

# **Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Accessibility Plan**

## **Purpose**

Under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* all public and private sector organizations must meet the requirements of accessibility standards required by regulation. This policy establishes the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation in the areas of Information and Communication Standards, Employment Standards and the Transportation Standards for the Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen in accordance with Ontario Regulation 191/11 and with the Ministry of Community and Social Services intent to “streamline, align and phase-in accessibility requirements and allow for progress on accessibility and reduce the regulatory burden for obligated organizations”. This regulation came into force July 1, 2011.

## **Scope and Responsibilities**

This policy has been drafted in accordance with the Regulation and addresses how the Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen will achieve accessibility through meeting the Regulation’s requirements. It provides the overall strategic direction that we will follow to provide accessibility supports to Ontarians with Disabilities. The requirements of the Regulation include:

- Establishment, implementation, maintenance and documentation of a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organization’s strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the Regulation;
- Incorporation of accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities;
- Training; and
- Other specific requirements under the Information and Communication, Employment and Transportation Standards.

## **Policy Statement and Organizational Commitment**

The Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen is committed and guided by the four core principles of Dignity, Equal Opportunity, Integration, full inclusion and supports the needs of persons as set out in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*. The Township shall put forth every effort to ensure that we meet the needs of people with disabilities, in a timely manner, through the implementation of this policy.

## Definitions

**Accessibility equipment** -- equipment intended to remove barriers for people with disabilities. Accessibility equipment includes lifting devices, power lifts, power ramps, mobility aids, securement devices, etc.

**Accessibility features** -- features intended to remove barriers for people with disabilities. This can include signage, accessible washrooms and automated communications systems, as well as technical features (e.g. software) and structural features (e.g. physical design, including hardware or product specifications)

**Accessibility Plan** -- a plan that describes the actions an organization will take to prevent and remove barriers and when it will do so.

**Accessible Taxicab** -- a taxicab, as defined in section 1 of Regulation 629 of the Revised Regulations of Ontario, 1990 (Accessible Vehicles) made under the Highway Traffic Act.

**Accessible Formats** may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, Braille and other formats useable by persons with disabilities.

**Accommodation** means the special arrangement made or assistance provided so that persons with disabilities can participate in the experiences available to persons without disabilities. Accommodation will vary depending on the person's unique needs.

**Communication Supports** may include, but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communications.

**Communications** means the interaction between two or more persons or entities, or any combination of them, where information is provided, sent or received.

**Communications Supports** are the supports that individuals with disabilities may need to access information. Some examples include plain language, sign language interpreter, reading the information out loud to a person with vision loss, adding captioning to videos or using written notes to communicate with someone else who is hard of hearing.

**Conversion Ready** means an electronic or digital format that facilitates conversion into an accessible format.

**Designated Public Sector Organization** means every municipality and every person or organization listed in Column 1 of Table 1 of Ontario Regulation 146/10 (Public Bodies and Commission Public Bodies – Definitions) made under the *Public Service of Ontario Act, 2006*.

**Documented individual accommodation plan** -- a plan developed by an employer, in consultation with an employee with a disability that documents the accommodations that will be provided so the employee can do his/her job. These plans are living documents. They are to be reviewed regularly.

**Individualized workplace emergency response information** -- refers to the information prepared by employers, in consultation with their employees who have disabilities, to help them prepare for emergencies such as fire, severe weather and power outages.

**Information** includes data, facts and knowledge that exists in any format, including text, audio, digital or images and that conveys meaning.

**Internet Website** means a collection of related web pages, images, videos or other digital assets that are addresses relative to a common Uniform Resource Identifier (URI) and is accessible to the public.

**Medical aid** -- refers to an assistive device, including respirators and portable oxygen supplies.

**Mobility Aid** means a device used to facilitate the transport, in a seated posture, of a person with a disability.

**Mobility Assistive Device** means a cane, walker, wheelchair, scooter or similar aid.

**New Internet website** means either a website with a new domain name or a website with an existing domain name undergoing a significant refresh.

