

POLICY

POLICY NO:	GG.3.8
SECTION:	GENERAL GOVERNMENT
TITLE/SUBJECT:	ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE (Pursuant to Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005; Ontario Regulation 191/11 Integrated Accessibility Standards)
ADOPTED DATE:	August 5, 2009 (By-law No. 2009-115)
REVISION DATE:	November 4, 2009 (By-law No. 2009-161) July 6, 2016 (By-law No. 2016-081)

PURPOSE

The Municipality of Kincardine is committed to being responsive to the needs of the community. To do this, we must recognize the diverse needs of individuals and respond by striving to provide services and facilities that are accessible to all. As a provider of goods and services, and as an employer, the Municipality of Kincardine is committed to ensuring its goods or services are provided in an accessible manner.

The Municipality of Kincardine will promote accessibility through the development of policies, procedures and practices and by ensuring they consider persons with disabilities. To do so, the Municipality must ensure the policies, procedures and practices address integration, independence, dignity and equal opportunity.

PRINCIPLES

Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure the following:

- (i) That goods or services be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- (ii) The provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities and others will be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods or services.
- (iii) Persons with disabilities will be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from the goods or services.

PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES:

Procedures and practices will strive to reflect or achieve the following:

- (i) When communicating with a person with a disability, the Municipality will do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.
- (ii) Persons with disabilities requiring a support person or a service animal should not be restricted in obtaining, using or benefiting from the Municipality's goods or services.
- (iii) Notice is required when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on to access Municipality of Kincardine goods or services are temporarily disrupted.
- (iv) Training of staff about provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities will facilitate the delivery of those goods or services.
- (v) The public should have an opportunity to provide feedback on the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities.
- (vi) The public should have the opportunity to be aware of the availability of documents related to this policy.
- (vii) Municipal documents should be available in formats that take in to account a person's disability.
- (viii) Persons with disabilities should be allowed to use their own personal assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from the goods and services offered by the Municipality.

PROCEDURES

Support Persons

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 or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

The Municipality of Kincardine will ensure that a person with a disability, who is accompanied by a support person, to enter municipal owned and operated public facilities with their support person and will not prevent the person with the disability having access to the support person while on the premises.

The Municipality may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises, but only if, after consulting with the person with a disability and considering the available evidence, the Municipality determines that,

- (a) 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; and

- (b) there is no other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability and the health or safety of others on the premises.

The Municipality of Kincardine will waive admission fees for support persons who accompany a person with a disability, into facilities where admission is charged.

- (a) The Municipality may require advance notice to facilitate availability, etc.
- (b) Member of public should notify a staff member the presence of the support person.
- (c) If there is confidential information to be disclosed, consent must be received from the person with the disability.

Service Animals

For the purpose of this policy, a 'service animal' is defined as either:

- (i) A "guide dog," as defined in section 1 of the *Blind Persons Rights' Act*, or
- (ii) A "service animal" for a person with a disability. For the purpose of this policy, an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability,
 - (a) if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for the reasons relating to his or her disability; or
 - (b) if the person provides documentation from a regulated health professional confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

The Municipality of Kincardine will ensure that a person with a disability is permitted to enter all Municipality of Kincardine owned and operated public facilities with the service animal and allowed to keep the service animal with him or her unless the service animal is otherwise excluded by law from the area.

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

Temporary Service Disruptions

If, in order to obtain, use or benefit from a provider's goods or services, persons with disabilities usually use particular facilities or services of the Municipality (i.e. elevator)

and if there is a temporary disruption in those facilities or services in whole or in part, the Municipality of Kincardine shall give notice of the disruption to the public.

Notice of the disruption must include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that are available.

Notice will be given by posting the information at a conspicuous place on premises owned or operated by the Municipality, as well as by posting it on the municipal website.

If the Municipality of Kincardine website should expect a temporary service disruption, advance notice shall be provided on the website where possible, keeping with the conditions of the service disruption section of this policy.

Training

The Municipality of Kincardine shall ensure that the following persons receive training about the provision of its goods or services to persons with disabilities:

- (a) Every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the Municipality, whether the person does so as an employee, agent, volunteer or otherwise.
- (b) Every person who participates in developing the Municipality's policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to members of the public or other third parties.

The training will include a review of the purposes of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and the requirements of applicable regulations and instruction about the following matters:

- (a) How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disability, as outlined in this policy.
- (b) How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person, as outlined in this policy.
- (c) How to use equipment or devices available on the Municipality's premises or otherwise provided by the Municipality that may help with the provision of goods or services to a person with a disability.
- (d) What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the Municipality's goods or services.

The training will be provided to each person as soon as practicable after he or she is assigned the applicable duties.

The Municipality of Kincardine will retain records of the training, including details of the training provided, as well as the name of the persons trained, the location of training, and the date of the training.

The Municipality of Kincardine will customize the training going forward, based on the actual experiences of the persons with disabilities in Municipality of Kincardine owned or operated facilities and will provide training on changes to the policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities.

