



Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy

Policy Number: 18-26

Policy Approval Date: March 12, 2018

Policy Review Date: March 2021

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Huntsville Public Library:

- Provides all library resources, services, and facilities in ways that are equally accessible to all members of the community.
- Is compliant with the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07

Four principles that will guide policy development and accessible customer services are dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

Background Information

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) was passed with the goal of creating standards for accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025.

The first standard to become law in Ontario was the Accessible Customer Service Regulation 429/07 which came into force on January 1, 2008; Library Boards are expected to comply by January 1, 2010.

Definitions

- AODA** means the *Accessibility for Ontarians for Disabilities Act, 2005*.
- Assistive Device** means a device used to assist persons with disabilities in carrying out activities or in accessing library services.
- Customer** is being used in this policy in compliance with the A.O.D.A. Customer Standards. Huntsville Public Library 'customers' are termed users.
- Disability or Disabilities** means:
 - any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation of disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness, and without limiting the generality of the foregoing, including diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, 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 or service dog or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,

- An intellectual and/or 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.
- e. **Guide Dog** means a guide dog as defined in Section 1 of the Blind Persons' Rights Act: a dog trained as a guide for a blind person and having qualifications prescribed by the regulations under the Blind Persons' Rights Act.
- f. **Library Premises** means premises operated by the Huntsville Public Library.
- g. **Library Services** means what the Library does for, or offers to, the public in an effort to meet a defined set of core values and delivery promises including meeting community needs.
- h. **Persons who Provide Library Services** means all persons who deal with customers, or other third parties who deal with customers on the Library's behalf such as those providing program services or renting Library premises for performances and events open to the public. A person or third party can be an employee, volunteer, Board member, student on placement or otherwise engaged in the provision of library services to customers.
- i. **Principle of Dignity** means the treatment of a person with a disability as a customer who is as valued and as deserving of effective and full service as any other customer. Treatment is not an afterthought or forcing acceptance of lesser service, quality or convenience.
- j. **Principle of Equal Opportunity** means having the same chances, options, benefits and results as others. In the case of services it means that people with disabilities have the same opportunity as others to benefit from the way services are provided. People with disabilities should not have to make significantly more effort to access or obtain service and should not have to accept lesser quality and more inconvenience.
- k. **Principle of Independence** means freedom from control or influence of others or freedom to make one's own choices. It can also mean the freedom to do things in one's own way.

- l. **Principle of Integration** means allowing people with disabilities to fully benefit from the same services, in the same place and in the same or similar way as other customers.
- m. **Readily Apparent** means that an animal is a service animal when it is obvious by its appearance (examples: identification card, certificate, logo, harness) or by what it is doing (examples: opening doors, retrieving items, guiding).
- n. **Service Animal** means any animal used by a person with a disability for reasons related to the disability; or where the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that he or she requires the animal for reasons relating to his or her disability; or a valid identification card signed by the Attorney General of Canada or a certificate of training from a recognized guide dog or service animal training school.
- o. **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 Library services.
- p. **Universal Access** means to provide access to services for all people to the greatest extent possible without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

1. Customer Service Standard Statement

The Library is committed to providing quality services that are accessible to all persons who wish to obtain and use these services.

Guiding Principles:

- Library service is relevant, inclusive and responsive for all, including persons with disabilities. Each member of the community has an equal opportunity to access public library services.
- Library services are provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- The Library strives to provide “universal access” to library services for all people through integration unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from library services.
- The Library strives to provide library services in a way that meets the specific needs of the person with disabilities and is convenient and accessible to the person with disabilities.

2. Communication with Persons with Disabilities

Huntsville Public Library will communicate with people with a disability in ways that take into account their disability.

3. Notice of Service Disruptions

Huntsville Public Library will post a notice in the event of a temporary service disruption that would limit a person with a disability from gaining access to the Library. The notice will include the reason for the disruption, its duration and an alternative service if available. The Library will make the disruption known to customers through signage and by such other methods as is reasonable in the circumstances.

4. Service Animals and Guide Dogs

Guide dogs or other service animals are permitted in the Library. If it is not readily apparent that the animal is being used because of a person's disability, the person with a disability may be asked to show a letter from a medical professional confirming that the service animal is required for reasons relating to his or her disability. It is the responsibility of the person with the disability to ensure that the guide dog or service animal is kept in control.

5. Support Persons

A support person accompanying and assisting a person with a disability is welcome in the Library. When assisting a person with a disability to obtain or use Library services or to participate in a Library program, the support person will be permitted to attend at no charge where an admission fee is applicable. In situations where it is necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with the disability or the health and safety of others, the Library may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person.

6. Assistive Devices and Other Measures that Assist with Accessibility

A person with a disability may use their own assistive devices to access library service. It is the responsibility of the person using the assistive device to ensure that it is operated in a safe manner. Anyone with accessibility issues can seek assistance from Library staff.

7. Training

The Library will ensure that all persons to whom this policy applies receive training as required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service. The amount and format of training provided will be tailored to suit each person's interactions with the public and their involvement in the development of policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of goods and services.

At a minimum, the training will include:

- Review of the AODA and the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07).
- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require assistance of a service animal or the assistance of a support person.
- How to use equipment or devices provided by the Library that may help with the provision of goods or services to a person with a disability.
- How to assist a person with a particular type of disability who is having difficulty in accessing the Library's goods or services.

- Instruction on the Library's Policies and Procedures pertaining to the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities.

The specified training and information must be provided to each person to whom this policy applies as soon as practical after they are assigned the applicable duties as well as on an ongoing basis as changes occur to the Library's policies, procedures and practices governing the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities.

A record of the training provided, the date of the training and the recipients will be maintained. The names of individuals trained will be recorded for training administration purposes, subject to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Accessibility Services Feedback

In an effort to improve on the provision of Library goods and services to persons with disabilities, feedback from the public is welcome. To assist with the collection of feedback, the Library will maintain a Feedback form (Appendix A) and will accept comments in any form (in person, electronic format, written, etc.). All such feedback will be logged and all questions and concerns shall be acknowledged within a maximum of two (2) business days from the date of receipt. Response time to the feedback will depend on the issue, but will not exceed fifteen (15) business days unless there are extenuating circumstances. The comments and concerns collected through the feedback process will be provided to the Huntsville Accessibility Advisory Committee (H.A.A.C) subject to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Information on the feedback process will be readily available to the public through postings on Library premises, the Virtual Library (huntsvillelibrary.ca) and other appropriate locations.

Related Documents

- 2018-2022 Town of Huntsville Accessibility Plan
- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001
- HPL Accessibility Feedback Form (Attached)
- HPL Collection Development Policy
- HPL Facilities Maintenance Capital Asset Plan
- HPL IT Capital Asset Plan
- HPL Individuals with a Disability Policy
- HPL Programming Policy
- Ontario Human Rights Code
- Ontario Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service
- Other Accessibility Standards as approved into Regulation

History

Approved by the Huntsville Public Library Board March 12, 2018 | 18-26

June 8, 2015 | 15-62

June 15, 2011 | 11-32

