

THE CORPORATION OF THE
MUNICIPALITY OF GREENSTONE

POLICY MANUAL

SECTION: Community Services

SUBJECT: Accessibility
Standards

DATE: December 16, 2013

AUTHORIZATION: Resolution 13-334

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of The Corporation of the Municipality of Greenstone to strive at all times to provide access to its goods, services, programs and facilities in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. The Municipality is committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity for access, and allows them the benefits of the same services, in the same place and in a similar manner as other customers. This commitment extends to residents, visitors and employees with visible or non-visible disabilities.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- develop procedures and practices which address integration, independence, dignity and equal opportunity,
- comply with the legislative requirements prescribed under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* and all regulations pursuant to the *Act*,
- promote accessibility.

MULTI-YEAR PLAN

The Municipality of Greenstone will establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year Accessibility Plan, which outlines the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet the Accessibility Standards. Completion of this task will be led by the Accessibility Working Group.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Council of The Corporation of the Municipality of Greenstone, employees, volunteers, contractors, agents and any other individual who interacts with the public or other third parties, on behalf of the Municipality, in accordance with the legislation.

DEFINITIONS

“assistive devices” means any auxiliary aids such as communication aids, cognition aids, personal mobility aids and medical aids (i.e. canes, crutches, wheelchairs, or hearing aids).

“barrier” means anything that keeps someone with a disability from participating fully in society because of his or her disability. A barrier can be visible or invisible. An example of a visible barrier is a building with steps but no ramp. An example of a barrier that is invisible is a policy that sets a time limit for completing a test for employment or for training or promotion opportunities.

“disability” means the *Ontario Human Rights Code's* definition of “disability.” This definition includes physical, mental health, developmental and learning disabilities. A disability may be visible or not visible:

- 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 coordination, 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;
- e. 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”)

“a person with a disability” means an individual who is afflicted with a disability as defined under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

“service animals” means any animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability.

“support person” means any person whether a paid professional, volunteer, family member, or friend who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communications, personal care or medical needs, or with access to goods or services.

GENERAL

The Corporation of the Municipality of Greenstone will carry out its functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

1. Establishment of Accessibility Plans and Policies

The Municipality shall produce a multi-year Accessibility Plan. The plan will be posted on the Municipal Website (www.greenstone.ca) and shall be made available in an accessible format and with communication supports, upon request. Progress on the plan will be provided annually in a report to Council.

A copy of this policy and other information regarding Municipally owned accessible equipment or features will be posted on the Municipal Website and made available free-of-charge to the public at

each Ward Office. This Policy shall be reviewed and, if necessary, updated at least once every term of Council.

2. Procurement of Goods, Services, Programs and Facilities

When procuring goods, services, programs or facilities, the Municipality shall incorporate accessibility criteria and features, unless it is not feasible (practicable). If not practicable, the Municipality shall provide an explanation, upon request.

3. Training

The Municipality will provide Accessibility Awareness Training to members of Council, staff and volunteers. New employees and volunteers will receive Accessibility Awareness Training as soon as practical after beginning their employment.

The Municipality will also provide ongoing training with respect to changes in its policies, practices, and procedures to those individuals who require such training as soon as practicable. The Municipality will keep records of the training provided.

Agents and contractors of The Corporation of the Municipality of Greenstone who deal with the public during their work for the Municipality will provide proof of 'Accessibility Awareness' training (as part of their contractual agreement with the Municipality) prior to their work for the Municipality. The Municipality may, at its discretion, provide the necessary training to its agents and contractors if required.

COMMUNICATION

The Municipality will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

The Municipality 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.

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

- a) An explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible;
- b) A summary of the unconvertible information or communications.

Emergency Procedures, Plan and Information

The Municipality shall provide all existing public emergency procedures, plans and public safety information, upon request, in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports in a timely manner.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

1. Use of Guide Dogs and Service Animals

If a person with a disability is accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal, the Municipality 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 Municipality will look to other available measures to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Municipality's goods and services.

2. 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 Municipality 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.

3. Fees for Support Persons

Fees will not be charged for support persons accompanying persons with disabilities. Customers will be informed of this by public notice.

4. Notice of Temporary Disruption

If there is a temporary disruption in a particular facility or service used to allow a person with a disability to access goods or services, the Municipality will provide notice of the disruption to the public. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

Recruitment

The Municipality of Greenstone will notify its employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in our recruitment processes.

We will notify applicants when they are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process that accommodations, in relation to the materials or processes to be used, are available upon request. If a selected applicant requests an accommodation, we will consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for the provision of a suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability.

When making offers of employment, successful applicants will be notified of our policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

Employee Supports

The Municipality of Greenstone 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 Municipality 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.

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

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

Workplace Emergency Response Information

If an employee's disability is such that workplace emergency response information is necessary and the Municipality 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 undergo review when the employee moves to a different location, when the employee's overall accommodation needs or plans are reviewed and when the Municipality reviews its general emergency response plan.

Individual Accommodation Plans

The Municipality of Greenstone will establish and maintain a written process for the development of individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.

The individual accommodation plans shall:

- If requested, include any information regarding accessible formats and communication.
- Supports provided.

- If required, include individualized workplace emergency response information.
- Identify any other accommodation that is to be provided.

TRANSPORTATION STANDARDS

Although the Municipality of Greenstone does not presently license taxicabs within the municipality, those owners/operators are encouraged to adhere to the AODA guidelines regarding taxicab accessibility.

FEEDBACK PROCESS

Feedback about barriers to accessibility and the ways the Municipality provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made:

- by filling out the Customer Feedback Form (Appendix 'A' attached) available at all Ward Offices
- by email to: administration@greenstone.ca
- verbally at any Ward Office.

All feedback will be directed to the Clerk.

Customers can expect to hear back within 21 days of the receipt of the feedback by the Clerk.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS POLICY

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to customers with disabilities.

If anyone has a question about the policy, or if the purpose of a policy is not understood, they may contact the Office of the Clerk at 807-854-1100 or by email at: administration@greenstone.ca.

THE CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF GREENSTONE

Customer Feedback Form

Thank you for visiting _____.

Please tell us the date and time of your visit: _____

Did we respond to your customer service needs today? YES NO

Was our customer service provided to you in an accessible manner?

YES SOMEWHAT NO (please explain below)

Did you have any problems accessing our goods and services?

YES (please explain below) SOMEWHAT (please explain below)
 NO

Please add any other comments you may have:

Customer contact information (*optional*): _____
