

HURON COUNTY

**Multi Year Accessibility Plan**  
**Working Towards An Accessible Huron County**



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## **Accessibility at the County of Huron**

At the County of Huron, providing excellent service for both the public and for employees means delivering citizen focused programs and services that are efficient, effective, responsive, and accessible. Accessible services meet people's needs while protecting the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. When services are accessible, people can easily navigate into and around buildings and offices, receive information and communications in a format that works for them, and work in an accommodating environment. These parts of everyday life are important to accessibility and benefit everyone.

The County of Huron has been making improvements in the accessibility of programs, services, and facilities for over ten years. This Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines our approach to achieving accessible and inclusive services in the years to come.

## **Diversity, Service, and Accessibility**

By removing barriers to services and programs across the County of Huron and in the workforce, we will recognize the strength that comes with embracing new ideas and perspectives.

This commitment to inclusion will be realized through processes that engage and support employees, and creating a satisfying customer experience to those we serve. We do this because a satisfying service experience at the County of Huron improves the quality of life for those we serve, and helps to secure their trust and confidence in the work that we do.

Accessible service is about providing service to meet diverse needs that is flexible to individuals whenever possible, and makes a satisfying service experience our primary focus. By identifying, removing, and preventing barriers in the accessibility of our services, the County of Huron is stepping up to our commitments to diversity, inclusion, and service excellence. The County of Huron is committed to creating inclusive programs and services that meet the needs of our growing and changing community.

## **About the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan**

The County of Huron Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines strategies and actions to identify, prevent, and remove barriers for people with disabilities. The plan also details our strategy for meeting Ontario's accessibility legislation, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA).



In this plan you will find:

- **Accessibility Improvement Plans:** A five-year plan outlining ways we will meet our goals.
- **Annual Review:** The five-year plan will be reviewed annually and revised as necessary.
- **Progress For Each Year:** Highlights of successes in accessibility will be documented and posted on the website.

### **Accessibility in Ontario: About the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005***

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, (AODA) was passed in 2005 with the vision of creating a fully accessible Ontario by 2025. The AODA gave the Province the mandate to create sets of standards in accessibility, which will apply to both public and private sector organizations. The Province has since committed to developing and implementing standards in:

- Customer Service
- Information and Communication
- Employment
- Transportation
- Built Environment

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07) was passed in January, 2008. The County of Huron has been required to comply with the Standards for Customer Service since January 1, 2010.



The next three standards – Information and Communication, Employment, and Transportation – have been combined into the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR). The IASR came into effect July 1, 2011, with requirements that are to be phased in over time, which, for the County of Huron, means implementing standards from 2011 to 2021.

The last accessibility standards identified under the AODA, standards for the built environment, are currently in development. These standards will apply to buildings and outdoor spaces. At the time of publication, the Province of Ontario has divided the standards for the built environment into two distinct areas of the built environment: the Design of Public Spaces, and Buildings. A draft Design of Public Spaces Standard, developed under the AODA, was made available to the public for comment until October 1, 2012. According to the Ministry of Community and Social Services website, enhancements to accessibility for buildings are to be addressed at a later date and incorporated into future revisions of the *Ontario Building Code*.

## Who is Huron County?



The County of Huron is an upper-tier municipal corporation located in southwestern Ontario. Known as "Ontario's West Coast," Huron County has 100 km of shoreline along Lake Huron and covers a land area of 3,400 square km. As one of the largest geographic Counties in Ontario, Huron is known for its strong agricultural sector as well as its tourism, manufacturing and cultural economic sectors. The County has extensive prime agricultural soils, scenic natural areas, and bustling towns and villages.

Huron County is surrounded by Bruce and Grey Counties to the north, Perth and Wellington Counties to the east, and Middlesex and Lambton Counties to the south. Ontario about three hours northwest of Toronto and covers 3,397 km<sup>2</sup>. Huron County is the second largest geographical region in Southwestern Ontario.

According to the 2006 census, the population of Huron County was estimated at 59,325. Huron County is one of Ontario's most rural counties with 60% of the population living in non-urban areas and an overall population density of 17.5 people/km<sup>2</sup>.

Between 2006 and 2031, the population of Huron County is projected to grow by 15.4% and 35% across Ontario. There will be rapid growth in the population of 60+ for both Huron and Ontario during this period.

