

Accessibility Policy

Policy Statement

Commitment Statement

The Town of St. Marys is committed to enriching the quality of life for persons with disabilities. The Town recognizes that it is a long-term process, and knows that community collaboration is vital for moving towards full accessibility for persons with a disability. The Town strives to remove existing barriers that limit inclusion while sustaining a community where residents are proud to be a member.

Scope

All Team Members, Council, Board Members, Volunteers, Students on placement term or otherwise.

Purpose

To ensure compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, S.O. 2005* (the "AODA").

Definitions

Accessibility Advisory Committee

A Committee of Council which recommends and advises Town Council on matters to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities and to provide for involvement in the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers to full participation in the community.

Disability

As defined in Section 10 of the *Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990 c.H.19*

Service Animal

Any animal used by a person with a disability for reasons relating to the disability where it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or where a person provides a letter from a Physician confirming that he or she requires the animal for reasons relating to his or her disability; or a valid identification card signed by the Attorney General of Canada or a certificate of training from a recognized guide dog or service animal training school.

Support Person

A person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to assist him or her with communication, mobility, personal care, or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

Town

The Corporation of the Town of St. Marys

Responsibilities

Town Council

Town Council shall appoint one Council Member as a Council representative on the St. Marys Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC), direct staff to appoint a staff liaison on the AAC, and appoint committee members to the AAC.

Human Resources

Human Resources shall ensure that all Team Members, Council, Board Members, Volunteers, and Students are trained in regards to legislative requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). A Team Member from this department shall also represent the Town on the AAC.

Managers

Managers are responsible for adhering to the parameters set out in this policy as it relates to goods, services, programs, and facilities. Managers will foster an inclusive environment within their departments.

Team Members

Team Members are responsible for practicing good customer service and adhering to the parameters set out in the policy.

Guidelines

This Accessibility Policy will function as an overarching policy for the requirements of the standards developed under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, S.O. 2005, c.11 (the "AODA").

The Town will develop policies, work procedures which contribute to ensuring that goods, services, programs, and facilities are accessible for persons with disabilities. The following principles shall be met when developing such policies, work instructions and procedures:

Accessibility Planning

The Town will establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan in accordance with the AODA. The multi-year accessibility plan will outline the ways the Town will identify, prevent and remove barriers and meet the requirements of the standards developed under the AODA.

The multi-year accessibility plan will be:

- Reviewed and updated at least once every five years; and
- Established, reviewed, and updated in consultation with persons with disabilities and the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

An annual status update report on the progress of measures taken to implement the multi-year accessibility plan will be prepared. The multi-year accessibility plan and accompanying status update reports will be posted to the Town's website and provided in accessible formats upon request.

Alternate Formats

The Town will provide alternate formats of information that are produced or controlled by the Town to members of the public upon request, in a timely manner.

When it is not practicable to provide an alternate format, the Town will provide, an explanation and a summary of the document in an accessible format.

Communication Supports

The Town will provide communication supports to members of the public upon request, in a timely manner.

If Team Members are unable to obtain the requested communication support, they will work with the requestor to determine a practicable and appropriate method for communication.

Customer Service

To ensure accessible customer service, the Town will use reasonable effort to ensure that all policies, procedures and practices related to the provision of goods and services to people with disabilities are consistent with the following principles:

Dignity

- Goods and services will be provided in a way that allows people to maintain self-respect and the respect of others
- People with disabilities are as valued and as deserving of full and effective services as any other customer

Independence

- Goods and Services will be provided without unnecessary help or interference from others
- Independence means freedom to make one's own choices and decisions

Integration

- Integrated services are those that are designed to be accessible to everyone including people with disabilities
- People with disabilities will be able to benefit from the same services, in the same place, and in the same or similar ways as other customers
- In some cases alternative measures to integration will be provided

Equality of Opportunity

- Goods and services will be provided in such a way that a person with a disability will have the same opportunity to benefit from our goods and services as other customers

- A person with a disability should not have to make significantly more effort to access or obtain our goods and services and should not have to accept less quality or more inconvenience

Team Members, Volunteers, Contractors, Students, Members of Advisory Groups, and Council can improve their level of customer service by incorporating the following points:

- Asking how you can help or assist
- Offering a variety of communication methods
- Understanding the nature and scope of the services the Town offers

Team Member Training

Town staff will be trained in accordance with the regulations under the AODA.

The Town will log and retain records containing the details of the training provided, the number of people trained, location, and date the training was completed.

Fees and Charges

Persons with disabilities will not be charged more to access programs or services than to persons without disabilities, in accordance with the Fees By-law number 12 of 2012 or successor.

Should an accessible format or communication support cost more for the Town to provide to a person with a disability than a typical format or communication method to a person without a disability, the person with the disability will be charged the same price as that charged to the person without the disability.

Owners and operators of taxicabs licensed by the Town are prohibited from charging additional fares or fees to persons with disabilities than those for persons without disabilities, or for the storage of mobility aids or mobility assistive devices as outlined in the Town of St. Marys Taxi By-law number 49 of 2012 or successor.

