



Municipality of Central Huron

Election Accessibility Plan

2022 Municipal Elections

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Introduction

The Municipal Clerk is responsible for the appropriate legislative and administrative conduct of the municipal elections for the Municipality of Central Huron.

The Municipal Elections Act, (MEA), Section 12.1 (1) places responsibility on the Clerk to have regard to the needs of the electors and candidates with disabilities. Accessible Customer Service Standards must be followed when conducting municipal elections.

Section 12.1 (2) of the MEA requires that the clerk shall prepare a plan regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and shall make the plan available to the public before voting day in a regular election.

Central Huron's municipal elections will be conducted in a manner that shall ensure that Candidates and electors with disabilities have full and equal access to all election information and services, including the Voter Assistance Centre at the municipal office. The election shall be conducted in a manner that ensures that persons with disabilities are able to vote independently and privately with access to voting assistance if required.

Section 12.1 (2) of the MEA requires that within ninety (90) days of voting day the Clerk who is responsible for conducting the election shall submit a report to Council regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect elector and candidates with disabilities.

Staff Training and Election Assistance

Staff Training

Only municipal staff is used to conduct the 2022 Municipal & School Board Election. All staff carrying out election duties have completed the Central Huron Accessible Customer Services Training and specific Election Training to comply with the municipal Accessibility Plan and to recognize and ensure that persons with disabilities are served in a way that accommodates their individual needs.

Training will include:

- How to interact/communicate with persons with various types of disability;
- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices, require the assistance of a support person or a service animal.
- How to clearly explain internet and telephone voting, as well as the touch-screen kiosk available at the Voter Assistance Centre.
- What to do if a person is having difficulty accessing election information or services.
- How to provide voter assistance if requested.

Provision of Election Information

Election information will be provided to electors and candidates with disabilities in an alternative format, agreed upon between the requester and the Clerk.

Notice of the provision of information in an alternative format will be provided on the municipal website, www.centralhuron.com and included in the election notices in the local media.

Notice of Temporary Service Disruption

The Clerk shall provide public notice on the municipal website and in the local media if there is a temporary disruption in the delivery of election information or services. The Notice shall include the reason for the disruption, the expected duration and an explanation of alternative methods of delivering the information or service. Every effort shall be made to provide alternative methods of providing the information or service to persons with disabilities.

Emergencies

In accordance with Section 16 of the “2022 Municipal & School Board Elections Alternative Voting Method Procedures” and Section 53 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, the Clerk may declare an emergency if he or she is of the opinion that circumstances have arisen that are likely to prevent the election being conducted in accordance with the Act.

On declaring an emergency, the Clerk shall make such arrangements as he or she considers advisable for the conduct of the election.

The Clerk shall, to the best of their ability, advertise such emergency by means Form CH01 “Notice of Election Service Disruption” (attached hereto) and posted at the affected election location, website, social media platforms and radio, if possible.

Assistance to the Public and Candidates

The Clerk Department Staff are available throughout the election to assist with any issues that may arise with respect to providing a barrier-free election.

Contact information for assistance:

Telephone: 519-482-3997

Email: info@centralhuron.com

Fax: 519-482-9183

In Person: Clerk’s Office, Central Huron Town Hall, 23 Albert St., Clinton, ON

Mail: Municipality of Central Huron, PO Box 400, Clinton, ON, N0M 1L0

Assistance to Electors

General

The 2022 Central Huron Municipal and School Board Elections will be conducted using Internet and Telephone Voting methods. Detailed information about each voting method is set out in the 2022 Election Procedures Manual, available on the municipal website or from the Clerk's Office and can be provided in an alternative format upon request.

Please contact the Clerk's Office at 519-428-3997 or info@centralhuron.com for your Voter Information Package in an accessible format.

The Clerk Department Staff are available throughout the election to assist with any issues that may arise with respect to providing a barrier-free election.

Accessible Voter Assistance Centre

Section 45(2) of the MEA requires that the clerk shall ensure that each voting place is accessible to electors with disabilities.

An accessible Voter Information Centre, located at the municipal office, 23 Albert St, Clinton, will be available to voters throughout the voting period during regular office hours and on Election Day until 8:00 p.m. The location, accessible parking and entrance information will be posted on the election page of the municipal website, www.centralhuron.com.

Parking

The municipal office parking lot has designated parking for individuals with disabilities that are clearly posted and located close to the entrance to the Voter Assistance Centre.