There are two levels of municipal government in Huron County: The county level of government; and lower tier levels of government for the nine municipalities:

- Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh
- Bluewater
- Central Huron
- Goderich
- Howick
- Huron East
- Morris-Turnberry
- North Huron
- South Huron

There are many factors that influence people's ability to participate in daily activities, including health status, obesity, asthma, and diabetes, all of which have been steadily worsening since 2003. <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada, Participation and Activity Limitation Survey, 2006.

There are many different types of barriers faced by people with disabilities. These include:

- Physical barriers, such as lack of access to ramps, or inaccessible transportation.
- Attitudinal barriers, which includes people who may make judgments and assumptions about what people with disabilities can and cannot do.
- Technological barriers, as when certain technologies are not useful for people with disabilities, such as a website that does not support screen reading software.
- Information and communication barriers, as when certain formats of information are not useful for people with disabilities, such as print that is too small to read.

People with disabilities also encounter financial barriers, as many are on fixed or low income and have limited access to socioeconomic activities. Many people with disabilities are also at risk of experiencing isolation, particularly if they experience a number of obstacles, such as requiring assistance with putting on a coat, accessing transportation, or requiring personal care in order to attend a program or benefit from a service.

Having an understanding of who is in our community and the types of barriers encountered by people with disabilities helps the staff at the County of Huron to plan for and take into account the many needs of people with disabilities.

The Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee created three sub committees to assist with removing barriers. They are Special Events, Awareness and Community Education Sub Committee; Building Plan Review, Site Plan and Physical Architectural Sub Committee; Directive and Regulation Review Sub Committee.

The Special Events Awareness and Community Education Committee meets as required to develop and implement programs to educate agencies, businesses and the broader private sector and to plan for special events that will bring awareness to the community regarding accessibility.

This Committee will develop resources for the private sector about the AODA, Huron County's Universal Design and Accessibility Guideline for Site Plan Control, and the importance of identifying, preventing and removing barriers and challenges faced by people with disabilities.

This committee will also increase awareness and create a stronger presence in the community by developing an interactive event to participate in National Access Awareness Week

The Building Plan Review, Site Plan and Physical Architectural Sub Committee is responsible for advising Councils within 30 days on the accessibility for persons with

disabilities to a public municipal building prior to purchasing, construction, renovation or lease.

This Sub Committee is responsible for drafting, periodically reviewing and updating the document titled "Huron County Universal Design and Accessibility Guidelines" and providing it to local Municipalities to assist in their review of site plans under section 41 of the Planning Act. The Committee may, if requested by a local Municipality, review a site plan under section 41 of the Planning Act to ensure facilities designed are accessible for persons with disabilities.

This Sub Committee is continually increasing site plan reviews to the public which is considered a huge success in breaking down barriers before they are made during construction of new buildings and renovations of old buildings. The word is out in Huron County on the importance of accessibility in ensuring inclusion for all.

This Sub Committee reports back to Council, advises participating municipalities and public businesses that requested a review on the accessibility of buildings, structures or premises in relation to the updated Building Codes and Huron County's Universal Design and Accessibility Guideline for Site Plan Control document. These reports will provide County staff with valuable information on items that need to be addressed during building upgrades.

The third and final Sub Committee that assists the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee in breaking down barriers is the Directive and Regulation Review Sub Committee.

The Directive and Regulation Review Sub Committee will review any relevant regulations and directives and identify concerns, provide solutions and provide recommendations to the Accessibility Coordinator. le) drafting new policies identified in IASR.

The Accessibility Coordinator will gather input from the Directive and Regulation Review Committee, the Working Group and the Senior Management Team and draft a response to the Ministry of Economic Development Employment and Infrastructure and write County Council identifying areas of concern and possible solutions and recommendations.

This Sub Committee will review the draft response and provide final feedback to the Accessibility Coordinator.

In Summary, with the implementation of the Special Events, Awareness and Community Education Sub Committee; Building Plan Review, Site Plan and Physical Architectural Sub Committee; and the Directive and Regulation Review Sub Committee, the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee has been very successful in removing and avoiding barriers in our communities.

## Accessibility Policy

The Integrated Accessibility Policy has been approved by the HCAAC on September 17, 2012 and will be approved by County Council prior to the compliance deadline of January 1, 2013. This policy demonstrates the County of Huron's commitment to inclusion and understanding and meeting the needs of all those we serve, in a way that is free from discrimination, protects the dignity and independence of all people, and provides equal opportunity and integrated services for people with disabilities.



