

<b>Title:</b>	Accessible Customer Service Policy	<b>Policy Number:</b> 300-23
<b>Policy Type:</b>	Operational	
<b>Approval By:</b>	Resolution Number	
<b>Approval Date:</b>	<b>December 2009</b>	
<b>Reviewed Dates:</b>		
<b>Revised Dates:</b>	<b>September 27, 2021</b>	
<b>Review Date:</b>	<b>May 2024</b>	

**PURPOSE:**

This policy addresses the requirements of the Accessibility Customer Service Standards under Ontario Regulation 191/11 for the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA).

**SCOPE:**

This policy applies to all library locations and operations including library services provided by staff and Library volunteers outside of the library.

**DEFINITIONS:**

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

**AODA** – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

**OHRC** - Ontario Human Rights Code

**Service Animal** - any animal, as described under the AODA, which has documentation from a regulated health official, confirming that it is required because of a disability.

**Support Person** - an individual hired or chosen by a person with a disability to provide services or assistance with communication, mobility, personal care, and/or medical needs. They do not necessarily need to have special training or qualifications.

**POLICY STATEMENT/STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT:**

The Library Board will identify and remove barriers that prohibit full participation by persons with disabilities and encourage our community partners to share a vision of a fully accessible community. The Library makes a commitment to prevent further barriers from being created in future planning processes and implementation.

The Library strives at all times to provide its goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. The Library is committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access its goods and services, allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other Library patrons.

To do so this Policy will be implemented by way of additional operational policies and procedures developed to keep the needs of all Library patrons in mind.



## **ACCESSIBLE LIBRARY SERVICES:**

The Library will provide:

- equitable access to library services which may include separate or specialized services including a Visiting Library Service. Such services will be offered in a way that respects the dignity and full participation of persons with disabilities.
- access to or arrange for the provision of access to accessible library collections where they exist. Collections will be developed so they contain materials in alternative formats and for audiences with varying levels of literacy and comprehension.
- accessible facilities which include entranceways and aisles that will accommodate mobility aids. All Library service desks and self-service kiosks shall incorporate accessibility features and will accommodate individuals seated in mobility aids. Library facilities shall ensure that off-street parking has accessible parking spots in accordance with the AODA
- accessible technology such as adaptive workstations to assist users with visual, learning, or physical disabilities. Adaptive workstations shall be equipped with specialized software.

## **COMMUNICATION:**

Staff will communicate with people in ways that take into account their disabilities.

The Library offers several methods of communication, including in-person conversations, telephone services, and online communications through web forms, email and social media. Library notices will be given via phone message, mail, email, or text as per each patron's preference.

Sign language interpretation will be provided upon request. American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreters costs will be covered at no charge to persons who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing who are conducting Library business or attending Library events.

The Library's website and web content will conform with the World Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1.

## **ASSISTIVE DEVICES:**

The Library is committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from Library services.

## **SERVICE ANIMALS:**

The Library is committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on Library premises.

## **SUPPORT PERSONS:**

The Library is committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be



allowed to enter our premises with his or her support person. At no time will someone be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on our premises.

Fees will not be charged for support persons attending with persons with disabilities who are conducting Library business. Support persons may be charged for events, if the event is not a Library sponsored event.

### **NOTICE OF TEMPORARY DISRUPTION:**

The Library will provide patrons with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

Notice of disruption at each entrance and service counters at the affected Library location(s). Notice will be posted on the Library's website and social media whenever possible. Notice will be provided via a recorded message on the Library's main telephone line. Media releases will also be issued in advance for planned disruptions.

### **TRAINING:**

The Library will provide ongoing training to all employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on their behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of accessible customer service policies, practices and procedures.

Managers will ensure that staff/volunteers receive training no later than one month after commencement of duties.

### **FEEDBACK AND ACCESSIBLE FORMATS**

The Library has processes in place for receiving and responding to feedback. The Library shall ensure that such processes are accessible to persons with disabilities by providing or arranging for the provision of accessible formats and communications supports upon request.

### **MODIFICATIONS TO POLICIES**

Any policy of the Library Board that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed. In all cases, the requirements for serving Ontarians with Disabilities as prescribed in the AODA and its regulations take precedence over any Library Board policy, procedure or practice.

### **RELATED POLICIES**

300-03 Collection Development Policy  
300-08 Visiting Library Service Policy  
300-09 Rules of Conduct



300-17 Volunteer Program Policy  
300-26 Computer and Internet Use Policy  
300-27 Face Covering Policy  
400-01 Hiring Policy  
400-03 Health and Safety Commitment Policy  
400-09 Human Rights Policy