Entrance

The entrance doors to the municipal office have automatic door opening devices. They are wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair or other mobility devices.

Interior

Access to the interior voting area and voting booth is level. Carpeting and doormats are level with the floor to prevent potential tripping hazards. The voting area is well lit and seating shall be made available.

Accessible Voting Booth

The Voting Kiosk will be low in height and have a wide area to allow individuals using mobility aids to vote independently and secretively.

Voting Assistance

Persons with disabilities may be accompanied by a support person within the Voter Assistance Centre or the municipal staff can assist the voter in casting their vote. The

Voter Assistance Centre Supervisor shall, in conjunction with the person with the disability, determine the extent to which they need assistance and the best way to provide the assistance.

Accessible Voting Technologies

Voter Assistance Centres will be equipped with a Voting Kiosk (touch screen computer for internet voting) that will assist voters with disabilities in casting their votes with independence and privacy. Staff will be available at all times to assist voters at the kiosk upon request. Support persons and service animals will be accommodated.

Huron County libraries also provide internet access during regular library hours and will have trained staff available to assist voters in accessing the electronic voting site throughout the voting period for voters that choose to vote from that location. This provides voters another option of location to access the internet if they do not have their own access to the internet.

Internet Voting

Internet voting allows voters to vote from their home through secured internet services. This method provides for easy voting for persons with a variety of disabilities to cast their vote with independence and privacy as voters have the option of using the assistive tools they have on their own computer such as a thumbswitch or sip and puff technology.

This method of voting is designed to encourage voter participation as voters don't have to attend a physical location to cast their ballot and accessibility and privacy for persons with disabilities is maximized.

Telephone Voting

Telephone voting allows voters to vote from their home through secured telephone services which provides for easy voting for persons with a variety of disabilities to cast their vote with independence and privacy. Land lines or cell phone can be used to vote, the method is compatible with assistive devices.

Voters can register their vote selections with the telephone keypad or voice commands, greatly increasing accessibility, privacy and independence for voters who do not have internet access.

Assistance to Candidates

General

The 2022 Central Huron Municipal & School Board election will be conducted with Internet and Telephone Voting methods. Detailed information about each voting method is set out in the 2022 Election Procedures Manual, available on the municipal

website or from the Clerk's Office and can be made available in an alternative format upon request.

Please contact us at 519-482-3997 or the Clerk Department staff are available throughout the election to assist with any issues that may arise with respect to providing a barrier-free election.

The Guide is intended to draw attention to the measures candidates should be considering to ensure equal opportunity for all electors to access candidate information. These measures should include aspects of a campaign including: literature through print media, audio and video messages.

Service Animals/Support Persons

Candidates are permitted to be accompanied by a service animal and/or support person at all designated elections locations.

Campaign Expenses

Expenses that are incurred by a candidate with a disability that are directly related to the disability, and would not have been incurred but for the election to which the expenses relate, are excluded from the permitted spending limit for the candidate.

Feedback Process

The Accessible Customer Service Feedback Form is attached to this Plan. The Feedback Form is also available at the Municipal Office at the Town Hall, 23 Albert St., Clinton and posted to the website.

The feedback received will be reviewed by the Clerk and appropriate action will be taken to remove barriers or provide accommodation if necessary.

The information received on the Accessible Customer Service Feedback Form will be summarized in the post-election Election Accessibility Report and will be used to improve accessibility measures in future municipal elections.

Additional Information

Huron County Joint Accessibility Plan

<https://www.huroncounty.ca/administration/accessibility/accessibility-plan/>

Municipality of Central Huron Website Election Page

<https://www.centralhuron.ca/en/your-municipal-government/elections.aspx>

Forms

In accordance with Section 16 of the “2022 Municipal & School Board Elections Alternative Voting Method Procedures, Form CH01 - Notice of Election Service Disruption will be used to notify the public that there is an interruption in election services.

Form CH01

Municipality of Central Huron Notice of Election Service Disruption

The Central Huron Election Team would like to thank you for your patience.

The following election service is currently unavailable:

Enter Description

Service is expected to resume:

Enter Time Frame

The following alternative service is available:

Enter Description

Posted on:

Enter Date and Time

For additional information please contact:

Kerri Ann O'Rourke
Clerk/Returning Officer
Municipality Of Central Huron
519-482-3997 Ext 1223
clerk@centralhuron.com