
St. Marys Public Library



Policy Type: **Operational Policy**

Policy Number: **OP-15**

Policy Title: **Accessibility Policy**

Policy Approval Date: April 2022

Policy Review Date: April 2026

1. Objective

1.1 The Library is committed to providing library services, collections, technology and spaces in ways that are accessible to persons with disabilities, in compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). This policy should be read in conjunction with the policies of Town of St. Marys on accessibility and the Act and its regulations.

2. Principles

- 2.1 The Library welcomes people with disabilities and encourages them to use Library services.
- 2.2 The Library will make all reasonable efforts to provide access to Library services for people with disabilities in a way that respects their rights to dignity, independence, and inclusion.
- 2.3 This commitment is consistent with the Library's mission to deliver services in a welcoming and supportive environment and with the Library's core values of equity and respect demonstrating accessibility and fairness in the treatment of all individuals and valuing individual needs, experiences and differences.
- 2.4 The Library will establish policies, practices and procedures which support the accessibility standards established under the AODA on customer service, information and communication, employment and the built environment.

3. Directives on Service

- 3.1 Library policies will be applied in a way that considers the needs of people with disabilities and respects the principles of dignity, independence, and inclusion.
- 3.2 Library staff and volunteers will communicate with people with disabilities in a way that takes their needs into consideration.
- 3.3 The Library welcomes feedback and makes information available to all users on how to provide feedback. Feedback is accepted by the Library in a variety of formats.
- 3.4 Staff assistance is available to support all users, including people with disabilities, in providing feedback. In keeping with the Library's mission of providing free and equitable access in a welcoming and supportive environment, the Library will:
 - a) Provide services in a timely manner that respects the dignity and independence of people

with disabilities and provides them with an equal opportunity to learn about, use, and benefit from Library services, and

b) Include services for people with disabilities.

- 3.5 The Library understands that equitable access sometimes requires different treatment including separate or specialized services. However, such services will be offered in a way that respects the dignity and full participation of people with disabilities.
- 3.6 The Library welcomes service animals that are needed to assist people with disabilities.
- 3.7 The Library welcomes any support person required by a person with a disability. When admission fees are charged for Library programs or services, admission fees will be waived for a support person, or advance notice will be given of any admission fees that a support person must pay, for example for food. person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises. Before making a decision to require a support person, the Library will consult with the person with a disability to understand their needs, consider health or safety reasons based on available evidence and determine if there is any other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person or others on the premises.
- 3.8 The Library will make reasonable efforts to facilitate the use of assistive devices that enable people with disabilities to use the Library's services. The Library offers a range of assistive devices to help meet the reading needs of people with disabilities. The Library also recognizes that accessibility can be achieved and provided in different ways.
- 3.9 The Library will provide notice of service disruptions which include the reason for the disruption, how long the disruption will last and a description of available alternatives, if any. In the event of an unplanned disruption, notice will be provided as quickly as possible.

4. Training and Documentation

- 4.1 The Library will ensure training of staff, volunteers, and contractors who interact with the public, to meet the needs of people with disabilities. This includes the training and documentation requirements in the AODA and its regulations.
- 4.2 The Library will document its policies, practices and procedures as required by the Customer Service Standard. Members of the public will be notified of the availability of this documentation which will be available in a variety of formats.

5. Related Documents

Circulation and Services Policy
Rules of Conduct Policy
Safety and Emergencies Policy
Town of St. Marys Accessibility Policy
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
Ontario Human Rights Code

6. History

Date of Latest Board Approval: April 2022

Date(s) of Revision(s): October October 2016

Date of next scheduled review: 2026

* This policy was passed at the December 2012 Board meeting to ratify the change in format.