



ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

and

PRACTICES and PROCEDURES

for

ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE

adopted October 23, 2009

**TOWNSHIP OF THE ARCHIPELAGO
ACCESSIBILITY POLICY**

SUBJECT: Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

ISSUE No. 1

PSOP: ACC-0

PREPARED BY: Joyce Crookshank

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1. Purpose

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.

This policy allows for the development of procedures to be implemented to meet the requirements of the AODA and all related accessibility standards developed and proposed to be developed by the Ministry of Community and Social Services. The standards include:

- i) Accessible Customer Service (January 1, 2008)
- ii) Accessible Transportation
- iii) Accessible Information and Communication
- iv) Accessible Built Environment
- v) Employment Accessibility

2. Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Township of The Archipelago that citizens with disabilities achieve accessibility in the provision of goods and services, consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equality of opportunity as set out in the regulations of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

3. 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 procedures governing the provision of goods and services to members of the public or other third parties.

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4. Exclusions

This *Accessible Customer Service Policy* shall not apply during any period where the Reeve, or the Reeve's designate, has declared a "State of Emergency" as defined under the *Emergency Management Act*.

5. Related Documents

- ACC-1 – Definitions
- ACC-2 – *Accessible Customer Service – Practices and Procedures*
- *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*
- *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*
- *Ontario Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service*
- *Ontario Human Rights Code*
- Other Accessibility Standards to be approved into Regulation
- Township's "Accessible Customer Service Training Manual"

**TOWNSHIP OF THE ARCHIPELAGO
ACCESSIBILITY POLICY**

SUBJECT: Definitions

ISSUE No. 1

PSOP: ACC-1

PREPARED BY: Joyce Crookshank

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1. Purpose

To define terms used in the Township's Accessibility Policy, Practices and Procedures.

2. Definitions

2.1 Assistive Device is a technical aid, communication device, or medical aid modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. e.g. canes, crutches, wheelchairs or hearing aids.

2.2 Barrier, as defined by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, 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.

2.3 Dignity means that service is provided in a way that allows the person with a disability to maintain self-respect and the respect of other people.

2.3 Disability, as defined by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, 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,

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- 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*.

2.5 Equal Opportunity means that service is provided to a person with a disability in such a way that they have an opportunity to access goods or services equal to that given to others.

2.6 Independence means that service is provided in such a way that a person with a disability is allowed to do things on their own without unnecessary help or interference from others.

2.7 Integration means that service is provided in a way that allows the person with a disability to benefit from the same services, in the same place, and in the same or similar way as other customers, unless an alternate measure is necessary to enable a person with a disability to access goods or services.

2.8 Service Animal is 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 the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse 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.

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2.9 Support Person is another person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

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SUBJECT: Accessible Customer Service – Practices and Procedures

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1. Purpose

These practices and procedures address the accessibility requirements of *Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service* under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

2. Scope

These practices and procedures have been prepared in accordance with the requirements and information provided in the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07) and addresses the following:

- the provision of goods and services to 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 disruptions 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.

3. Application

These practices and procedures apply 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 procedures governing the provision of goods and services to members of the public or other third parties.

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4. Procedures:

The Township of The Archipelago will provide goods and services to people with disabilities with particular consideration to the following areas:

4.1 The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities

The Township will use reasonable efforts to ensure that:

- 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.

4.2 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. Staff who communicate with customers will be trained on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

4.3 Assistive Devices and other Measures that Assist with Accessibility

A person with a disability may provide their own assistive device for the purpose of obtaining, using and benefitting from

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the Township's goods and services. Exceptions may occur in situations where the Township has determined that the assistive device may pose a risk to the health and safety of a person with a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises.

In these situations and others, the Township may offer a person with a disability other reasonable measures to assist him or her in obtaining, using and benefitting from the Township's goods and services, where the Township has other measures available.

It should be noted that it is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that his or her assistive device is operated in a safe and controlled manner at all times.

The Township will ensure that staff are trained on how to use the assistive devices which are available on the Township's premises. The following assistive aids are available through the Township of The Archipelago:

Accessible Telephone Service

If enquiries for telephone services are received for hearing impaired or vision impaired individuals, please refer them to Bell Canada. The Bell Relay Service operator is available to assist in placing or receiving calls to/from persons who use a TTY/teletypewriter. The operator will also assist in placing Voice Carry Over (VCO) and Hearing Carry Over (HCO) calls. VCO mode allows a person with a hearing disability to speak directly to the other party. HCO mode allows a person with a speech disability to hear the other party. There is no charge for local calls. Information regarding this service is provided in the local telephone book under "Special Needs".

