

Policy

1.0 Policy Statement

The Town of Greater Napanee is committed to meeting accessibility needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner so that all people may have equitable access to Town programs, goods, services, and facilities in a way that respects their dignity and independence.

2.0 Purpose

This policy complies with the standards developed under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005, (AODA), and amendments contained in O.Reg.165/16.

3.0 Scope

This Policy applies to all Town employees, volunteers, and to any individual or organization that provides goods, services or facilities to the public or other third parties on behalf of the Town, in accordance with the legislation.

4.0 Policy Requirements

4.1 General Standards

The Town of Greater Napanee is a designated public sector organization under the AODA and is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of people with disabilities.

4.2 Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Town of Greater Napanee is part of an advisory committee that advises the Councils of the County of Lennox and Addington, the Township of Addington Highlands, the Town of Greater Napanee, Loyalist Township and the Township of Stone Mills and the Board of Governors of Lennox and Addington County General Hospital on the preparation and implementation of annual accessibility plans in order to remove barriers for people with disabilities and ensure that no new barriers are created.

4.3 Accessibility Plans

The Town of Greater Napanee shall produce a multi-year Accessibility Plan. The plan will be posted on the Town's website and shall be made available in an accessible format and with communication supports, upon request. Progress on the plan will be provided annually and reported to Council. The Accessibility Plan shall be reviewed and, if necessary, updated at least once every five (5) years.

4.4 Training

The Town of Greater Napanee will ensure that training is provided to all employees, volunteers on the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in the Regulation and on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities. Ongoing training will be provided to review the policy periodically. If any changes are made to this policy or the requirements, training will be provided. The Town shall maintain a record of the dates when training is provided.

4.5 Feedback

The ultimate goal of the Town of Greater Napanee is to meet and surpass customer expectations while serving customers with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback regarding the way the Town of Greater Napanee provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made by using a feedback form, by mail, e-mail, or verbally. All feedback will be directed to the Manager of Safety & Compliance & Accessibility. Customers can expect a response within thirty (30) days. All feedback will be documented and tracked and provided in accessible formats and with communication supports upon request.

4.6 Documentation

Documentation that describes this Policy and its requirements shall be maintained on the Town's website and provided to individuals, upon request, in the appropriate format or communication support.

5.0 Customer Service Standard

5.1 Assistive devices

The Town of Greater Napanee is committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services.

Staff shall accommodate the use of personal assistive devices including but not limited to, wheelchairs, canes, walkers, and scooters. The Town of Greater Napanee will also ensure that staff are aware of and where appropriate know how to use the assistive devices available on our premises for customers, including elevators and lifts.

5.2 Service animals

The Town of Greater Napanee is committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal, in the areas of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties.

If you cannot easily identify that the animal is a service animal, you can ask the person to provide documentation from a regulated health professional. The documentation must confirm that the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

5.3 Support persons

The Town of Greater Napanee is committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to access goods and services with their support person. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on our premises.

A “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. No admission will be charged to the support person for admission into Town owned facilities or Town operated events. The Town of Greater Napanee will recommend to groups renting Town owned facilities to adopt a similar policy and not charge a support person who is accompanying a person with a disability.

5.4 Notice of service disruption

The Town of Greater Napanee will provide customers with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

The notice will be placed at all public entrances and service counters on our premises, posted on the Town’s website or by such other method as is reasonable in the circumstances.

6.0 Information and Communication Support Standards

6.1 Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

The Town of Greater Napanee shall, upon request, and in consultation with the person making the request, provide or make arrangements to provide accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities. Accessible formats and communication supports shall be provided in a timely manner, taking into account the person's accessibility needs and at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

- Accessible formats may include, but are not limited to large print, recorded audio and electronic formats and braille;
- Communication supports may include but are not limited to captioning, plain language and sign language

If it is determined that information or communications are unconvertible, the department shall provide the person requesting the information or communication.

Notice to the public about our commitment to provide materials in an accessible format or with communications supports, upon request is posted at the front entrances/counters at all our office locations and on our website.

6.2 Procurement of Goods, Services, Facilities and Kiosks

The Town of Greater Napanee will have regard for accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services, self-service kiosks or facilities, except where it is not practical to do so (in which case, if requested, an explanation will be provided.)