Feedback on Corporate Services

The Town has established a process for receiving and responding to feedback on the manner in which the Town provides goods and services. Members of the public may provide feedback through the Town's website, through the Guest Services email address, by telephone, and in person.

All feedback received from the public regarding the accessibility of services will be provided to all relevant Town staff members who will take appropriate action.

Obtaining Public Feedback

The Town will provide, upon request, accessible formats and communication supports when seeking public input, feedback, and advice, when practicable.

Should Town staff be unable to provide a requested accessible format or communication support, they will work with the citizen to determine alternate means for gathering citizen feedback.

Feedback can be given to one of the following points of contact:

Accessibility@town.stmarys.on.ca
www.town.stmarys.on.com/accessibility
Clerk's Office, Town of St. Marys
175 Queen Street East
P.O. Box 998
St. Marys, Ontario N4X 1B6
519-284-2340 ext 241
Fax 519-284-3881

Procurement

Whenever possible, the Town will take into account the accessible features and criteria of goods, services, and facilities procured, purchased, or acquired.

When not practicable to incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, staff shall provide upon request, an explanation.

Service Animals

The Town welcomes service animals into all Town owned or operated facilities where the public is allowed. Service animals will be allowed to accompany a person with a disability to allow them to access facilities and services.

If a service animal is otherwise excluded from the premises by law, Town staff will ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods or services provided by the Town.

Support Persons

The Town will allow people with disabilities to be accompanied by a support person in all Town owned and operated public facilities. The Town reserves the right to request the person with a disability be accompanied by a support person, in the event that it is considered necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with a disability or others on the premises.

The Town will provide notification of any applicable admission fees or fares that apply to support persons by posting such admission fee or fare where all other fees or fares are posted.

Service Disruptions

If a temporary disruption of service occurs, the Town will give notice of the disruption, including information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any may be available. The Town will make reasonable effort to provide prior notice of planning disruption if possible, recognizing that in some circumstances such as in the situation of unplanned temporary disruption, advance notice will not be possible.

Notice will be given by posting the information in a conspicuous place on the premises experiencing the service disruption, through use of social medial, or by posting the notice on the Town's website.

Use of Assistive Devices

The Town will allow people with disabilities to use their own personal assistive devices to obtain services offered by the Town.

If a person with a disability is unable to access the Town's services through the use of their own personal assistive device, Town staff members will work with the customer to determine any alternate means for accessing services.

Accessible Workplace

The Town will meet the requirements of the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation* (Ontario Regulation 191/11) under the AODA and, in particular, Part III Employment Standards of such Regulation by:

- Ensuring the recruitment process is inclusive of people with disabilities;
- Informing Team Members of supports available for Team Members with disabilities;
- Accommodating Team Members with disabilities under the AODA in the areas of:
 - workplace emergency response information;
 - information and communications needed to perform the Team Member's job or that is generally available to Team Members in the workplace; and
 - other accommodations as required;
- Taking into account Team Member's accommodations in:
 - Performance management;
 - Career development and advancement; and
 - Redeployment; and
- Developing and implementing a return to work process for Team Members who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work.

This will be completed in accordance with the timelines set out in the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation* under the AODA.

Accessible Transportation- Licensed Transportation

Owners and operators of taxicabs licensed by the Town will operate in accordance with the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service* (Ontario Regulation 429/07) under the AODA and the *Integrated Accessibility Standards* (Ontario Regulation 191/11) under the AODA. Without limitation, the Town requires that taxicabs licensed by the Town make available vehicle registration and identification information in an accessible format as outlined in the Town of St. Marys Taxi By-law number 49 of 2012 or successor.

Communication

This policy will be communicated to all Team Members through email and a copy will be stored on the Company Drive.

Training

Team Members will receive training on this policy during orientation.

Evaluation

Annual reviews of customer feedback received regarding accessibility will take place.

Acknowledge Success and Make Improvements

References

Ontario Regulation 191/11, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
 Ontario Regulation 429/07, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
 Town of St. Marys, Procurement By law 036-2012
 Town of St. Marys, Fees By law 012-2012
 Town of St. Marys, Taxi By law 049-2012
 Town of St. Marys, Animal Control By law 039-2008
 Town of St. Marys, Notice of Service Disruption Work Procedure COR-WP-006
 Town of St. Marys, Notice of Service Disruption Form COR-F-006
 Town of St. Marys, Employment Application Form HRS-F-003
 Town of St. Marys, Accessibility Concern Form HRS-F-001
 Town of St. Marys, Early and Safe Return to Work Policy HSY-P-003
 Town of St. Marys, Team Member Emergency Information Worksheet HRS-F-049
 Town of St. Marys, Team Member Emergency Information Plan HRS-F-048
 Town of St. Marys, Job Posting Template HRS-F-016
 Town of St. Marys, Accessible Customer Service Brochure

End of Document

Revision #	Date	Reason	Initiated	Reviewed	Approved
0	Jan 12, 2009	Inception	K. Richardson		R. Brindley/ J. Hahn
1	January 25, 2013	Amended Customer Service policy, Include AODA IASR	J.McCartney	K.Richardson	