## Accountable Governance

All Accessibility planning is based on the following Planning Principles:

- The Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee and the Accessibility Coordinator and appropriate Huron County staff will participate in the development and implementation of the accessibility plan under the IASR.
- Accessibility plans will consider the different impact on both the public and County employees.
- Accessibility plans will coordinate with and serve to enhance other County initiatives.
- Accessibility plans will strive to meet the requirements outlined in the IASR in the specified timeframe.
- Actions to improve accessibility will take into consideration the principles of Universal Design, which allow for the design of products and environments that will be useable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.
- The County will work in cooperation with the area municipalities and other participating agencies in consideration of common interests.

All employees have a role in creating and enhancing the accessibility of programs and services, and key individuals and groups are responsible for ensuring goals are met.

- **County Council** provides oversight on accessibility activities and approves policies and plans required by the legislation.
- **Senior Management Team** monitors accessibility activities, reviews accessibility policies and plans, and are responsible for compliance at the County of Huron.
- **Accessibility Coordinator** provides strategic direction and advice and monitors progress on meeting the AODA standards.



- **Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee** provides input on implementation plans, reports, and policies, and provides linkages to departmental activities.

### **Meaningful Participation**

The County of Huron will ensure that key stakeholders are engaged in the accessibility planning process, in the implementation of the AODA Standards, and in identifying, preventing, and removing barriers for people with disabilities.

The Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee provides feedback and advice on implementation of the AODA standards. The committee, comprised of volunteer community members with disabilities, assist the County of Huron with identifying, preventing, and removing barriers, including site plan reviews.

### **Accessibility Improvement Plans**



To create an accessible and inclusive County of Huron, we are committed to meeting the AODA standards and to identifying, removing, and preventing barriers for people with disabilities. With these priorities in mind, over the next five years the County of Huron will implement the AODA standards in Customer Service, Information and Communication, Employment, Transportation, and the Built Environment. Every plan and deliverable will contribute to key outcomes, all of which works toward our common vision of an accessible and inclusive County of Huron.

### **Customer Service**

#### ***Our commitment***

The County of Huron is committed to inclusion and understanding and meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a manner that is free from discrimination, and protects dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity.

#### ***How we will achieve accessible customer service***

Policies, Guidelines, and Standards

- Review and update policies to ensure high quality customer service. (2012 – 2017)

Tasks

- Embed accessibility requirements into staff training and orientation materials. (2012-2014)
- Provide training for all staff, volunteers, and contractors. (Ongoing)

- Develop and implement action plans to address barriers identified throughout the year of County services. (Ongoing)

#### Public Awareness

- Consult with advisory groups on emerging and changing requirements. (Ongoing)
- Review customer feedback and take appropriate action. (Ongoing)

#### ***Our progress***

- ✓ Developed and implemented the *Standards for Accessibility Policy*, outlining how the County of Huron will achieve accessibility through meeting the requirements of the AODA. Policy was approved by County Council.
- ✓ Developed and implemented a multi-year accessibility plan outlining the County's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet the requirements under the AODA. Completed for approval by County Council December, 2012.
- ✓ Developed a coordinated process for posting temporary service disruptions to the County's website. Will seek County Council approval December, 2012.
- ✓ Developed a document for public awareness on service animals. Completed May, 2012. Information to be posted on the County's website.
- ✓ Currently developing a staff training guide for working with customers with support persons.

#### ***Outcomes***

- County of Huron customers will receive services appropriate to their needs.
- People with disabilities are engaged for feedback and advice on County of Huron programs, services, and facilities.
- Staff can identify, prevent, and remove barriers for people with disabilities.

#### **Procurement**

##### ***Our commitment***

The County of Huron is committed to integrating accessibility into procurement policies and procedures.

##### ***How we will achieve accessible procurement***

###### Policies, Guidelines, and Standards

- Develop and implement accessible procurement practices and procedures. (2012-2013)

###### Tasks

- Include accessible procurement practices in training material. (2013)

## Technology

- Incorporate website accessibility guidelines into accessible procurement procedures. (2013)

## ***Our progress***

- ✓ Developed and implemented Procurement Policies, to incorporate accessibility features and criteria when procuring or acquiring goods, services, and facilities. To be completed December, 2012.

