

<i>Procedure Category</i> Administration	<i>Name of Procedure</i> Accessibility Standard Compliance Procedure
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Procedure Owner	Office of the Regional Clerk, Accessibility Advisor
Parent Policy	C-A-003 Accessibility Policy
Approval Body	Corporate Leadership Team (CLT)
Approval Date	
Effective Date	
Review by Date	

1. Accessibility Standard Compliance Procedure

1.1. Customer Service Accessibility Standards

1.1.1. Assistive Devices

- i. If a person with a disability requires assistive devices to access goods or services of Niagara Region, they are allowed to use such devices. The Region provides assistive devices at some of its facilities upon request.

1.1.2. Guide Dogs, Services Animals

- i. If a person with a disability is accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal, the Region will permit the person to enter the premises with the animal and keep it with him or her, unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law from the premises.
- ii. If the service animal or guide dog is excluded by law from the premises, the Region will look to other available measures to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Region's goods and services.

1.1.3. Support Persons

- i. If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, they are permitted to enter the premises together and are not prevented from having access to each other while on the premises. The Region may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person while on its premises, but only if a support person is necessary

<i>Procedure Category</i>	<i>Name of Procedure</i>
Administration	Accessibility Standard Compliance Procedure

to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises.

- ii. Where fees for goods and services are advertised or promoted by the Region, it will provide advance notice of the amount payable, if any, in respect of the support person.

1.1.4. Disruption of Services

- i. If there is a disruption in a particular facility or service used to allow a person with a disability to access goods or services, the Region will give notice of the disruption to the public by posting the reason for the disruption, the anticipated duration of the disruption, and alternative facilities or services that may be available.
- ii. This posting will be in a conspicuous place on the premises of the Region, or by other reasonable methods in the circumstances. If the disruption is anticipated, the Region will provide a reasonable amount of advance notice of the disruption. If the disruption is unexpected, notice will be provided as soon as possible.

1.1.5. Accessible Emergency Information

- i. The region is committed to providing the customers and clients with publicly available emergency information in an accessible way upon request. We will also provide employees with disabilities with individualized emergency response information when necessary upon request.
- ii. The Region will provide individualized emergency response information to employees who identify potential accessibility barriers when responding to emergency situations. If the employee requires assistance, the Region must receive consent from the employee to provide the individualized emergency response information to the person(s) designated to provide assistance. The information must be reviewed when the employee moves to a different location, when the employee’s accommodation needs change, when overall accommodation plans are reviewed and when the Region reviews its general emergency response plan every year.

1.1.6. Kiosks

- i. The Region will take the following steps to ensure employees consider the needs of people with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks by January 1, 2014.

<i>Procedure Category</i>	<i>Name of Procedure</i>
Administration	Accessibility Standard Compliance Procedure

- ii. The Region shall communicate with members of Niagara Region’s Accessibility Advisory Committee as well as other persons with disabilities as appropriate.

1.2. Employment Accessibility Standards

1.2.1. Employment

- i. The Region is committed to fair and accessible employment practices.
- ii. We will take the following steps to notify the public and staff that, when requested.
- iii. Niagara Region will accommodate people with disabilities during the recruitment and assessment processes and when people are hired.
- iv. Persons shall be made aware throughout the application, recruitment and interview process that the Region will provide accommodations, upon request, for persons with disabilities.
- v. Successful applicants will be notified about the Region’s policies for accommodating employees with disabilities as part of their offer of employment. All employees will be updated accordingly when policies are updated or changed.
- vi. The Region will consult with the employee and any other appropriate persons and organizations to develop and put in place a process for developing individual accommodation plans and return-to-work policies for employees that have been absent due to a disability.
- vii. The Region will gather and retain appropriate documentation to ensure the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities are taken into account if is using performance management, career development and redeployment processes.

1.2.2. Accommodation Plan

- i. A written process for the development and maintenance of documented individual accommodation plans shall be developed for employees with disabilities. Each request will be unique and tailored to the individual’s needs. Upon request, accommodation plans can be shared using accessible formats and communication supports that fits the individual’s needs. If requested, the plans shall include individualized workplace emergency response information. Individuals are encouraged to be a participant in the development of their individual accommodation plan. Individuals are encouraged to reach

<i>Procedure Category</i>	<i>Name of Procedure</i>
Administration	Accessibility Standard Compliance Procedure

out to their managers, supervisors, and the accessibility coordinator to ensure their accommodation plan fits their needs.

- ii. Accommodation plans are personal and private documents that are only accessible to the individual and authorized management. These plans should be reviewed on a yearly basis with the individual and their manger and or supervisor. In addition, accommodation plans can be updated at the request of the individual on an as needed basis. Individuals are entitled to explanation if their accommodation plan is modified or denied.

