

POLICY TITLE	Accessibility Policy
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POLICY STATEMENT

The City of Cambridge is committed to recognizing and being responsive to the diverse needs all of our residents, by striving to provide goods, services and facilities that are accessible to all. As an employer, and a provider of services, the City of Cambridge is committed to ensuring its goods, services and facilities are provided in an accessible manner.

The City of Cambridge is committed to meeting its current and ongoing obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code respecting non-discrimination, and to complying with the accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and its related regulations, including the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (O. Reg. 191/11).

The City of Cambridge will promote accessibility through the development of policies, procedures and practices and by ensuring they take into consideration the needs of people with disabilities. To do this we must ensure the policies, procedures and practices are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration, and the equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the requirements developed under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), specifically Ontario Regulation 191/11, the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), which establishes the accessibility standards pertaining to information and communications, employment, transportation, the built environment (design of public spaces) and customer service, as well as additional general requirements that the City must comply with.

This policy will provide the framework for compliance with the requirements. All City Corporate Policies and Procedures, by-laws, standards, and guidelines must comply with the standards developed under the AODA.

DEFINITIONS

Accessible Formats: Formats for the presentation of information, which may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, Braille and other formats usable by people with disabilities.

Accommodations: The arrangements made or assistance provided so that people with disabilities may participate in the experiences available to people without disabilities. Accommodation will vary depending on the person's unique needs.

Assistive Device: A technical aid, communication device or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Personal assistive devices are typically devices that customers bring with them such as a wheelchair, walker or a personal oxygen tank that might assist in hearing, seeing, communicating, moving, breathing, remembering and/or reading.

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

Disability: is defined per Section 2 of the AODA and the Ontario Human Rights Code as follows:

- 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 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.

Guide Dog: a dog trained as a guide for a blind person and having the qualifications prescribed by the regulations to the Blind Persons' Rights Act, R.S.O. 1990 c. B. 7.

Information and Communication Exceptions: is defined per Section 9 of the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation* (O. Reg 191/11) as follows:

- The information and communications standards do not apply to the following:
 - Products and product labels, except as specifically provided by this Part.
 - Unconvertible information or communications.
 - Information that the obligated organization does not control directly or indirectly through a contractual relationship.

Kiosk: an interactive electronic terminal, including point-of-sale devices, intended for public use that allows users to access one or more services or products or both.

Service Animal: is defined per Section 80.45 of the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation* (O. Reg 191/11) as follows:

- For the purposes of this Part, 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:

- A member of the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario;
- A member of the College of Chiropractors of Ontario;
- A member of the College of Nurses of Ontario;
- A member of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario;
- A member of the College of Optometrists of Ontario;
- A member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario;
- A member of the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario;
- A member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario; or
- A member of the College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario.

Support Person: is defined per Section 80.45 of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (O. Reg. 191/11) as follows:

- “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, medical needs or access to goods, services or facilities.

Shall: used to indicate that something must be done.

Unconvertable Information and Communication: is defined per Section 9 of the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation* (O. Reg 191/11) as follows:

- For the purposes of this Part, information or communications are unconvertible if,
 - it is not technically feasible to convert the information or communications;
 - or
 - the technology to convert the information or communications is not readily available.

AUTHORITY

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* requires organizations to establish policies, practices and procedures governing how the organization will achieve

accessibility through meeting its requirements and compliance dates under the Ontario Regulation 191/11, the *Integrated Accessibility Standards (IASR)*.

The requirements set out in the AODA Regulations are not a replacement or a substitution for those established under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, nor do the standards limit any obligations owed to people with disabilities under any other legislation.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all City of Cambridge employees, elected officials, citizen members of committees and volunteers acting on behalf of the City of Cambridge or third parties who are responsible for delivering goods, services or facilities to employees, members of the public or other third parties, unless otherwise stated.

This policy applies to the employment life cycle and the provision of goods, services or facilities to employees and members of the public or other third parties by, or on behalf of, the City of Cambridge.

POLICY

Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure the following:

- (i) That the accessibility needs of people with disabilities shall be met in compliance with the requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and the *Integrated Accessibility Standards*, and in accordance with the requirements of the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, in a timely manner.
- (ii) That goods, services and facilities be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.
- (iii) That the provision of goods, services, and facilities to people with disabilities, and others, will be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or permanently, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods, services or facilities.
- (iv) That people with disabilities will be given an opportunity – equal to that given to others – to obtain, use and benefit from the goods, services, and facilities.