**Redeployment** means the reassignment of employees to other departments or jobs within the organization as an alternative to layoff, when a particular job or department has been eliminated.

**Small designated public sector organization** means a designated public sector organization with one to 49 employees.

**Support person** -- refers to a person who accompanies a person with a disability to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs, or with access to goods, services or facilities.

**Taxicab** -- is a motor vehicle as defined in the Highway Traffic Act that is licensed as a taxicab by a municipality and has a seating capacity of not more than six people, not including the driver. A taxicab is hired for one specific trip to transport one person or a group of people for which only one fare or charge is collected or made for the trip. A taxicab is not a car pool vehicle.

**Township** means the corporation of the Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen.

**Unconvertible** means if it is not technically feasible to convert the information or communications. It also means if the technology to convert the information or communications is not readily available.

**Web Content Accessibility Guidelines** means the World Wide Web consortium recommendation, dated December 2008, entitled “Web Content Accessibility Guidelines” (WCAG) 2.0.

**Web page** – means a non-embedded resource obtained from a single Uniform Resource Identifier (URI) using Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) and any other resources that are used in the rendering or intended to be rendered together with it by a user agent.

## **General Provisions**

### **Multi-Year Accessibility Plan**

The Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen’s Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines a phased-in strategy to prevent and remove barriers and addresses the current and future requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

The Township will report annually on the progress and implementation of the plan, post the information on our website and will provide it in alternative formats upon request. The plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every five years.

### **Procuring and Acquiring Goods, Services or Facilities**

When the Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen procures or acquires goods, services or facilities, accessibility criteria and features will be incorporated into the decision, when practicable to do so. If it is not practicable, the Township will document reasons for the accessibility criteria and features to be disregarded.

### **Training**

The Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen will ensure that training is provided to all employees and regular fee-for-service staff on the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in the regulation and on the *Human Rights Code* as it pertains to persons with disabilities. Training will be provided as soon as practicable. The Township will maintain records of the dates when training was provided and the number of individuals to whom the training was provided.

If there are significant changes to the policy, re-training will be provided as soon as practicable.

## **Information and Communication Standard**

The Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen will create, provide and receive information and communications in ways that are accessible to people with disabilities.

If the organization determines that it is not technically feasible to convert the information or communications or the technology to convert the information or communication is not readily available, the township will be obligated to provide the person that requires the information with:

- a) An explanation as to why the information or communication is not convertible; or
- b) A summary of the unconvertible information or communication.

## **Emergency Information**

If the Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen prepares emergency procedures, plans or public safety information and makes the information available to the public, we shall provide the information in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports as soon as practicable, upon request.

## **Feedback**

The Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen has a process in place for receiving and responding to feedback and will ensure that those processes are provided in an accessible manner and with communication support upon request. We will notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

## **Accessible Formats and Communication Supports**

Havelock-Belmont-Methuen shall be obligated to provide or arrange for accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities:

Upon request and in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs.

Costs of the service are to be no greater than the regular costs charged to others.

Consult with the person making the request and determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication supports

Notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

## **Website Accessibility**

Havelock-Belmont-Methuen shall make their internet website and web content conform with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 initially at Level A and increasing to Level AA. The Township will ensure that by January 1, 2014, any *new* web content will conform to WCAG 2.0 Level A; and by January 1, 2021, all internet website and web content will conform to WCAG 2.0 Level AA.

## **Education, Training and Materials**

### **Public Libraries**

- The Havelock-Belmont-Methuen Public Libraries shall provide access to or arrange for the provision of access to accessible materials where they exist;
- Public Libraries 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;
- The Havelock-Belmont-Methuen Public Library Board may provide accessible formats for archival materials, special collections and rare books.

## **Employment Standard**

The Employment Standard builds upon the existing requirements under the *Ontario Human Rights Code* in relation to how to accommodate individuals with disabilities throughout the job application process and the employment relationship. It applies in respect to employees and does not apply to volunteers and other non-paid individuals.

