

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF SABLES-SPANISH RIVERS

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

1. PURPOSE / BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (the “AODA”) is a Provincial Act with the purpose of developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for persons with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises.

Under the AODA, Ontario Regulation 429/07 entitled “Accessibility Standards for Customer Service” came into force on January 1, 2008. That Regulation establishes standards specific to customer service for public sector organizations and other persons or organizations that provide goods and services to members of the public or other third parties.

This policy is drafted in accordance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 420/07) and addresses the following:

- the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities;
- communication with persons with disabilities;
- the use of assistive devices by persons with disabilities;
- the use of service animals by persons with disabilities;
- the use of support persons by persons with disabilities;
- notice of temporary disruption in services and facilities;
- training;
- customer feedback regarding the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities; and
- notice of availability and format of documents.

2. APPLICATION

This policy applies to all persons who deal with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the Township, whether the person does so as an employee, member of Council, agent, volunteer, student on placement, or otherwise and all persons who participate in developing the Township’s policies, practices and other procedures governing the provision of goods and services to members of the public or other third parties.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Corporation of the Township of Sables-Spanish Rivers that citizens with disabilities achieve accessibility in the provision of goods and services by the Township to this community, consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity as set out in the regulations of the Accessibility for Ontarians With Disabilities Act, 2005.

4. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

a. The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities

The Township will use reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following principles:

- the Township's goods and services are provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities;
- the provision of the Township's goods and services to persons with disabilities are integrated with those provided to persons who do not have disabilities unless an alternative measure is necessary to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Township's goods or services and,
- persons with disabilities are given an opportunity equal to that of persons without disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from the Township's goods and services.

b. Communication with Persons with Disabilities

When communicating with a person with a disability, the Township will do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

c. Assistive Devices

If a person with a disability requires assistive devices to access goods or services of the Township, they are allowed to use such devices.

d. Guide Dogs, Service Animals

If a person with a disability is accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal, the Township will permit the person to enter the premises with the animal and keep it with him or her, unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law from the premises. If the service animal or guide dog is excluded by law from the premises, the Township will look to other available measures to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the City's goods and services.

e. Support Persons

If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, they are permitted to enter the premises together and are not prevented from having access to each other while on the premises. The Township may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person while on its premises, but only if 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.

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

f. Disruption of Services

If there is a temporary disruption in a particular facility or service used to allow a person with a disability to access goods or services, the Township will attempt to give notice of the disruption to the public.

Notice of a temporary disruption shall be posted in a conspicuous place within the affected facility.

g. Training

The Township will provide training to its staff and volunteers about the provision of its goods and services to persons with disabilities. All Township employees and volunteers who deal with the public or other third parties and those involved in developing customer service policies, practices and procedures will receive Accessibility Awareness Training as soon as practical after beginning their employment. The Township will also provide ongoing training with respect to changes in its policies, practices and procedures to those individuals who require such training as soon as practicable. The Township will keep records of the training provided.

General

Every Department Head of the Township shall be responsible to provide the required training outlined in this Policy to all employees and volunteers under his/her direction who deal with the public or other third parties.

Every Department Head of the Township shall be responsible to provide the required training respecting the use of equipment or devices within his/her respective department that may help with the provision of goods or services to persons with a disability.

The Department Head shall keep records of the training provided. The record shall include a description of the training provided, the date on which the training is provided and the signature of the employee/volunteer who received the training. A copy of the record shall be forwarded to the office of the Clerk.

h. Feedback Process

The Township will have a mechanism to allow the public to provide feedback on the accessibility of the provision of goods and services.

i. Notice of the Availability of Documents

Notice of the availability of all documents required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service will be posted on the Township's website and available through the Township Clerk's office.