successful applicants about the town's policies for accommodating employees with disabilities as part of their offer of employment

Employee supports, accessible formats and communication supports for employees

The town will ensure that all employees are informed of the policies used to support employees with disabilities. This information will be provided to new employees as part of the orientation program or as soon as practicable. All employees will be notified of any changes to existing policies relating to job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability.

Upon request by an employee, the town will consult with the employee to provide or arrange for accessible formats and communication supports for:

- a. information that is needed to perform the employee's job

- b. information that is generally available to employees in the workplace.

Workplace emergency response information

The town will provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees with disabilities if the disability is such that an individual plan is necessary and the town is aware of the need for accommodation. The town will work with the employee as necessary to ensure an individualized plan is in place as soon as practicable. Should the employee move to a new position and/or location within the town, the information shall be reviewed, in accordance with the accommodation process and as part of the general emergency response plan review.

With the employee's consent, this information will be provided to any person designated by the town to provide assistance.

Individual accommodation plans

The town has established an Accommodation Procedure for developing and maintaining individual accommodation plans. This written process outlines:

- How an employee can participate in the development of their plan
- How employees are assessed on an individual basis
- When the town can request an evaluation by an outside medical or other expert, at the town's expense, to determine if and how accommodation can be achieved
- How affiliated (unionized) employees can request the participation of a representative from their bargaining agent (union), in the development of their plan
- How non-affiliated (non-unionized) employees can request the participation of a representative from their workplace, in the development of their plan
- The steps taken to ensure privacy of the employee's personal information, when the plan is reviewed and how this will be done
- If an accommodation is denied, how the reasons for denial will be communicated to the employee
- How employees with disabilities will be provided an individual accommodation plan in a format that takes into account their accessibility needs.

Individual accommodation plans will include the following information:

- Individual workplace emergency response information, where one exists
- If requested, information regarding accessible formats and communications supports
- Any other accommodations to be provided.

Return to work process

The town shall have a documented return to work process for employees who have been absent due to disability and require disability-related accommodations. This return to work process shall outline the steps that the town shall take to facilitate the return to work.

Performance management and Career development and advancement

The town shall take into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities including any individual accommodation plans when using its performance management process, providing career development and when considering redeployment and advancement to its employees with disabilities.

Definitions

Employee: a person receiving or entitled to wages for work performed including but not limited to full-time, part-time, students, temporary and interns.

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

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.

Workplace emergency response: are actions to be taken from the time when an emergency occurs to the arrival of the attending emergency services.

Responsibilities

Departments are responsible for:

- Ensuring the accessible employment procedure is followed
- Taking into account accessibility needs of individuals during the recruitment process, return to work process, performance management, career development, and redeployment.

Employee(s) (person with disability) is responsible for:

- Requesting accommodation and providing relevant information to assist the town in supporting the individual's accessibility needs, including participating in the development of individual accommodation plans.
- Requesting accessible formats and communication supports for information that is needed to perform their job.

Job applicant(s) is responsible for:

- Requesting an accommodation during the recruitment process

Human Resources department is responsible for:

- Identifying, removing and preventing barriers when posting jobs, during the recruitment and selection process, when implementing occupational health and safety programs and during the rehabilitation and placement of employees with disabilities.

Accessible Information and Communication Procedure

Purpose statement

This procedure addresses the Accessible Information and Communications standards requirements of Ontario Regulation 191/11 for the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*.

Scope

This procedure applies to municipal goods, services and facilities provided by Town Council and town employees as well as by volunteers, agents, contractors (personnel) or any individual representing or performing any function on behalf of the town, including the town's websites and web content.

The requirements set out in this procedure are being implemented by the town in accordance with the standards and timelines established in the AODA.

Procedure

Feedback

The town has established an accessible customer service feedback process as required under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, Ontario Regulation 191/11. The town also receives and responds to other feedback and will ensure that the process is accessible to persons with disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports upon request.

Accessible formats and communication supports

Upon request, the town will provide or arrange for accessible formats and communication supports in a timely manner that takes into account the person's disability at no additional cost. The town will also notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

Emergency procedure, plans or public safety information

Upon request, the town will provide existing public emergency procedures, plans and public safety information in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports in a timely manner.

Accessible websites and web content

The town's internet websites and web content controlled directly by the town or through a contractual relationship that allows for modification of the product shall conform to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 at Level A and AA according to the schedule set out in the AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.

Definitions

Accessible formats may include but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

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.

Responsibilities

Strategy, Policy and Communications is responsible for:

- Administration of and ensuring compliance with this procedure
- Reviewing communications materials to ensure plain language is incorporated where possible
- Developing and/or reviewing all major published materials and information prior to release
- Administrating the town's Corporate Identity Standards
- Managing content on the town's websites

Information Systems is responsible for:

- Developing, supporting and maintaining the technology for the town's websites
- Supporting requests for technical-related accessible formats and communications supports

Departments are responsible for:

- Ensuring the Accessible Information and Communication Standard procedure is followed.

Service Disruption Guidelines

Service disruption

A service disruption occurs when a facility, service, program or system is interrupted for any length of time or reason. When a service disruption occurs, the town must notify the public.

The following are examples of service disruptions:

- Road closure (construction/parade)
- Elevator out of service
- Power outage at sports complex
- Grass field closed due to weather
- Trail closed due to ice storm
- Holiday closure
- Program closure (fitness class, show at the performing arts centre)
- Information and technology issue: geographic information system not functioning

Notice

All service disruption notices should include:

- Name of the service/event impacted
- Expected duration of disruption
- Description of alternative facilities, services, programs or systems that may be available
- Who to contact for assistance
- Any other relevant information for accessing the facility, service/program, or system

Procedure

In the event of a service disruption at any town facility, service, program or system, notice shall be provided on the town website and posted at the location, where possible. There is a designated web page and RSS feed on the town's website for service disruptions and the town uses social media to notify its followers about service disruptions.

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

Categories of service disruptions

Unplanned service disruption

Recommended public notice:

- Town website and RSS feeds

- Social media
- Notice at the location

Timeline:

- As soon as the service disruption is known

Planned service disruption

Recommended public notice:

- Town website and RSS feeds
- Social media
- Notice at the location

Optional public notice:

- Local newspapers
- TV screens at town facilities

Timeline:

- 14 days

Unplanned road service disruption

Recommended public notice:

- Town website and RSS feeds
- Social media
- Notice at location
 - Where possible, place signage at the nearest curb cut and at the point of work

Timeline:

- As soon as the service disruption is known. Notice should be provided to Corporate Communications to update notice page on town website and RSS feeds on a real-time basis

Planned road service disruption

This includes road work that takes two to three days to complete. Road work that takes 30-45 minutes to complete is not included as a service disruption.

Recommended public notice:

- Town website and RSS feeds
- Social media
- Direct notice to affected area (notice placed at residences and businesses)
- Notice at location
 - Where possible, place signage at the nearest curb cut and at the point of work

Optional public notice:

- Local newspapers

Timeline:

- 14 days