## ***Outcomes***

- County of Huron customers will receive services appropriate to their needs.
- Staff can identify, prevent, and remove barriers for people with disabilities.

## **Information and Communication**

### ***Our commitment***

The County of Huron is committed to ensuring information and communications are available and accessible to people with disabilities.

### ***How we will achieve accessible information and communication***

#### Policies, Guidelines, and Standards

- Develop guidelines and best practices for creating accessible documents for Microsoft Office applications. (2012-2013)
- Develop accessible standards of practice for information and communication supports. (2013)
- Ensure website accessibility guidelines are incorporated into website style guides. (2013)

#### Tasks

- Develop and implement training on accessible electronic documents. (2012- 2014)
- Develop tools, and resources to create accessible materials for County staff. (2012-2014)

#### Public Awareness

- Update library information to notify customers of the availability of accessible materials. (2013-2016)

## Technology

- Achieve compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) to ensure that websites and web content are accessible to people with disabilities. (2017)
- Continue to expand knowledge and use of accessible devices such as text-to-audio and video captioning. (Ongoing)

## **Our progress**

- ✓ Confirmed that emergency information, procedures, plans, and public safety information is available in alternate formats when requested. Completed January, 2012.
- ✓ Currently developing a series of instructional resources on ensuring Microsoft Office applications and PDF documents are accessible to most screen readers. To be completed June, 2013.
- ✓ Developing a half-day staff training course on creating accessible electronic documents. To be completed June, 2013.
- ✓ Developing resources and standards of practice for web content. To be completed by 2016.
- ✓ Exploring a CNIB partnership to provide DAISY book access to library patrons. To be completed by 2014.
- ✓ Will post information on the availability of accessible library materials to the library website. To be completed by June, 2013.

## **Outcomes**

- County of Huron customers will receive services appropriate to their needs.
- People with disabilities are engaged for feedback and advice on Huron County programs, services, and facilities.
- Staff can identify, prevent, and remove barriers for people with disabilities.

## **Employment**

### **Our commitment**

The County of Huron is committed to inclusive employment practices that ensure the processes of recruiting, hiring, communicating, and retaining employees with disabilities fulfills the intent of the *Ontario's Human Rights Code*.

## **How we will achieve accessible employment**

### Policies, Guidelines, and Standards

- Create a process for developing individual accommodation plans. (2013)
- Update documented return to work procedures to take into account employees with disabilities. (2013)
- Review and revise processes for performance management, career development, and redeployment. (2013)
- Review interview questions ensuring inclusivity and use of plain language. (2013)
- Ensure that any policy, procedure, or practice at the County of Huron respects and promotes the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. (Ongoing)

### Tasks

- Train recruitment staff and managers to support the intent and goals of the AODA. (2013 - 2014).
- Train staff and volunteers on accessibility and the *Ontario Human Rights Code*. (2013 - 2014)
- Promote understanding of employer obligations to provide employee accommodations. (Ongoing)
- Identify and remove barriers in the workplace. (Ongoing)

### Public Awareness

- Notify successful applicants, new, and existing employees of policies supporting people with disabilities. (2013)

### Technology

- Provide accessible formats and communication supports for employees with disabilities. (Ongoing)

## **Our progress**

- ✓ Created individual emergency workplace response plan policy and form for staff with a disability. To be approved December, 2012.
- ✓ Revised employment advertisements to include a statement regarding providing accommodations under the Human Rights Code in all aspects of the hiring process. Completed October, 2012.

## **Outcomes**

- Employees with disabilities are supported throughout the employment cycle.

- Staff can identify, prevent, and remove barriers for people with disabilities.

### **Built Environment**

The following accessibility actions to address barriers in the built environment are based on a preliminary review of a draft Design of Public Spaces Standards, released by the Province in August, 2012.

### ***Our commitment***

The County of Huron is committed to identifying, removing, and preventing barriers in accessibility in all County facilities.