6.3 Communication

When communicating with a person with a disability, Town employees, volunteers and third party contractors shall do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability. Guidelines for communicating with people who have various types of disabilities are provided in the appendix Customer Services Best Practices.

6.4 Terminology

When referring to people with disabilities, Town employees, volunteers and third party contractors shall use terminology that adheres to guidelines provided in the Customer Service Best Practices.

6.5 Emergency Information

The Town of Greater Napanee will provide its emergency procedures, plans or public safety information which are made available to the public, in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, as soon as practicable, upon request.

6.6 Website Accessibility

The Town of Greater Napanee shall make any new web content on its internet website conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level A and AA in accordance with the AODA.

7.0 Employment Standards

The Employment Standard builds upon the existing requirements under the Ontario Human Rights Code in relation to how to accommodate individuals with disabilities throughout the job application process and the employment relationship. It applies in respect to employees and does not apply to volunteers and other non-paid individuals.

7.1 Recruitment

The Town of Greater Napanee shall post information about the availability of accommodations for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment process. Job applicants who are individually selected for an interview and/or testing shall be notified that accommodations for material to be used in the process are available, upon request. The Town shall consult with any applicant who requests an accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's disability. Successful applicants shall be notified about the Town's policies for accommodating employees with disabilities as part of their offer of employment.

7.2 Employee Supports

The Town will inform employees of the policies used to support employees with disabilities, including policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability. The Town will

provide this information to new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment and provide updated information to all employees. Whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability.

7.3 Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

Upon an employee's request, the Town shall consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for:

- information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job; and
- information that is generally available to employees in the workplace.

The Town will consult with the employee making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

7.4 Individual Accommodation Plans (IAP)

The Town of Greater Napanee shall have in place a written process for the development of a documented individual accommodation plan for employees with a disability. The process will include:

- The employee's participation in the development of the IAP;
- Assessment on an individual basis;
- Identification of accommodations to be provided;
- Timelines for the provision of accommodations;

The Town of Greater Napanee may request an evaluation by outside medical or other expert, at our expense, to assist with determining accommodation and how to achieve accommodation. Employee may request the participation of a representative from their bargaining agent, where represented, or otherwise a representative from the workplace not from a bargaining agent. If denied, the reasons for denial are to be provided to the employee.

If requested, any information regarding accessible formats and communication supports shall be provided and include individualized workplace emergency response information.

7.5 Return to Work Process

The Town of Greater Napanee will have a return to work process in place for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work. Such processes will

be documented and will outline the steps that the Town of Greater Napanee will take to facilitate the return to work and include an individual accommodation plan.

7.6 Performance Management and Career Development and Redeployment

The Town shall take into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities as well as any individual accommodation plans when providing career development, performance management and when considering redeployment.

7.7 Workplace Emergency Response Information

If an employee's disability is such that workplace emergency response information is necessary and the Town is aware of the need for accommodation, this information shall be provided to employees. In addition, this information shall be provided, with the employee's consent, to the person designated to provide assistance. The information shall be reviewed when the employee moves to a different location.

8.0 Transportation Standards

The Transportation Standard will make it easier for people to travel on specialized and public transit and in taxicabs in Ontario, including persons with disabilities, older Ontarians and families traveling with children in strollers.

The Town of Greater Napanee is not a provider of specialized or public transit however, will meet the accessible taxi needs of the community.

8.1 Taxicabs

Owner and operators of taxicabs licensed by the Town are prohibited from charging additional fares or fees to persons with disabilities than for persons without disabilities and for the storage of mobility aids or mobility assistive devices.

The Town requires that taxicabs have appropriate information displayed on the rear bumper and available in an accessible format to passengers.

9.0 Design of Public Spaces

The Town shall comply with the AODA Design of Public Spaces Standards when undertaking new construction and redevelopment of public spaces in the following areas:

- Recreational trails and beach access routes;
- Outdoor public use eating areas;
- Outdoor play spaces;
- Exterior paths of travel;
- Accessible Parking;
- Obtaining Services; and
- Maintenance of accessible elements

10.0 Responsibilities

The Manager of Safety Compliance & Accessibility is responsible for reviewing this Policy annually and recommending amendments to ensure on-going compliance with regulated accessibility standards and legislated obligations.

- The Manager of Safety Compliance & Accessibility shall provide advice and direction on the implementation of this Policy.
- Supervisors and managers shall ensure that they and their staff are familiar with and comply with this Policy.