

# The City of St. Catharines Accessibility Policy

- **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act**
- **Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Policy**



Building a more  
**Accessible** St. Catharines

# Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation

## General Requirements

Information and Communications Standard

Employment Standard

Transportation Standard

Design of Public Spaces Standard  
(Built Environment)

Customer Service

## Human Rights Code

# City of St. Catharines Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Policy

## 1. Statement of Organizational Commitment

The Corporation of the City of St. Catharines (herein after the “City”) is committed to developing, implementing, maintaining, and enhancing accessibility as set out under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) and its Standards for people with a disability, in a manner that:

- Reflects the principles of dignity and independence;
- Seeks to provide integrated services; and
- Provides opportunity equitable to others to obtain, use and benefit from its goods or services.

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set out the requirements of the AODA, Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) Ontario Regulation 191/11 (as amended) which reflects a number of accessibility standards that organizations across Ontario, including the City, are required to comply with.

This document has been organized into the following sections:

- Part I** General Requirements; Accessibility Plans, Procurement, Kiosks and Training
- Part II** Information and Communications Standards
- Part III** Employment Standards
- Part IV** Transportation Standards
- Part IV.1** Design of Public Spaces Standards
- Part IV.2** Customer Service Standards

Ontario Regulation 191/11 amended to add O. Reg. 413/12 (Design of Public Spaces Standards) and O. Reg. 165/16 (Customer Service Standards) which revokes O. Reg. 429/07 and 430/07.

The requirements set out in this policy and the IASR are not a replacement or a substitution for the requirements established under the Ontario Human Rights Code nor do the standards or policy limit any obligations owed to persons with disabilities under any other legislation. Terms are as defined by the AODA and its Standards and are referred to herein with that intent.

### **3. Scope and Responsibility**

This policy applies to all City of St. Catharines employees and volunteers as well as other third parties acting on behalf of the City for the provision of goods, services, programs and facilities.

## **4. Procedures: Policy Principles and Requirements**

### **Part I: General Requirements**

#### **4.1 Accessibility Plans**

The City will establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan that outlines its strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meets its requirements under the IASR.

The multi-year accessibility plan will be;

- posted on the City's website and be provided in an accessible format, upon request, as soon as is practicable.
- reviewed and updated at least once every five years
- established, reviewed and updated in consultation with persons with disabilities and the St. Catharines' Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC)

The City will;

- prepare an annual status report on the progress of measures taken to implement the multi-year accessibility plan
- post the status report on its website and provide the report in an accessible format, upon request, as soon as is practicable.

## 4.2 Procurement

When procuring or acquiring goods, services, self-service kiosks or facilities, the City shall incorporate accessibility criteria and features, unless it is not feasible (practicable). If not practicable, the City shall provide an explanation, upon request.

## 4.3 Training

As required by the IASR, the City shall ensure that the following persons are provided training on (1) the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in the IASR and (2) on the Human Rights Code, as it pertains to persons with disabilities;

- all employees and volunteers;
- all persons who participate in developing the organization's policies; and,
- all other persons or third parties who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the organization shall continue to be trained and meet AODA obligations as part of the City's procurement process.

The training on the requirements of the IASR and the Human Rights Code shall be appropriate to the duties of the employees, volunteers and other persons. Record of the training provided including the dates shall be kept of employees by the Human Resources Department.

## Part II: Information and Communication Requirements

### 4.4 Feedback

The City welcomes public feedback on the accessibility of its goods, services and facilities through various formats and methods of communications and, upon request, can provide accessible formats and communication supports when receiving and responding to feedback.

## 4.5 Accessible Formats

The City will;

- notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports
- upon request, provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities;
  - in a timely manner that takes into account the person’s accessibility needs;
  - by consulting with the person making the request to determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication support; and,
  - at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

**Exceptions**, the IASR does not apply to the following;

- product and product labels,
- unconvertible information or communications,
- information that the City does not control directly or indirectly through a contractual relationship

If the City determines that information or communications are unconvertible, the City shall provide the person requesting the information or communication with an explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible and a summary of the unconvertible information or communications.

Information or communications are unconvertible if, it is not technically feasible to convert the information or communications; or the technology to convert the information or communications is not readily available.

## 4.6 Emergency Information

The City shall provide publicly available emergency procedures, plans or public safety information in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, upon request, as soon as practicable.

## **4.7 Website Accessibility**

The City shall make their internet website and web content conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 initially at Level A and increasing to Level AA. By January 1, 2014, any new web content shall conform to WCAG 2.0 Level A. By January 1, 2021 all internet website and web content shall conform to WCAG 2.0 Level AA (exceptions; Captions (live), Audio Descriptions (pre-recorded)).

## **4.8 Public Library**

Public Library Boards;

- shall provide access to or arrange for the provision of access to accessible materials where they exist;
- shall make information about the availability of accessible materials publicly available and shall provide information in accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, upon request;
- may provide accessible formats for archival materials, special collections and rare books.

## **Part III: Employment Requirements**

### **4.9 Scope and Interpretation**

The Accessible Employment Standard applies to paid employees and does not apply to volunteers and other unpaid individuals.

