



# Municipality of Central Huron

## Accessibility Policy

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**Responsible Department:** Clerk's Department

# Accessibility Policy

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### **1. Policy Statement:**

The Municipality of Central Huron is committed to excellence in serving all customers, including persons with disabilities, and will make reasonable efforts to provide equitable access to obtain, use and benefit from the Municipality's programs, goods, services and facilities in a manner that respects a person's dignity and independence.

### **2. Purpose:**

To establish a framework for guiding the development, implementation and enforcement of accessibility standards across the Municipality of Central Huron as a requirement under the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)**, including the accessibility standards of O. Reg 191/11, Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

### **3. Application:**

This policy applies to all employees of the Municipality of Central Huron, volunteers, students, and any individual or organization that provides goods, services, programs or facilities on behalf of the Municipality, or is involved in the development of policies.

### **4. Policy Requirements:**

The Municipality of Central Huron is required to have a policy governing how the organization achieves and maintains accessibility through meeting the requirements of the accessibility standards of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR, O. Reg. 191/11) under the AODA. This includes general requirements and five accessibility standards.

#### **General Requirements:**

##### **a) Accessibility Planning**

The Municipality of Central Huron is committed to the establishment, implementation, maintenance and documentation of a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organizations' overall strategy to prevent and remove barriers and to address the current and future requirements of the AODA and

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the IASR. The Municipality of Central Huron contributes to a Joint Multi-Year Accessibility Plan with the County of Huron, and its Member Municipalities. In accordance with the requirements set out in the IASR, and in cooperation with the County of Huron, the Municipality of Central Huron will:

- Establish, review and update this plan in consultation with persons with disabilities;
- Post this plan on its website (Link to plan on website and footnote)
- Report as required on its website (Link and footnote) on the progress of the implementation of this plan through an Annual Status Update;
- Provide this plan in an accessible format, upon request; and
- Review and update this plan at least once every five years.

### **b) Procurement**

The Municipality of Central Huron is committed to the incorporation of accessibility criteria when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities. If it is not practicable to do so, staff will provide an explanation, upon request.

### **c) Self-service Kiosks**

The Municipality of Central Huron is committed to incorporating accessibility criteria and features when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks. If it is not practicable to do so, staff will provide an explanation, upon request.

### **d) Training**

The Municipality of Central Huron is committed to the training of all employees, volunteers, persons who deal with customers and the public on behalf of the Municipality, and persons participating in the development and approval of the Municipality's policies, practices and procedures, on the requirements under the IASR and the Ontario Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities.

In addition to specific requirements for training under the Customer Service Standards, training on the other standards shall be appropriate to the duties of the employees, volunteers and other persons, and will recur when changes occur to this policy.

The Municipality of Central Huron will maintain records of the training provided, including training dates and the number of individuals trained. The complete training listing and content summary will be available on the Municipality's website.

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## **Information and Communications Standards**

The Municipality of Central Huron is committed to complying with the requirements in the Information and Communications standards, including:

### **a) Feedback**

The Municipality of Central Huron will ensure current feedback processes regarding how goods, services, facilities and programs are provided to persons with disabilities are accessible by providing accessible formats and communication supports, upon request. When an accessible format is requested, the Municipality will consult with the person making the request to determine what format is suitable. The feedback process is available on the Municipality of Central Huron's website.

### **b) Accessible Formats and Communication Supports**

Upon request, the Municipality of Central Huron will provide or will arrange to provide for the provision of information and communication in an accessible format and with communication support (if needed) for persons with disabilities in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs due to his or her disability.

The Municipality of Central Huron will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

The public will be notified by the Municipality about the availability of obtaining information and communication in an accessible format and with communication support if needed.

The following exceptions apply in cases where it is not possible to provide accessible information and communications:

- It is not technically feasible to convert the information or communication.
- The technology required to convert the information or communication is not readily available.
- The Municipality does not control the information directly or indirectly through a contractual relationship.

In such cases where the Municipality has determined that information or communications cannot be converted into an alternative format or provided through communication supports, the reasons for this will be explained to the individual who is making the request, and he/she will be provided with a

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summary of the information or communications being requested. The format of the summary will be determined in consultation with the individual and provided in a method that considers his/her disability.

### **c) Emergency Procedures, Plans and Public Safety Information**

Where emergency procedures, plans and public safety information is made available to the public, the Municipality of Central Huron will ensure such documents are available in an accessible format or with appropriate communication support as soon as practicable upon request.