### ***How we will achieve accessible built environment***

Policies, Guidelines, and Standards

- Create compliance guidelines and standards to address the Design of Public Spaces standards, if passed into Regulation. (2015)

Tasks

- Respond to feedback from staff and the public on the accessibility of facilities. (Ongoing)

Public Awareness

- Seek feedback and advice from the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee on site plans and other physical spaces. (Ongoing)

Infrastructure

- Incorporate the Design of Public Spaces standards, if passed into Regulation, in the design of outdoor spaces and service counters. (2013-2017)

### ***Our progress***

- ✓ Building Plan Review, Site Plan & Physical Architectural Assessment Committee actively reviews site plans for all municipal plans.
- ✓ This committee has reviewed the following site plans in 2012:
  - Goderich Downtown Master Plan (more specifically courthouse square)
  - Maitland River Elementary School
  - Brussels and Bayfield Libraries
  - Private location on Kingston Street in Goderich – Credit Union

### ***Outcomes***

- People with disabilities are engaged for feedback and advice on Huron County programs, services, and facilities.
- New buildings and renovations take into account the needs of people with disabilities.

## **Accountability and Reporting Compliance**

The County of Huron will develop a county-wide Compliance Work Plan that will be used to direct actions and support departments to fully meet the AODA standards. Each department will receive resources and guidance from the Accessibility Coordinator on how to meet and often exceed the expectations under the AODA standards.

The Accessibility Coordinator will collect each department's report on compliance. The Accessibility Coordinator annually submits a comprehensive compliance report to the County Council. The compliance report will be filed with the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario at their request.



## **A Final Word**

### **Reviewing and Monitoring the Accessibility Plan**

The County of Huron Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every five years. An annual status report will be completed to document the progress and measures taken to implement the County of Huron's strategy and meet the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.

### **Feedback**

The County of Huron welcomes feedback on the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, and on the accessibility of our programs, services, and facilities. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please contact us.

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### **Availability of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan**

Communication supports and accessible formats are available upon request.

## Appendix A: Integrated Accessibility Policy

Integrated Accessibility Policy		Section #	Policy #
		Approval Date: October, 2012	Revision Date:
Title:	Integrated Accessibility Policy		
Responsibility:	Council and Senior Management Team	Approval Level:	Council
Applies to:	All County Staff, Councillors, and Volunteers		

### Integrated Accessibility Standards

#### 1. Purpose:

Under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* all public and private sector organizations must meet the requirements of accessibility standards established by regulation. This policy establishes the Integrated Accessibility Standards in the areas of Employment, Information and Communication and Transportation for the County of Huron in accordance with Ontario Regulation 191/11 and with the Ministry of Community and Social Services intent to “streamline, align and phase-in accessibility requirements and allow for progress on accessibility and reduce the regulatory burden for obligated organizations”. This regulation came into force July 1, 2011.

The requirements set out in this policy and the Integrated Accessibility Regulation are not a replacement or a substitution for the requirements established under the *Human Rights Code* nor do the standards or policy limit any obligations owed to persons with disabilities under any other legislation.

#### 2. Scope and Responsibilities



This policy has been drafted in accordance with the Regulation and addresses how the County of Huron will achieve accessibility through meeting the Regulation's requirements. It provides the overall strategic direction that the County of Huron will follow to provide accessibility supports to Ontarians with disabilities.

The requirements of the Regulation include:

- Establishment, implementation, maintenance and documentation of a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the County of Huron's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the Regulation;
- Incorporation of accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities.
- Training; and
- Other specific requirements under the Information and Communication, Employment and Transportation Standards.

### **3. Policy Statement and Organizational Commitment**

The County of Huron is committed and guided by the four core principles of Dignity, Independence, Integration and Equal Opportunity and supports the full inclusion of persons as set out in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

The County of Huron shall use every effort to ensure that we meet the needs of people with disabilities, in a timely manner, through the implementation of this policy.

### **4. Definitions:**

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

**“Accommodation”** means the special arrangement made or assistance provided so that persons with disabilities can participate in the experiences available to persons without disabilities. Accommodation will vary depending on the person's unique needs;

**“Communication Supports”** may include, but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communications;

**“Communications”** means the interaction between two or more persons or entities, or any combination of them, where information is provided, sent or received;

**“Conversion Ready”** means an electronic or digital format that facilitates conversion into an accessible format;

**“Designated Public Sector Organization”** means every municipality and every person or organization listed in Column 1 of Table 1 of Ontario Regulation 146/10 (Public Bodies and Commission Public Bodies — Definitions) made under the *Public Service of Ontario Act, 2006*

**“IAP”** means Individualized Accommodation Plan

**“Information”** includes data, facts and knowledge that exists in any format, including text, audio, digital or images, and that conveys meaning.

