

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent

Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy

Purpose

This policy has been established by the Municipality of Chatham-Kent to govern the provision of its services in accordance with Ontario Regulation 191/11, "Integrated Accessibility Standards" ("Regulation") under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*. These standards are developed to break down barriers and increase accessibility for people with disabilities.

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent is governed by this policy as well as the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, in meeting the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities. The Municipality of Chatham-Kent endeavors to regularly ensure and implement accessibility standards in all of its practices.

Statement of Commitment

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent is committed to developing, implementing, maintaining, and enhancing accessibility in the areas of the Integrated Accessibility Standards in a manner that respects the individual's dignity and independence, provides an equal opportunity to utilize and benefit from the Municipality of Chatham-Kent's goods and services, and allows persons with disabilities to benefit from the same goods and services at the same time and location as other residents.

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will make reasonable efforts to provide an accessible environment for all persons with disabilities where practicable and will continue to enhance and improve its practices so as to meet the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner and consistent with the specific requirements of the Act and its regulations.

This policy will be implemented in accordance with the time frames established by the Regulation.

Scope

Unless otherwise stated, this policy applies to Municipal employees, volunteers, independent operators and contractors who are conducting business on behalf of the Municipality of Chatham-Kent.

Accessibility Plan

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will develop, maintain, and document an Integrated Accessibility Standards Plan outlining their strategy to prevent and remove barriers from its workplace and to meet its requirements under the Regulation.

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Plan will be reviewed and updated in consultation with the Chatham-Kent Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) at least once every five years, and will be posted on the Municipality of Chatham-Kent's website. Upon request, the Municipality of Chatham-Kent will provide a copy of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Plan in an accessible format.

In addition, the Municipality of Chatham-Kent will prepare annual status reports on the progress of measures taken to implement the Municipality of Chatham-Kent's strategy outlined in its policy. Status reports will also be made available in an accessible format upon request.

Financial Implications

The impact (if any) to existing budgets are currently unknown at this time. As the plan is developed, any requirements to meet the Integrated Accessibility Standards will be addressed through Reports to Council.

Integrated Accessibility Standards

The next twelve items, and their additional sub-items, are the Integrated Accessibility Standards that the Municipality of Chatham-Kent will abide by, arranged by date.

Effective January 1, 2011:

1.0 Transportation

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent shall provide information on the accessibility features of its conventional and specialized transit services, and shall make this information available in an accessible format upon request.

Effective January 1, 2012:

2.0 Emergency Preparedness Plan

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will post on their website the Chatham-Kent Emergency Response Plan in accordance with the Regulation.

3.0 Employment Standards

3.1 Workplace Emergency Response Information

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will provide Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP) to employees who have a disability, if the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary, and if the Municipality of Chatham-Kent is aware of the need for accommodation. The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will provide this information as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation.

Where the employee requires assistance, the Municipality of Chatham-Kent will, with the consent of the employee, provide the Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan to the person/s designated (buddy) by the employee to provide assistance to the employee.

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will review the Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan when the employee moves to a different location in the organization, or when the employee's accommodation needs change. Plans will be reviewed at least once every two years.

4.0 Transportation

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent shall provide information on the accessibility features of its conventional and specialized transit services, and shall make this information available in an accessible format upon request.

Effective January 1, 2013:

5.0 Procuring or Acquiring Goods, Services or Facilities:

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will ensure that accessibility criteria and features are incorporated when it procures or acquires goods, services or facilities, except where it is not

practicable to do so. Where it is impracticable to incorporate accessibility criteria and features, the Municipality of Chatham-Kent will provide an explanation upon request.

6.0 Self-service Kiosks

Where self-help kiosks are used by the Municipality of Chatham-Kent, accessibility features will be incorporated and will have regard to accessibility for people with disabilities when designing, procuring, or acquiring self-service kiosks.

7.0 Transportation

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent shall provide information on the accessibility features of its conventional and specialized transit services, and shall make this information available in an accessible format upon request.

Effective January 1, 2014:

8.0 Accessible Websites and Web Content:

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will ensure that its Internet and Intranet websites, including web content published on a website after January 1, 2012, conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, at Level A except where this is impracticable.

9.0 Employment Standards:

9.1 Information and Communications Standards

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will inform new and existing employees of their policies for supporting employees with disabilities, including providing employment related accommodation.

9.2 Recruitment general

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will notify its employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment process through job ads and on the municipal website. Job ads will include a statement of the organizations' commitment to accommodating individuals with disabilities.

9.3 Recruitment, Assessment or Selection Process

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will notify candidates selected to participate further in an assessment or selection process (interview and/or testing) that accommodations are available upon request in relation to the materials or processes to be used.

If a selected applicant requests an accommodation, the Municipality of Chatham-Kent will consult with the applicant and provide, or arrange for the provision of, a suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability.

9.4 Notice to Successful Applicants

When making offers of employment, the Municipality of Chatham-Kent will verbally notify the successful candidate of the organization's policies for accommodating employees with disabilities. The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will follow-up with written communications (i.e. letter of hire).

9.5 Informing Employees of Supports

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will continue to inform its employees of its policies (and any updates to those policies) used to support employees with disabilities, including policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability. This information will be provided to new employees as soon as practicable after commencing employment.

9.6 Documented Individual Accommodation Plans

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will maintain a written process for documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities. Plans will include individualized workplace emergency response information (where required), and will identify any other accommodation that is to be provided.

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will maintain a documented return to work policy/process for supporting its employees who have been absent from work due to a non-work related disability and who require disability-related accommodation in order to return to work. The policy/process will be posted on the internal Municipal Intranet.

The return to work process will outline the steps the Municipality of Chatham-Kent will take to facilitate the return to work and will include documented individual accommodation plans as part of the process.

This return to work process will not replace or override any other return to work process created by or under any other statute (i.e., the *Workplace Safety Insurance Act, 1997*).

9.7 Documented Return to Work Process

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will maintain a documented return to work policy/process for supporting its employees who have been absent from work due to a non-work related disability and who require disability-related accommodation in order to return to work. The policy/process will be posted on the internal Municipal Intranet.

9.8 Performance Management

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will provide a performance management process that takes into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities.

9.9 Redeployment

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will consider the accessibility needs of an employee with disability, as well as individualized accommodation plans, when redeploying an employee with disability.

When moving an employee with disabilities to a new role (or location), the Municipality of Chatham-Kent will ensure that accommodations are adjusted to fit the new role (or location) prior to moving the employee.

9.10 Career Development

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will provide career development and advancement opportunities that take into account the accessibility of employees with disabilities.

9.11 Training Employees and Volunteers:

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will ensure that training is provided on the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in the Regulation and continue to provide training on the *Human Rights Code* as it pertains to persons with disabilities or changes to the policies regarding accessibility, to all its employees

and volunteers, to all persons who participate in developing the Municipality of Chatham-Kent's policies and to all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the Municipality of Chatham-Kent

The training will be appropriate to the duties of the employees, volunteers and other persons. Staff will be trained when changes are made to the accessibility policy. New staff will be trained upon commencement of employment.

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will keep a record of the training it provides.

10.0 Feedback

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will ensure that its process for receiving and responding to feedback is accessible to persons with disabilities by providing, or arranging for the provision of, accessible formats and communication supports, upon request.

11.0 Transportation

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent shall provide information on the accessibility features of its conventional and specialized transit services, and shall make this information available in an accessible format upon request.

Effective January 1, 2015:

12.0 Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

Upon request, the Municipality of Chatham-Kent will provide, or will arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs due to disability where practicable.

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

The Municipality of Chatham-Kent will also notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.