1.2.3. Corporate Information and Communication Accessibility

- i. Niagara Region is committed to meeting the communication needs of people with disabilities. We will consult with people with disabilities to determine their information and communication needs. The AODA requires that all information and communications that the Region produces, directly or indirectly through contractual relationships, must be made available in accessible formats.
- ii. When an accessible format or communication support is requested, the Region must consult with the person making the request to determine which format or support is required, and provide or make arrangements to provide the material in a reasonable amount of time and at no additional cost to the requestor.
- iii. All employees will be contacted accordingly when policies are updated or changed.
- iv. The Region will take the necessary steps to make all websites and content conform to WCAG 2.0, Level AA by January 1, 2021.

1.2.4. Procurement

- i. When procuring goods, services and facilities, Niagara Region will incorporate accessibility criteria and features. Where applicable, procurement documents will specify the desired accessibility criteria to be met and provide guidelines for the evaluation of proposals in respect of those criteria. Where it is impractical for the Region to incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring specific goods, services or facilities, the Manager of Procurement will provide a written explanation, on request.

1.2.5. Training

<i>Procedure Category</i>	<i>Name of Procedure</i>
Administration	Accessibility Standard Compliance Procedure

- i. The Region will provide training about the provision of its goods and services to persons with disabilities. All Regional employees, volunteers, agents, contractors and others who deal with the public or other third parties, and those involved in developing customer service policies, practices, and procedures, will receive Accessibility Awareness Training within six months of beginning their duties.
- ii. The Region will also provide ongoing training with respect to changes in its policies, practices, and procedures to those individuals who require such training as soon as practicable.
- iii. The Region will keep records of the training provided, including dates when training is provided and the number of persons trained.
- iv. Accessibility Awareness Training will include the following:
 - a. How to provide goods and services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities;
 - b. How to interact and communicate with persons in a manner that takes into account their disabilities;
 - c. The process for people to provide feedback to the Region, its provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities, and how the Region responds to the feedback and takes action on any complaint;
 - d. How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog, service animal or a support person to access goods and services;
 - e. Information on other Regional policies, practices, and procedures dealing with the AODA;
 - f. A review of the purposes of the AODA and the requirements of the customer service standard;
 - g. How to use equipment or devices available on Regional premises or provided by the Region that may assist the provision of goods and services;
 - h. What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing the Region's goods and services.
 - i. The process for persons with disabilities to access Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans upon request.
 - j. Requirements under the Ontario Human Rights Code relating to persons with disabilities.

1.3. Feedback Process

<i>Procedure Category</i>	<i>Name of Procedure</i>
Administration	Accessibility Standard Compliance Procedure

1.3.1. The public can provide feedback on the accessibility of the provision of goods and services by Niagara Region through the Accessibility Advisory Committee:

- By mail: PO Box 1042, Thorold, ON L2V 4T7
- By phone: 905.685.4225 x.3252
- In person: 2201 St. David’s Rd. West, Thorold, ON
- By email: accessibility@niagararegion.ca

2. Purpose Statement

In compliance with Accessibility for Ontario with Disabilities Act (AODA) the Niagara Region is committed to building an inclusive society that values the contributions of people with disabilities. It is committed to providing an accessible environment in which people with disabilities can access the Niagara Region’s goods, services, and facilities, including all buildings, public spaces, information and communications, in a way that meets their individual needs.

3. Scope

This procedure applies to the Council and staff of Niagara Region, including volunteers, contractors, agents and any other people interact with the public or other third parties, on behalf of the Region.

3.1. Roles and Responsibilities

Outline the position(s) responsible for administrating this policy and/or for ensuring compliance, maintenance or for completion of assigned tasks

4. Definitions

1. Assistive Devices

- i. Auxiliary aids such as communication aids, cognition aids, personal mobility aids and medical aids (i.e. canes, crutches, wheelchairs, or hearing aids)

2. Disabilities

As per the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, “disability” means:

- i. Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,

<i>Procedure Category</i>	<i>Name of Procedure</i>
Administration	Accessibility Standard Compliance Procedure

- ii. A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- iii. A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- iv. A mental disorder, or
- v. An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*; (“handicap”)

3. Person with Disabilities

- i. Individuals who are afflicted with a disability as defined under the Ontario *Human Rights Code*.

4. Service Animals

- i. Any animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability.

5. Support Persons

- i. Any person whether a paid professional, volunteer, family member, or friend who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communications, personal care or medical needs, or with access to goods and services.

5. Appendices

- N/A

6. Document Control

The electronic version of this document is recognized as the only valid version.

Approval History

Approver(s)	Approved Date	Effective Date

Revision History

Revision No.	Date	Summary of Change(s)	Changed by

<i>Procedure Category</i> Administration	<i>Name of Procedure</i> Accessibility Standard Compliance Procedure
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