The municipality will strive to meet the Employment Standard requirements by January 1, 2015, unless otherwise specified.

## **Recruitment and Retention**

The Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen shall notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodations for applicants with disabilities:

During the recruitment process when job applicants are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process;

- If a selected applicant requests an accommodation, we shall consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for the provision of a suitable accommodation that takes into account the applicant's disability;
- Notify successful applicants of the policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

## **Employee Notification**

The municipality shall inform its employees of its policies used to support its employees with disabilities, including but not limited to, policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to a disability:

- As required to new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment;
- Whenever there is a change in policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to a disability.

## **Accessible Formats**

In addition and where an employee with a disability requests it, we will consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for:

- Information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job
- Information that is generally available to employees in the workplace; and
- Consult with the employee making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

## **Individual Accommodation Plan**

The Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen shall have in place a written process for developing a documented accommodation plan for employees with a disability. The process will include:

- The employee's participation in the development of the IAP;
- Assessment on an individual basis;
- Identification of accommodations to be provided;
- Timelines for the provision of accommodations;
- The Township reserves the right to request an evaluation by medical or other expert, at the Township's expense, to assist with determining accommodation;
- The Employee may request the participation of a representative from the workplace;
- Steps that will be taken to protect the privacy of the individual's private information;
- Frequency with which the IAP will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which it will be done;
- If denied, the reason for denial are to be provided to the employee;
- A format that takes into account the employee's disability;

- If requested, any information regarding accessible formats and communication supports provided;
- Identification of any other accommodations that is to be provided.

## **Return to Work**

The Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen will have in place a return to work process for employees who have been absent from work due to disability and require disability-related accommodation in order to work. Such processes must be documented and must outline steps we will take to facilitate the return to work and include an IAP plan.

## **Performance Management, Career Development and Advancement, Redeployment**

We will take into account the accessibility needs and/or individual accommodation plans of employees when:

- Using performance management processes;
- Providing career development and advancement information;
- Using redeployment procedures.

## **Workplace Emergency Response Information**

As of January 1, 2012, the Township of Havelock-Belmont-Methuen shall provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability:

- If the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary and the employer is aware of needs for accommodation due to the employee's disability;
- If the employee submits an individual workplace emergency response information form requiring assistance and with the employee's consent, we shall provide the workplace emergency information to the person designated by the Township to provide assistance to the employee;
- As soon as practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability;
- Review the individualized workplace emergency response information if the employee moves to a different location in the organization, when overall accommodations need or plans are reviewed and when the employer reviews its general emergency response policies.

## **Transportation Standards**

The Transportation Standard will make it easier for people to travel in Ontario, including disabilities, older Ontarians and families traveling with children in strollers.

As a municipality, we will:

- Consult with the public to determine proportion accessible taxis required in the community, including steps to meet the need;
- Ensure taxicabs do not charge higher fee or additional fee to persons with disabilities;
- Ensure taxicabs do not charge a fee for storage of assistive devices;
- Ensure taxicabs have appropriate information displayed both the rear bumper and available in an accessible format to passengers.

Our Accessibility Plan will include progress made by the municipality to meet the accessible taxi needs of the community.

## **Design of Public Spaces Standard**

The Design of Public Spaces Standard is to make it easier for persons with disabilities to access public spaces. This standard will affect planning new and major renovations of the following public spaces:

- Recreational trails / beach access routes
- Outdoor public eating areas like rest stops or picnic areas
- Outdoor play spaces, like playgrounds in the community parks
- Outdoor paths of travel, like sidewalks, ramps, stairs, curb ramps, rest areas and accessible pedestrian signals
- Accessible parking (on and off street)
- Service related elements like service counters, fixed queuing lines and waiting areas
- Maintenance and restoration of public spaces

As of January 1, 2018, the municipality will give accessible consideration for new development or a major renovation of a public space the standards will be applied unless it meets the specific constraints described in exceptions portion of Section 80 of the Integrated Accessibility Standards *O.Reg. 191/11*.