### **4.10 Recruitment and Notification**

The City shall notify;

- employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities during the assessment or selection process
- job applicants selected to participate in an assessment or selection process relating to the materials or processes to be used that;
  - accommodations are available upon request
  - accommodations will take into consideration the applicants disability
  - accommodations will be based on consultation between the employer and applicant
- successful applicants of City policies and any other additional supports pertaining to the accommodation of employees with disabilities

#### **4.11 Employee; Accessible Formats and Supports**

The City will provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication job supports, upon request.

#### **4.12 Employee; Workplace Emergency Information**

The City will provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability, upon request.

#### **4.13 Accommodation Plans**

The City has a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.

#### **4.14 Return to Work**

The City has a return to work process for employees who have been absent due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work.

#### **4.15 Performance Management, Career development, Redeployment**

The City's performance management will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans.

The City's career development/advancement or redeployment will take into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans.

### **Part IV: Transportation Requirements**

#### **4.16 The Transportation Standard**

The Transportation Standard policy is written and approved by the St. Catharines Transit Commission (approved by Council 2012-03-19).

## Part IV.1: Design of Public Spaces Requirements

The City is committed to designing public spaces that are accessible to its residents and visitors. The City will provide opportunity for public consultation as stated in the regulation which includes the public, people with disabilities and the municipal accessibility advisory committee. Areas of consultation include; recreational trails, outdoor play spaces, exterior pathway rest areas and on-street parking.

The City will continue to apply the Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS) and/or the Design of Public Spaces Standards, whichever is greatest.

The City will comply with the Design of Public Spaces Standards with respect to public spaces that are newly constructed or redeveloped, including:

### 4.17 Recreational trails and beach access routes

### 4.18 Outdoor public use eating areas

### 4.19 Outdoor play spaces

### 4.20 Exterior paths or travel

### 4.21 Accessible parking

### 4.22 Obtaining services

### 4.23 Maintenance



The City's accessibility planning includes procedures for preventative and/or emergency maintenance and temporary disruptions with respect to its accessible elements in outdoor spaces.

## Part IV.2: Customer Service Requirements

### 4.24 Scope, interpretation and policies

Further to the aforementioned requirements within this Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy, the City applies definitions and creates policies relating to accessible customer service as follows:

### 4.25 Service animals and support persons

#### 4.25.1 Service animals

Persons with a disability can be accompanied by a guide dog or service animal on City premises, unless otherwise excluded by law.

If a guide dog or service animal is excluded by reason of law, rule or regulation from the City's premises, the provider of services shall use reasonable efforts to ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the provider's good, services or facilities.

- A Guide Dog (as defined in Section 1 of the Blind Person's Rights Act)
- Service Animal for a person with a disability is recognized;
  - if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to the person's disability; or
  - if the person provides documentation from a regulated health professional confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the person's disability.
- A regulated health professional is member of Ontario's College of;
  - Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists
  - Chiropractors
  - Occupational Therapists
  - Optometrists
  - Physicians and Surgeons
  - Physiotherapists
  - Psychologists
  - Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists

## 4.25.2 Support persons

The City welcomes a person who accompanies a person with a disability to assist that person with a disability for purposes of communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or with access to goods, services or facilities.

Both are welcome together and a person with a disability shall not be prevented from having access to the support person while on a City premises.

City staff;

- may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on City premises based on consultation and consideration of available evidence;
  - that a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of other persons,
  - that there is no other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of other persons.
- shall be notified by either of the parties of the presence of a support person
- shall waive admission fees for a support person who accompanies a person with a disability, into facilities or programs where admission is charged.

## 4.26 Notice of temporary disruptions

The City will provide notice of service disruption in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in services or facilities usually used by persons with a disability. This notice shall include information about the reasons for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternatives.

**Notice of Temporary Service Disruption**

**Reason/Nature of Disruption:**  
[e.g. elevator is temporarily out of service, pool machinery malfunction, broken door, toilet repair.  
Note: TES Construction, has large signs available for exterior use; park or trail flooding, sidewalk or road construction.]

**Anticipated Duration of Disruption:**  
[e.g. 1 hour, 1 day. If extended disruption is anticipated consider additional notification via website, media or contacting affected individuals, such as swimming patrons during pool closures.]

**Alternative Options:**  
[e.g. another elevator, door, route or location for services.]

Date: Select a date      Contact: 905.688.5601 x



## 4.27 Training

Further to Sec. 4.3, training on customer service to persons with a disability is provided to all employees, volunteers or other third parties who provide customer service on behalf of the Corporation, and to those who are involved in the development and approvals of City policies, practices and procedures.

Training on customer service to persons with disabilities will be held at orientation and periodically or upon AODA changes, and shall include;

- purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the requirements of the Customer Service Standards
- how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- how to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog, service animal or support person
- how to use equipment or devices available at the City or otherwise provided by the City to help with the provision of goods, services or facilities to a person with a disability
- what to do if a person with particular type of disability is having difficulty in accessing goods, services or facilities
- resources on corporate policy, practices and procedures relating to the AODA and Customer Service Standards

## 4.28 Feedback process

Refer to 4.4 of Information and Communication requirements

## 4.29 Format of documents

Refer to 4.5 of Information and Communication requirements

## Application:

Ontario's Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) includes municipalities, all paid staff, volunteers and third parties.

Compliance: Any violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## Disability means;

- a) 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,
- b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- d) 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; ("handicap")."







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