



Township of Brock

Accessible Customer Service

1. Background and Scope

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (A.O.D.A.) was proclaimed in 2005 with the stated intention to “achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures, and premises on or before January 1, 2025.” Section 6 of the A.O.D.A., permits the Provincial government to make regulations establishing accessibility standards which are applicable to public and private sector organizations. In order to achieve this vision, the Provincial government has issued five standards under A.O.D.A.: customer service, transportation, communication and information, employment, and built environment.

The first standard is the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07, which was made on July 25, 2007 and became effective on January 1, 2008. The purpose of this regulation is to establish accessibility standards for the delivery of customer service by the broader public and private sector. For the broader public sector, including the Township of Brock, the standard must be complied with by January 1, 2010.

The Accessibility Standard for Customer Service requires that the municipality develop policies, procedures, and practices, on the provisions of goods and services to persons with disabilities and must address the following:

- The use of service animals and/or support persons;
- The use of assistive devices;
- Training of employees and volunteers on the provisions of the A.O.D.A. and Ontario Regulation 429/07;
- Customer feedback regarding the provision of service to persons with disabilities;
- Provision of notice when services are disrupted; and,
- Municipal reporting to the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario;
- Notice of availability and format of documents; and
- Communication to persons with disabilities.

2. Purpose

This document outlines how the Township will meet the requirements of the A.O.D.A., 2005 and all related provisions relative to the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (A.O.D.A.) in order to ensure that persons with disabilities are provided equal opportunities within a standardized service delivery model.

3. Scope

This document applies to all persons who deal with members of the public on behalf of the Township of Brock, whether the person does so as an employee or volunteer of the municipality. This document also applies to all persons who participate in the development of policies, practices, and procedures guiding service delivery in the Township of Brock.

4. Definitions

“Accessible formats” may include, but are not limited to large print, recorded audio, electronic formats, and other formats useable by person with disabilities

“Employee” means any paid employee, including, but not limited to, full-time, part-time, paid apprenticeships, and seasonal employees.

“Guide Dog” means a guide dog as defined in section 1 of the Blind Persons’ Rights Act.

“Mobility Assistive Device” means a cane, walker or similar aid.

“Service animal” means an animal for a person with disability if:

- (a) the animal can be readily identified as one that is being used by the person for reasons relating to the person’s disability, as a result of visual indicators such as the vest or harness worn by the animal; or
- (b) the person provides documentation from one of the following regulated health professionals as listed in Section 80.45 (4) (b) of the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/22, confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

“Support Person” means another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods, services or facilities. Support persons may be employed by a person with a disability to provide assistance to them in the form of communication, mobility, personal care, or medical needs, or with access to the receipt of goods or services. Support persons may be a paid professional, a volunteer, a family member, or friend of the person with a disability.

“Volunteer” means any non-paid individual who acts on behalf of the municipality, including, but is not limited to, any individual appointed by Council to a Board or Committee, camp or recreational program volunteer, or co-op student.

5. Overriding Principles

It shall be the policy of the Township of Brock that good and services offered by the municipality shall be provided in a manner that:

- Respects the dignity and independence of persons with a disability;
- Shall be integrated with others, unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or permanently, to enable persons with a disability to obtain or benefit from the good or service;

- Persons with a disability shall be given equal opportunity to that given to others to obtain, use, and benefit from the goods and services; and,
- When communicating with a person with a disability, a provider shall do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

6. General Principles

6.1 Communication

Communications from the Township of Brock to a person with a disability will be provided in such a manner which takes into account an individual's disability and addresses such forms as print material and the municipal website.

It shall be the policy of the Township of Brock to ensure that its website meets the World Wide Web Consortium Accessibility Guidelines.

The municipality will, upon request, provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities as outlined in the Township of Brock Accessible Formats Policy. Staff will consult with the requester on the most appropriate format and will make every effort to provide such information in a timely manner.

6.2 Assistive Devices

Personal assistive devices may be used by certain persons with a disability. Examples of which may include a cane, walker, hearing aid, oxygen tanks, etc. In addition, the municipality provides a number of assistive devices for the benefit of all persons using or accessing goods and services provided by the Township of Brock. These include elevators and lifts in most buildings owned and operated by the municipality, an amplification system for the hard of hearing within the Council chambers, magnifying glasses at each of the service counters within the municipal office, provision of handicapped parking spaces in certain locations, and a W3C compliant website.