**“Internet Website”** means a collection of related web pages, images, videos or other digital assets that are addressed relative to a common Uniform Resource Identifier (URI) and is accessible to the public.

**“Kiosk”** means an interactive electronic terminal, including a point-of-sale device, intended for public use that allows users to access one or more services or products or both.

**“Mobility Aid”** means a device used to facilitate the transport, in a seated posture, of a person with a disability.

**“Mobility Assistive Device”** means a cane, walker, wheelchair, scooter or similar aid.

**“New Internet Website”** means either a website with a new domain name or a website with an existing domain name undergoing a significant refresh.

**“Redeployment”** means the reassignment of employees to other departments or jobs within the organization as an alternative to layoff, when a particular job or department has been eliminated.

**“Unconvertible”** means

- (a) If it is not technically feasible to convert the information or communications;
- (b) The technology to convert the information or communications is not readily available.

**“Web Content Accessibility Guidelines”** means the world wide web consortium recommendation, dated December 2008, entitled “Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0.

## **5. General Provisions**

### **Multi-Year Accessibility Plan**

The County of Huron’s Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines a phased-in strategy to prevent and remove barriers and addresses the current and future requirements of the AODA. The County of Huron will report annually on the progress and implementation of the plan, post the information on the County website and will provide it in alternative formats upon request. The plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every five years.

### **Procuring or Acquiring Goods, Services or Facilities**

The County of Huron will use accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, except where it is not practical to do so (in which case, if requested, will provide an explanation). Please refer to Procurement By-Law.

### **Self-Service Kiosk**

The County of Huron shall have regard to the accessibility for persons with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.

### **Training**

The County of Huron will ensure that training is provided to all employees on the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in the Regulation and on the

*Human Rights Code* as it pertains to persons with disabilities. Training will be developed and implemented by January 1, 2014. Ongoing training will be provided to new employees as soon as practicable. If any changes are made to this policy or the requirements training will be provided. The County of Huron shall maintain a record of the dates when training is provided and the number of individuals to whom it was provided.

## **6. Information and Communication Standard**

The County of Huron will create, provide and receive information and communications in ways that are accessible to people with disabilities.

If the County of Huron determines that it is not technically feasible to convert the information or communications or the technology to convert the information or communication is not readily available, we will be obligated to provide the person that requires the information with:

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

## **7. Emergency Information**

If the County of Huron prepares emergency procedures, plans or public safety information and makes the information available to the public, we shall provide the information in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, as soon as practicable, upon request.

## **8. Feedback**

The County of Huron has a process in place for receiving and responding to feedback and will ensure that those processes are provided in accessible formats and with communication supports upon request. The County of Huron will notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

## **9. Accessible Formats and Communication Supports**

The County of Huron shall be obligated to provide or arrange for accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities:

- a) Upon request in a timely manner that takes into account the persons' accessibility needs due to a disability;
- b) At a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons;
- c) Consult with the person making the request and determine suitability of an accessible format or communication support;
- d) Notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

## **10. Website Accessibility**

The County of Huron shall make their internet website and web content conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 initially at Level A and increasing to Level AA. By January 1, 2014, any new web content will conform with WCAG 2.0 Level A. By January 1, 2021 all internet website and web content will conform with WCAG 2.0 Level AA.

## **11. Education, Training and Materials**

Applies to educational or training institutions.

### **Public Libraries**

- Public Libraries shall provide access to or arrange for the provision of access to accessible materials where they exist;
- Public Libraries shall make information about the availability of accessible materials publicly available and shall provide information in accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, upon request;
- Public Library Boards may provide accessible formats for archival materials, special collections and rare books.

## **12. Employment Standard**

The Employment Standard builds upon the existing requirements under the *Ontario Human Rights Code* in relation to how to accommodate individuals with disabilities throughout the job application process and the employment relationship. It applies in respect to employees and does not apply to volunteers and other non-paid individuals.

The requirements of the Employment Standard shall be met by the County of Huron by January 1, 2014 unless otherwise specified.

