

Head, Clara & Maria Policies and Procedures			
DEPARTMENT: Administration			POLICY #: A-04
POLICY NAME: Accessibility Policy			
DATE: April 2013	REV. DATE: June 2023	APPROVED BY: Council	PAGE #: 1 of 7

PURPOSE:

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07, was created under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). The standard came into effect on January 1, 2008. It sets out obligations for certain persons, businesses and other organizations to provide goods or services in a way that is accessible to people with disabilities in Ontario. The policy is drafted in accordance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario regulation 429/07).

STATEMENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT:

The United Townships of Head, Clara and Maria is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities and are committed to treating people with disabilities in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. The Municipality believes in integration, is committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner and will do so by removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and meeting our accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and Ontario's accessibility laws.

DEFINITIONS:

"Accessibility standard" means an accessibility standard made by regulation under section 6 of the AODA.

"Assistive Device" means any device that is designed and/or adapted to assist a person to perform a particular task (for example, canes, crutches, wheelchairs, walkers, communication aids and ventilators etc.).

"Barrier" means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or practice.

"Blind person" means a person who because of blindness is dependent on a guide dog or white cane.

"Disability" means,

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, muteness or speech impediment,

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or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;

A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;

A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;

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.

“Guide Dog” means a dog trained as a guide for a blind person and having the qualifications prescribed by the regulations under the Blind Persons Rights Act.

“Municipality” means the municipal Corporation of the United Townships of Head, Clara and Maria.

“Service Animal” means any animal used by a person with a disability for reasons relating to the disability where it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to his or her disability.

“Support Person” means a person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to assist him or her with communication, mobility, personal care, or medical needs or with access to goods and services.

PRINCIPLE:

The United Townships of Head, Clara and Maria will use reasonable efforts to ensure its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following principles:

The Municipality’s goods and services are provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities;

The provision of municipal goods and services to persons with disabilities are integrated with those provided to persons who do not have disabilities unless an alternative measure is necessary to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Municipality’s goods and services; and

Persons with disabilities are given an opportunity equal to that of persons without disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from the Municipality’s goods and services.

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TRAINING:

The Municipality is committed to training all staff and volunteers in accessible customer service, other Ontario's accessibility standards and aspects of the Ontario Human Rights Code that relate to persons with disabilities. The amount and format of training given will be tailored to suit each person's interactions with the public and his/her involvement in the development of policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of goods and services.

Training includes:

- the purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the Customer Service Standards;
- municipal policies related to 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 service animal or a support person;
- how to use the equipment or devices available on-site or otherwise that may help with providing goods, services or facilities to people with disabilities; and
- what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing the Municipality's goods, services or facilities.

The Municipality will train every person as soon as practical after being hired and provide training in respect of any changes to the policy. The Municipality maintains records of the training provided including the dates on which the training was provided and the number of individuals to whom it was provided.

COMMUNICATION:

When communicating with a person with a disability, the Municipality will do so in a manner that considers the person's disability. The Municipality will work with the person with disabilities to determine what method of communication works for them.

The Municipality will, upon request, provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities in a timely manner:

- that considers the person's accessibility needs due to disability; and
- at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

The Municipality will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an alternative format or communication support.

ASSISTED DEVICES:

People with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing our goods, services

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or facilities. In cases where the assistive device presents a significant and unavoidable health or safety concern or may not be permitted for other reasons, other measures will be used to ensure the person with a disability can access our goods, services or facilities where the Municipality has such other measures available.

It should be noted that it is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure his/her assistive device is operated in a safe and controlled manner at all times.

SERVICE ANIMALS:

Persons with a disability may enter premises owned and operated by the Municipality accompanied by a service animal and keep the animal with them if the public has access to such premises and the animal is not otherwise excluded by law. If the service animal 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. The safety, care and protection of the community at large will take priority over any individual.

If it is not readily apparent the animal is a service animal, the Municipality may ask the person with a disability for a letter from a qualified medical physician confirming the person requires the animal for reasons relating to his/her disability. The Municipality may also, instead, ask for a certificate of training from a recognized guide dog or service animal training school.

It should be noted it is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure his/her service animal is kept in control at all times.