It shall be the policy of the Township of Brock that persons with a disability shall not be barred from the use of their own personal assistive devices, or those which may be offered by the municipality, while accessing goods and services offered in any facility owned and operated by the municipality.

6.3 Service Animals

It shall be the policy of the Township of Brock that service animals shall be permitted to accompany any person with a disability in any facility owned and operated by the municipality, except where excluded by applicable law (e.g. food preparation areas).

In those cases where a service animal poses a health and safety risk to another person, it shall be the policy of the Township of Brock to make alternate arrangements to accommodate both parties (alternate rooms, exits, etc.)

6.4 Support Persons

It shall be the policy of the Township of Brock that support persons shall be permitted to accompany any person with a disability in any facility owned and operated by the municipality and that the support person is not prevented from having access to the support person while on the premises.

In certain cases, the municipality, at its discretion, may require the support person to sign a confidentiality agreement prior to an exchange of information with the person with a disability.

In certain cases, the municipality may require the attendance of a support person with the person with a disability, but only if, after consulting with the person with a disability and considering the available evidence, the municipality determines that:

- a support person is necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises; and
- there is no other reasonable way to protect the health and safety of the person with a disability and the health and safety of others on the premises.

In those cases where a fee may be charged both the person with a disability and the support person accompanying them shall pay the applicable fee. If the municipality requires a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises, the municipality shall waive payment of the applicable fees, if any.

6.5 Service Disruptions

From time to time, certain services provided to persons with a disability may be suspended due to scheduled maintenance or unexpected causes (e.g. elevator malfunction).

It shall be the policy of the Township of Brock that notice shall be provided, through signage on-site, of any disruption of a service which may affect persons with a disability. In the event of a planned disruption to occur on a specified date(s), notice shall be provided on-site, the municipal website, and contact directly with an individual with a pre-scheduled appointment.

The signage shall include the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, are available.

6.6 Training

General

The municipality shall ensure that following persons receive training on the delivery of goods and services to persons with a disability:

- Every person who is an employee of, or a volunteer with, the municipality;
- Every person who participates in the development of the provider's policies; and
- Every person who provides goods, services or facilities on behalf of the municipality.

Further, every person above shall be trained as soon as possible and on-going training shall be provided when policies, practices, and procedures are altered.

Content

Staff training will address the following matters:

- The purpose of the A.O.D.A. and the requirements of this standard;
- Policies and procedures of the municipality;
- Instruction on staff interaction and communication with persons with various types of disabilities;
- Instruction on how to interact with persons with a disability who may use assistive devices or require the assistance of a guide dog, service animal, or a support person;
- Instruction on how to use equipment or devices available within the ownership of the municipality to assist persons with a disability access goods and services; and,
- Instruction on what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing services provided by the municipality.

Record Keeping

It shall be the policy of the Township of Brock that accurate records of training delivered to municipal staff and volunteers will be maintained by the municipality and made available for inspection as may be required. Information maintained with respect to training records is subject to the MFIPPA.

6.7 Feedback Mechanism

The Township of Brock shall receive feedback on the delivery of its goods and services through regular mail, email, telephone, facsimile, on diskette or otherwise. The municipality will, upon request, arrange for accessible formats and/or communication supports. Feedback shall be addressed to the Municipal Clerk.

Upon receipt, the Municipal Clerk shall investigate the matter with the appropriate personnel and provide a written response within thirty (30) days.

Concerns expressed with respect to property/ facilities which may be owned by the Regional Municipality of Durham shall be forwarded to the Regional Clerk together with a response

6.8 Availability & Format of Documents

A copy of this policy is available upon request by contacting the Municipal Clerk. In addition, a copy of this policy is available on the Township website, www.townshipofbrock.ca under the accessibility section.

Should a request for this document be made by a person with a disability, the Township will provide this policy in a format which takes into account their disability.

*Adopted by Resolution No. 16-10 at the August 8, 2016 Council.