Feedback Process

The Municipality of Kincardine will receive and respond to feedback about the manner in which it provides goods or services to persons with disabilities. The Municipality shall ensure that the feedback process is accessible to persons with disabilities by providing, or arranging for the provision of, accessible formats and communication supports, on request. While the Municipality will provide a form for submitting feedback, it may be provided in person, by telephone, in writing, or by delivering an electronic text by email or on diskette or otherwise

Should a member of the public wish to provide a suggestion on how to improve provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities:

- (a) Member of the public will inform Clerk of the suggestion, who will discuss with the Manager responsible for the department.
- (b) Staff member will assist member of the public in filling out the form, should they require assistance.
- (c) Member of the public will be notified in a timely manner of how the Municipality of Kincardine will proceed with their suggestion.
- (d) Staff response should include: an explanation of how we will implement the suggestion, a response indicating further investigation or an explanation why we are unable to implement the suggestion.

Should a member of the public wish to make positive feedback regarding provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities:

- (a) The feedback will be handled pursuant to the Municipality's Mail Procedure policy.

Should a member of the public wish to make a complaint regarding the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities:

- (a) The member of the public with the complaint or concern should have a discussion with the Manager of the staff person who was involved in the situation.

- (b) Should the discussion not resolve the complaint or the member of the public is uncomfortable discussing the issue, the member of the public should fill out a complaint form. A staff person can assist the member of the public with the complaint form in a manner that takes into consideration their disability.
- (c) The information to be documented on the complaint form by the member of the public shall include their personal contact information, the date, a description of the complaint, and what the member of the public requests to resolve the complaint.
- (d) The complaint shall be forwarded to the Clerk's Department to be dealt with as set out in the Municipality's Citizen Complaint policy, keeping in mind the principles of this policy when communicating with a person with a disability.

Notice of Availability of Documents

The Municipality of Kincardine will notify persons to whom it provides goods or services that documents associated with this policy are available upon request. This notice will be given by posting the information at a conspicuous place at the Municipal Administration Centre, by posting it on the municipal website, or by such other method as is reasonable in the circumstances.

Format of Documents

Should the Municipality of Kincardine be required to give a copy of a document to a person with a disability, the Municipality shall give the person the document, or the information contained in the document, in a format that takes into account the person's disability.

Material printed in-house and publications produced on behalf of The Corporation of the Municipality of Kincardine should contain a note indicating, "alternate formats are available upon request" and include relevant contact information.

The Municipality of Kincardine and the person with a disability will try to agree upon the format to be used for the document or information, subject to feasibility requirements of this policy.

Alternative formats that should be considered by the Municipality of Kincardine and the person with the disability will include, but are not limited to:

- (i) Print Requests:

Requests for alternative formats should be honoured in the most practical manner depending on the media chosen, the size and complexity of the document, the quality and source of the documents, the feasibility of the request (including the cost) and the number of documents to be converted. It should be noted that when request for one of these formats

is received and deemed feasible, staff should make every attempt to respond to the request in the most practical manner and to the satisfaction of the requestor. If it is determined that the format requested is not feasible, then other alternative methods of providing the information should be explored that will still meet the needs of the requestor (e.g. Audio CD or explaining the information verbally etc.).

- (a) Staff members receives request from member of the public for alternative format.
- (b) Employee fills out alternative format request form.
- (c) Forwards request to the responsible Manager.
- (d) The responsible Manager and the Clerk will determine feasibility, and
 - i) if feasible, proceed with alternative format request;
 - ii) if not feasible; contact individual with feasible solution.

(ii) ASL Interpreter Request:

- (a) Employee receives request from public for ASL Interpreter.
- (b) Employee fills out alternative format request form.
- (c) Forwards request to the responsible Manager.
- (d) The responsible department contacts Canadian Hearing Society to make request.
- (e) Once Canadian Hearing Society confirms attendance of ASL Interpreter, the responsible department contacts individual.
- (f) If ASL Interpreter is not available, individual will be contacted with an alternative solution.

Feasibility will be determined based upon cost in relation to size of document and time associated with processing document requests.

The time frame attached to the conversion process varies depending on the media chosen, the size, complexity, quality of source documents and number of documents to be converted. Documents shall be returned in a timely manner depending on the factors previously noted.

Conversion shall be processed in-house wherever possible. When a member of the public requests a record of the Municipality in a multiple format, the department of origin shall be responsible for the cost of the conversion, materials and distribution, not the public requestor.

In-house printing, where possible, should adhere to the CNIB's Clear Print Standards.

Assistive Devices

The Municipality of Kincardine will allow persons with disabilities to use their own personal assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from the goods or services offered by the Municipality of Kincardine.

Should a person with a disability be unable to access the Municipality's goods or services through the use of their own personal assistive device, the Municipality of Kincardine will ensure the following steps are taken:

- (a) Determine if service is inaccessible, based upon individual requirements.
- (b) Assess service delivery and potential service options to meet the needs of the individual.
- (c) Notify person with disability of alternative service and how they can access the service, temporarily or on a permanent basis.

Contact Information

For more information about this policy, or questions related to accessibility at the Municipality of Kincardine, please contact us:

Clerk
Municipality of Kincardine
1475 Concession 5
RR # 5
Kincardine, ON N2Z 2X6

Phone: 519.396.3468
Fax: 519.396.8288
Email: clerk@kincardine.net

Links

Customer Service Standard, Ontario Regulation 191/11:
<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/110191#BK152>

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005:
http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_05a11_e.htm

Ministry of Community and Social Services:

<http://www.mcscs.gov.on.ca/mcscs/english/pillars/accessibilityOntario>

AccessON: www.accesson.ca