The City of Cambridge commits to the ongoing maintenance of measures in adhering to the applicable standards in the AODA summarized as follows:

General Requirements:

- (i) A multi-year Accessibility Plan, outlining the City's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its obligations under the IASR, will be developed, implemented, and maintained, and reviewed and updated at least once every 5 years.
- (ii) An annual status update report on the City's Accessibility Plan shall be prepared and posted to the website, outlining progress made on achieving the goals set out in the multi-year Accessibility Plan and steps taken to comply with the AODA and the IASR.
- (iii) The City uses accessible design, criteria and features that are incorporated into purchasing and acquiring good, services, or facilities, and when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks. When proven not practicable to do so, an explanation is provided upon request.
- (iv) Staff, those involved in developing the organizations policies, volunteers, and all other people who provide goods, services, or facilities on behalf of the City shall receive appropriate training on the requirements of the accessibility standards, including providing accessible customer service in accordance with O. Reg 191/11 s.80.49, the Ontario Human Rights Code as it related to people with disabilities and the duty to accommodate, job-specific training on meeting the obligations of the AODA and IASR, and any changes to policies developed under the AODA.

Information and Communication Standards:

- (v) The City ensures that information and communication that can be made accessible upon request through consultation is done so in a timely manner, at no additional cost, including but not limited to: information and communication available to the customers and the public; emergency plans, procedures; and public safety information.
- (vi) The City ensures that it maintains multiple methods of feedback and that methods used are applicable to the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation (IASR) including the Accessible Customer Service Standard. Feedback processes are accessible to people with disabilities that require alternate formats or communication supports upon request.

- (vii) The City will ensure that its website and web content conform to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) level AA in accordance with O. Reg 191/11 s.14.
- (viii) The City will continue to ensure that staff responsible for creating websites or maintaining and uploading content to City websites are trained to be competent of Web Content Accessibility Guidelines Level AA.

Employment Standards:

- (ix) The City strives to ensure that its employment strategies are conducive to building a workplace and employment culture that respects diversity and inclusion.
- (x) The City ensures that all employees and applicants have access to accessibility accommodations upon request through the City of Cambridge Workplace Support Procedure.
- (xi) The City consults with an employee making a request to ensure that they can equally participate by ensuring the provision of accessible workplace information and communication supports, emergency response information and documented individual accommodation plans.

Design of Public Spaces Standards:

- (xii) The City ensures that the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation and the Ontario Building Code are implemented in any applicable construction project or development of features or physical space through the use of the Facility Accessibility Design Manual.

Customer Service Standards:

- (i) The City of Cambridge will allow people with disabilities to use their own personal assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from the services or facilities offered by the City of Cambridge, unless such devices are a risk for health and safety reasons. In the event a personal assistive device cannot be used to obtain, use, or benefit from a service or facility, other options will be made available that ensure the dignity, integration, individualization, and full participation of the individual.
- (ii) Upon request, the City will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

- (iii) People with disabilities accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal may access City owned or operated facilities that are open to the public or other third parties, and may keep the animal with them except where excluded by law or for health and safety reasons.
- (iv) Where an animal is excluded by law or health and safety reasons other options will be made available that ensure the dignity, integration, individualization and full participation of the individual.
- (v) People with disabilities accompanied by a support person may access City owned or operated premises that are open to the public or other third parties.
- (vi) Any fees payable for a person's admission to the premises or in connection with a person's presence on the premises shall be waived for any support persons accompanying a person with disability for reasons of their disability.
- (vii) Should any City program or service determine that a person with a disability is required to be accompanied by a support person, they may only do so after consulting with the person with a disability, and considering evidence that a support persons is the only reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises. Any fees for admissions shall be waived for the support person.
- (viii) In the event of a planned or unplanned disruption a notice of temporary disruptions will be posted to the public at a conspicuous place and/or to the City's website. Notices will contain a description of alternative facilities or services, anticipated duration, and notice that the document is alternative in formats upon request.
- (ix) The City of Cambridge welcomes feedback on how we are providing goods, services and facilities to people with disabilities, through the City of Cambridge Feedback Procedure.

POLICY COMMUNICATION

City employees and elected officials will be advised of this Policy through distribution on the City's Learning Management System, and by posting the policy on the City's internal and external websites. Volunteers and other third parties will be notified of this policy by their City staff liaison through volunteer training or any relevant purchasing or procurement processes respectively.

This Policy will be made available to the public on the City's website, and in accessible alternate formats upon request.

Accessibility and Diversity Services is responsible for reviewing this Policy annually and recommending amendments to ensure on-going compliance with the accessibility standards and legislated obligations in consultation with the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Managers and supervisors shall ensure that they and their staff are familiar with and comply with this Policy and all relevant procedures and requirements of the AODA. Managers and supervisors shall monitor current practices to ensure compliance. Failure to comply with the provisions of this policy and all relevant procedures and requirements of the AODA may result in disciplinary action.

RELATED PROCEDURES

- Sustainable Procurement Policy
- Early and Safe Return to Work Policy
- Workplace Support Procedure
- Workplace Emergency Response Information Plan Procedure
- Request for Accessible Formats and Communication Supports Procedure
- Facility Accessibility Design Manual
- Feedback Procedure

RELATED DOCUMENTS/LEGISLATION

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, Chapter 11

Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, Ontario Regulation 191/11

Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter H.19

Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)