

COCKBURN ISLAND TOWNSHIP, ONTARIO
For AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians Disability Act)
Statement of Organizational Commitment,
SEPT 22, 2022

Cockburn Island Township is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities. We are committed to treating people with disabilities in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and we are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner. We will, as best we can, 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.

Cockburn Island Township is committed to meeting, as best it can, its current and ongoing obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code respecting non-discrimination.

Cockburn Island Township understands that obligations under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) and its accessibility standards do not substitute or limit its obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code or obligations to people with disabilities under any other law.

Cockburn Island Township is committed to excellence in serving and providing goods, services or facilities to all customers including people with disabilities. Our accessible customer service policies are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

Training

We are committed to training, as appropriate, 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.

In addition, we will train, as best we can:

- a) all persons who participate in developing the organization's policies; and

- b) all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the organization

Training of our employees and volunteers on accessibility relates to their specific roles.

Training includes:

- purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the requirements of the Customer Service Standards
- our 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 disability
- what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing our organization's goods, services or facilities.

We train every person as soon as practicable after being hired and provide training in respect of any changes to the policies.

We maintain records of the training provided including the dates on which the training was provided and the number of individuals to whom it was provided.

Assistive Devices

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

Communications

We communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. This may include the following:

- Accessible township website
- Easy to read annual newsletter
- Access by Zoom to municipal council meetings

We are willing to work with the person with disabilities to determine what method of communication works for them.

Service Animals

We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and third parties without reasonable limitation.

Support Persons

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises. There are no fees.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities, this organization will notify customers promptly. This clearly posted notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

Feedback Process

Cockburn Island Township welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. Customer feedback will help us identify barriers and respond to concerns.

Feedback may be provided by contacting the Clerk-Treasurer by means of the following; telephone 705-844-9886, email to cockburnisland21@gmail.com or postal mail to Cockburn island township, Box 209, Spanish, ON P0P 2A0 or text to 705-849-8605

All feedback, including complaints, will be brought to the attention of the municipal Council. Complainants can expect to receive an acknowledgement forthwith and a reply from Council shortly after the next scheduled regular council meeting. If the feedback is of an urgent nature, then an earlier reply will be attempted.

Cockburn Island Township ensures our feedback process is accessible to people with disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports, upon request.

Notice of Availability of Documents

Cockburn Island Township notifies the public that documents related to accessible customer service, are available upon request by posting a notice on the municipal website

Cockburn Island Township will provide these documents in an accessible format or with communication support, upon request. We will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of the format or communication support. We will provide the accessible format, as best we can, in a timely manner and, at no additional cost.

Procurement

Cockburn Island Township will incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities. If it is not possible and practical to do so, we will provide an explanation upon request.

Information and Communications

Cockburn Island Township has a process for receiving and responding to feedback and the process is accessible to persons with disabilities upon request.

We communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. When asked, we will provide information about our organization and its services, including public safety information, in accessible formats or with, as best we can, communication supports:

- a) in a timely manner, taking into account the person's accessibility needs due to disability; and
- b) at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

We will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support. If the organization determines that information or communications are unconvertible, the organization shall provide the requestor with:

- a) an explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible; and
- b) a summary of the unconvertible information or communications.

We notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports by posting same on the municipal website.

We will also meet internationally-recognized Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA website requirements in accordance with Ontario's accessibility laws.

Employment

We notify employees, job applicants and the public that accommodations can be made during recruitment and hiring. We notify job applicants when they are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process that accommodations are available upon request. We consult with the applicants and provide or arrange for suitable accommodation.

We notify successful applicants of policies for accommodating employees with disabilities when making offers of employment.

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

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

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

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

We will provide the information as soon as practicable after we become aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability.

We will review the individualized workplace emergency response information:

- a) when the employee moves to a different location in the organization;
- b) when the employee's overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed; and
- c) when the employer reviews its general emergency response policies.

Design of Public Spaces

We will, as best we can, meet accessibility laws when building or making major changes to public spaces. Our public spaces include – Community Hall (a heritage building over 100 years old but well-maintained with access features included).