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Electronic Door Openers

Electronic door openers are located at the Township office and at the Pointe au Baril Community Centre. These devices must be turned on at the beginning of the work day when the buildings are open to the public and turned off when the buildings are closed or unoccupied. The motor of the electronic door opener will continue to run if not turned off when the door is locked.

Accessible Ramp

The accessible ramp at the Pointe au Baril Community Centre shall be clearly marked and shall be cleared of snow and ice as soon as practical.

Elevators

The elevators at the Township office will be maintained on a routine basis to ensure that they are working properly.

Municipal Elections

The Township of The Archipelago uses an internet and telephone system of voting. The Clerk will provide election materials in an alternate accessible format if so requested by a person with a disability. The Clerk shall ensure that the third party conducting the Township's municipal vote is consistent with the Township's Accessibility Policy.

Municipal candidates must provide candidate materials in accessible formats if so requested by a person with a disability.

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Township Website

The Township's website will be designed and updated with regard to World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) guidelines to support the needs of persons with disabilities.

4.4 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 be permitted to attend at no charge where an admission fee is applicable.

4.5 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 Township's goods and services.

It should be noted that it is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that his or her service animal is kept in control at all times.

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4.6 Notice of Temporary Disruptions in Services and Facilities

The Township is aware that the operation of its services and facilities is important to the public. However, temporary disruptions in the Township's services and facilities may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the Township's control or knowledge.

The Township will provide Public Notice for all planned or unexpected temporary disruptions to facilities and services that are used to access the Township's goods or services.

If the temporary disruption is expected or planned, Public Notice must be provided a reasonable time in advance. If the temporary disruption is unexpected, Public Notice must be provided as soon as possible. In the event that all services are disrupted, such as power outage, Public Notice is not required unless the disruption significantly impacts on persons with a disability. The Public Notice must include the reason for the disruption, anticipated duration and a description of a suitable alternative, if available. The form of notice is attached to this document as Schedule '1'.

Temporary disruptions that are less intrusive or minor in nature e.g. repairs to washrooms, maintenance of elevator, technology unavailable (website, computers, telephone system), will require that a sign be posted at all entrances to the building and at the facility in a conspicuous place. Depending on circumstances and duration, notice may be provided on the municipal website.

Temporary disruptions that are more intrusive (major) e.g. temporary power outage, road closures, building closures, will

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be communicated on the municipal website and by posting a notice at the building entrances.

4.7 Feedback

Feedback from a member of the public about the delivery of goods and services to persons with disabilities may be given by using a feedback form, by mail, e-mail, or verbally in person or by telephone.

All feedback will be kept in strict confidence and used to improve customer service. All feedback will be acknowledged within a maximum of 5 business days from the date of receipt. A response to the feedback is not mandatory, however, should an answer be deemed appropriate and should the customer choose to supply his or her contact information, the customer may expect the said answer within 30 days.

Information about the feedback process will be readily available to the public and notice of the process will be posted at the Township office, the Pointe au Baril Community Centre and on the Township's website, (www.thearchipelago.on.ca).

The Township's Feedback Process and a sample Feedback Form are attached hereto as Schedule '2' to this Policy.

4.8 Training

Elected officials, staff, volunteers, agents/contractors, third parties and any other individuals who interact with the public or other third parties on behalf of the Township, or who participate in developing the Township's policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to members of the public or other third parties, will receive training and/or information on the following topics as required by *Ontario Regulation 429/07*.

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- Review of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the requirements of *Regulation 429/07*.
- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.
- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or the assistance of a support person.
- How to use equipment or assistive devices provided by the Township that may help with the provision of goods or services to a person with a disability.
- What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the Township's goods or services.
- The Township's policies, practices and procedures relating to the Regulation 429/07.

The aforementioned training and/or information must be provided to each person as soon as practical after he or she is assigned applicable duties.

The training format may vary depending on who is receiving the training and the nature of the services provided and depending on the individual Department requirements. Training format may include:

- training conducted by AMCTO or other outside organization
- an eLearning session with questionnaire
- "Accessible Customer Service Training Manual" prepared by Township staff, or
- other format as required

The training will be provided on an on-going basis in connection with any changes to the Township's policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities.