## **13. Recruitment**

The County of Huron shall notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodations for applicants with disabilities:

- During the recruitment process when job applicants are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process;
- If a selected applicant requests an accommodation, the County of Huron shall consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for the provision of a suitable accommodation that takes into account the applicant's disability;
- Notify successful applicants of the policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

## **14. Employee Notification**

The County of Huron shall inform its employees of its policies used to support its employees with disabilities, including but not limited to, policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to a disability:

- As required to new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment;
- Whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to a disability.

## **15. Accessible Formats**

In addition and where an employee with a disability requests it, the County of Huron will consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for:

- information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job;
- information that is generally available to employees in the workplace; and
- consult with the employee making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

## **16. Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP)**

The County of Huron shall have in place a written process for the development of a documented individual accommodation plan for employees with a disability. Process to include:

- The employee's participation in the development of the IAP;
- Assessment on an individual basis;
- Identification of accommodations to be provided;
- Timelines for the provision of accommodations;
- The County of Huron may request an evaluation by outside medical or other expert, at our expense, to assist with determining accommodation and how to achieve accommodation;
- Employee may request the participation of a representative from their bargaining agent, where represented, or otherwise a representative from the workplace not from a bargaining agent;
- Steps taken to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information;
- Frequency with which the IAP will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which it will be done;
- If denied, the reasons for denial are to be provided to the employee;
- A format that takes into account the employee's disability needs;

- If requested, any information regarding accessible formats and communication supports provided;
- Identification of any other accommodation that is to be provided.

### **17. Return to Work**

The County of Huron will have in place a return to work process for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work. Such processes must be documented and must outline the steps that the County of Huron will take to facilitate the return to work and include an individual accommodation plan.

### **18. Performance Management, Career Development and Advancement, and Redeployment**

The County of Huron will take into account the accommodation needs and/or individual accommodation plans of employees when:

- Using performance management processes;
- Providing career development and advancement information;
- Using redeployment procedures.

### **19. Workplace Emergency Response Information**

The County of Huron shall provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability:

- If the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary and the employer is aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability;
- If the employee who receives an individual workplace emergency response information requires assistance and with the employee's consent, the County of Huron shall provide the workplace emergency information to the person designated by the County of Huron to provide assistance to the employee;



- As soon as practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability;
- And will review the individualized workplace emergency response information when the employee moves to a different location in the organization, when overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed and when the employer reviews its general emergency response policies.

## **20. Transportation Standard**

The Transportation Standard will make it easier for people to travel in Ontario, including persons with disabilities, older Ontarians and families traveling with children in strollers.

The County of Huron does not have a public transit system and is not responsible for issuing taxi licenses, therefore has no obligations under the Transportation Standard. This portion of the IARS is the sole responsibility of the lower tiers.

The lower tiers shall:

- Consult with persons with disabilities and the public to determine proportion of accessible taxicabs required in the community, including steps to meet the need;
- Ensure taxicabs do not charge a higher fare or additional fee to persons with disabilities;
- Ensure taxicabs do not charge a fee for storage of assistive devices;
- Ensure taxicabs have appropriate information displayed both the rear bumper and available in an accessible format to passengers.

## Appendix B: Overview of AODA Requirements

Timeline for compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* – Large Designated Public Sector Organizations with 50+ employees.

<b>Standards Currently in Place</b>
Customer Service Standard ✓ All requirements under the Customer Service Standard Employment Standard ✓ Workplace emergency response information Information and Communication Standard ✓ Emergency Information Transportation Standard ✓ Duties of Municipalities, taxicabs
<b>By January 1, 2013</b>
General Requirements ✓ Accessibility policies ✓ Multi-year accessibility plans ✓ Procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities ✓ Self-service kiosks Information and Communication Standard ✓ Public libraries Transportation Standard ✓ Fare parity ✓ Duties of Municipalities, accessible taxicabs
<b>By January 1, 2014</b>
General Requirements • Training Employment Standard • Recruitment • Information for employees • Processes to accommodate employees Information and Communication Standard • Feedback • Accessible websites and web content Transportation Standard • Fares, support persons • Emergency or compassionate grounds • Booking • Trip restrictions

<b>By January 1, 2015</b>
Information and Communication Standard <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Accessible formats and communication supports</li></ul>
<b>By January 1, 2021</b>
Information and Communication Standard <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Accessible websites and web content</li></ul>

The above information was acquired using the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario Compliance Wizard, found at [www.accesson.ca](http://www.accesson.ca).