SUPPORT PERSONS:

The Municipality welcomes persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. Support people assist people with disabilities in a variety of ways, by assisting with communication such as an intervener, sign language interpreter, or as a personal support worker providing physical assistance. A support person may also be a volunteer, friend or relative who will assist and support the customer.

The Municipality may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person while on its premises only if it is necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises

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. Support persons are non-participants and are allowed free admission to the goods and/or services being accessed by the person with a disability they are accompanying. If an amount is payable by a support person for admission to the premises or in connection with a person's presence at the

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premises, notice shall be given in advance about the amount, if any, payable in respect of the support person.

NOTICE OF TEMPORARY DISRUPTION:

Temporary disruptions in municipal services or facilities may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the Municipality's control or knowledge. The Municipality will make reasonable effort to provide notice of the disruption to the public, including information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

If the disruption is anticipated, the Municipality will provide a reasonable amount of advance notice of the disruption.

The Municipality will provide notice by posting the information:

in visible places (post office flyer boards, front entrance to municipal office);

on the municipal website (www.townshipsofheadclaramaria.ca);

via the community email list; and/or

by any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances as soon as reasonably possible.

FEEDBACK PROCESS:

The goal of the Municipality is to meet and surpass customer expectations while serving customers with disabilities. Feedback from the public is welcomed as it may help to identify areas that require change and encourage continuous service improvement. The public can provide feedback to the Municipality on the delivery of goods and services to persons with disabilities:

(a) By mail addressed to:

Municipal Clerk
15 Township Hall Road
Stonecliffe, ON K0J 2K0

(b) By telephone: 613-586-2526

(c) In person at: Clerk's Office, Municipal Office

(d) By e-mail to: clerk@headclaramaria.ca

Feedback will not be acted upon unless the person providing the feedback includes his/her name, mailing address and telephone number. Customers can expect to hear back within ten (10) business days from its receipt. Information about the feedback process will be posted on the municipal website (www.townshipsofheadclaramaria.ca) and/or in other appropriate locations.

The Municipality ensures our feedback process is accessible to people with disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports, on request.

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NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS:

The Municipality is committed to raising awareness towards accessibility and to breaking down barriers for persons with disabilities in order for them to have the same kind of opportunities as everyone else. This policy shall be made available at the municipal office and shall be made available to anyone upon request. The Municipality will provide these documents in an accessible format or with communication support, on request, and will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of the format or communication support. The Municipality will provide the accessible format in a timely manner and, at no additional cost.

PROCUREMENT:

The Municipality incorporates accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities. If it is not possible and practical to do so, the Municipality will provide an explanation upon request.

EMPLOYMENT:

The Municipality notifies employees, job applicants and the public that accommodations can be made during the recruitment and hiring process. The Municipality notifies job applicants when they are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process that accommodations are available upon request. The Municipality consults with the applicants and provides or arranges for suitable accommodation. The Municipality notifies successful applicants of policies for accommodating employees with disabilities when making offers of employment.

The Municipality notifies staff that supports are available for those with disabilities as soon as practicable after they begin their employment and provide updated information to employees whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodation that consider an employee's accessibility needs due to a disability.

The municipality will consult with employees when arranging for the provision of suitable accommodation in a manner that considers the accessibility needs due to disability. The Municipality will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication supports specifically for:

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

Where needed, the Municipality will also provide customized emergency information to help an employee with a disability during an emergency. With the employee's consent, the Municipality will provide workplace emergency information to a designated person who assisting that employee during an emergency.

The Municipality will provide the information as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability.

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The Municipality will review the individualized workplace emergency response information:
when the employee moves to a different location in the organization;
when the employee's overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed; and
when the employer reviews its general emergency response policies.

Performance management, career development and redeployment processes consider the accessibility needs of all employees.

DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES:

The Municipality will meet accessibility laws when building or making major changes to public spaces. Municipal public spaces include:

Recreational trails/beach access routes

Outdoor public eating areas like rest stops or picnic areas

Outdoor play spaces, like playgrounds in provincial parks and local communities

Accessible off-street parking

Accessible on-street parking

Service-related elements like service counters, fixed queueing lines and waiting areas

The Municipality has procedures in place to prevent service disruptions to the accessible parts of our public spaces.