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Training records will be kept of who was trained, when and in which format the training was delivered. A "Record of Training" is attached to this document as Schedule '3'.

4.9 Notice of Availability of Documents

The Township shall notify persons to whom it provides goods or services that the documents required under *Ontario Regulation 429/07* are available upon request. Notice will be given by posting the information at the Township office, the Pointe au Baril Community Centre and on the Township's website. The form of notice is attached to this document as Schedule '4'.

If the Township is requested to provide a copy of a document to a person with a disability, consideration will be given to the person's disability and the document will be provided in an alternate format if necessary. The Township and the person with a disability will agree on what format will be used.

SCHEDULE '1'



NOTICE OF SERVICE DISRUPTION

There will be a service disruption at address impacting the delivery of goods and services from hour until hour on date.

These disruptions include:

- ___ repair/maintenance of doors
- ___ repair/maintenance of elevator
- ___ repair/maintenance of technology
- ___ repair/maintenance of telephone system
- ___ repair/maintenance of accessible washroom

On behalf of the Township of The Archipelago, we would like to thank you for your patience in this matter. We apologize for any inconvenience.

Management

SCHEDULE '2'



ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE FEEDBACK PROCESS

The Township of The Archipelago is committed to providing high quality customer service to all people including those with disabilities. We welcome your comments to help us monitor and improve our services and experiences.

Feedback regarding the way the Township of The Archipelago provides its goods and services may be given by using the attached feedback form, by mail, e-mail or verbally in person or by telephone.

All feedback should be directed to the Township Clerk at:

Township of The Archipelago
9 James Street
Parry Sound, Ontario P2A 1T4
Phone: 705-746-4243
Fax: 705-746-7301
Website: www.thearchipelago.on.ca

All feedback will be kept in strict confidence and used to improve customer service. All feedback will be acknowledged within a maximum of 5 business days from the date of receipt. A response to the feedback is not mandatory, however, should an answer be deemed appropriate and should the customer choose to supply his or her contact information, the customer may expect a response within 30 days.



Feedback Form

Thank you for visiting the Township of The Archipelago. We value all of our citizens and customers and strive to meet everyone's needs. Please submit your completed form by any of the following methods:

Mail or deliver to: Clerk
Township of The Archipelago
9 James Street
Parry Sound, Ontario P2A 1T4
Fax to: 705-746-7301
E-mail to: skaegi@thearchipelago.on.ca

Please tell us about your visit:

Date and Time of Visit:	Location:
Did we respond to your customer service needs on this visit? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Was our customer service provided to you in an accessible manner? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Did you have any problems accessing our goods and/or services? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Please provide details of your customer service experience.	

If you wish to be contacted by a staff person, please provide your contact information.

Name	Name of Organization	
Address		
Home Phone Number	Business Phone Number	E-mail
This information is collected by the Corporation of the Township of The Archipelago under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act R. S.O. 1990, c.F. 31, s. 39(2) for the purposes of improving accessible customer service. Questions about the collection of this information can be addressed to: Clerk's Department, 9 James Street, Parry Sound, Ontario, P2A 1T4 Phone: 705-746-4243		

For Township Use Only

Date Feedback was received	Date Forwarded to Clerk's Office
Responsible Department	
Comments / Follow-up Actions	

SCHEDULE '3



**ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE
RECORD of TRAINING**

Date: _____

Location: _____

Type of Training: _____

Trainer: _____

Name of Participant	Signature

SCHEDULE '4'



ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE NOTICE of AVAILABILITY of DOCUMENTS

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. The Regulation establishes accessibility 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.

As required by Ontario Regulation 429/07, the Township has adopted an *Accessibility Policy* and *Accessible Customer Service – Practices and Procedures*. These documents are available upon request and if necessary, will be provided in an alternate format with consideration to persons with a disability. The Township and the individual making the request will agree on what format will be used.

Requests for a copy of the Township's accessibility policy, practices and procedures can be forwarded to the Township's Clerk at:

Township of The Archipelago
9 James Street
Parry Sound, Ontario P2A 1T4
Phone: 705-746-4243
Fax: 705-746-7301

The document is also available on the Township's website at:
www.thearchipelago.on.ca