### **d) Accessible Websites and Web Content**

The Municipality of Central Huron will ensure that its website, content and applications directly controlled by the Municipality or through contractual relationships will be in conformity with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, Level AA, as required by the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), by January 1, 2021, as practicable.

The Municipality of Central Huron is committed to the process of providing online information and communications and services that are accessible to all. This includes:

- Identifying, removing and preventing barriers to access of online information and communications systems.
- Creating, providing and receiving online information and communications in ways that are accessible for people with disabilities.
- Providing or making arrangements for accessible formats and information and communication supports online when a person with a disability requests them.
- Conforming to the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 for accessible websites and web content.

### **e) Language and Terminology**

When referring to people with disabilities, employees and volunteers of, and third parties affiliated with the Municipality of Central Huron shall use language and terminology that adheres to guidelines provided in Appendix A: People First Language.

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### **Employment Standards**

The Municipality of Central Huron is committed to diversity and inclusivity in all employment practices, and will promote the independence, dignity, integration, and equality of opportunity with persons with disabilities by ensuring the accessibility of our facilities and services. Accommodations, including alternative formats, are available for all parts of the recruitment and selection process.

#### **a) Recruitment**

The Municipality of Central Huron will notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodations for job 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 Municipality will consult with the applicant and provide and arrange for the provision of suitable accommodations in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability. employees with disabilities.

#### **b) Notice to Successful Applicants**

The Municipality of Central Huron will notify all successful job applicants of the Municipality's policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

#### **c) Informing Employees of Supports**

The Municipality of Central Huron will inform employees of the 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. The Municipality will provide this information to new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment. Updated information will be provided to all employees when there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability.

#### **d) Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees**

Where an employee of the Municipality of Central Huron requests it, the Municipality will consult with the employee to arrange for the provision of accessible information and communication supports for information that is needed to perform the employee's job, and for information that is generally available to employees in the workplace. Further, the Municipality will consult

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with the employee making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

#### **e) Workplace Emergency Response Information**

An employee who has a disability shall be provided with individualized workplace emergency response information if the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary, and the Municipality is aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability. If an employee who receives individualized workplace emergency response information requires assistance, with the employee's consent, the Municipality shall provide the workplace emergency response information to a person designated by the Municipality to provide assistance to the employee. The information shall undergo a review when:

- The employee moves to a different location;
- The employee's overall accommodation needs or plans are reviewed;
- The Municipality reviews the Huron County Emergency Response Plan in conjunction with the County-wide Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee.

#### **f) Documented Individual Accommodation Plans**

The Municipality of Central Huron has developed a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities. If requested, these plans shall include information regarding accessible formats and communication supports provided, as well as individualized workplace emergency response information if required, and will identify any other accommodation that needs to be provided. Further, employees will be provided with copies of their individual accommodation plans.

All employees of, and any applicants to the Municipality of Central Huron will be notified when there is a change in the policy to accommodate and support a person with disabilities.

#### **g) Return to Work Process**

The Municipality of Central Huron is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment and, in the event of a work-related and non-work-related injury, illness or disability that fits the definition of disability under the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act (WSIA) and the AODA, ensuring that workplace rehabilitation is started as soon as possible in accordance with medical advice (if applicable).

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The Municipality of Central Huron has developed and has in place a documented return-to-work process for its employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work. The return-to-work process outlines the steps the Municipality will take to facilitate the return to work of employees who were absent due to their disability (both non-work-related and work-related), using individual documented accommodation plans as part of the process.

#### **h) Performance Management**

The Municipality of Central Huron is committed to removing barriers for employee with disabilities and takes into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, when using its Annual Performance Evaluation Process in respect of employees with disabilities.

#### **i) Career Development and Advancement**

The Municipality of Central Huron has integrated career development and advancement into the Annual Performance Evaluation Process and will ensure that the principles of equal opportunity and reasonable accommodation are essential characteristics in the process.

## **Transportation Standards**

The Municipality of Central Huron does not have any requirements under the Transportation Standards for conventional or specialized transit and does not license taxicabs.

Although there is not any conventional transit available to the residents of Central Huron, specialized transit is available for persons with disabilities through other organizations, including:

- EasyRide Transportation Services through One Care services
- 211 Services
- [Regional Ride Share Program](https://www.regionalrideshare.ca/en/my/)<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.regionalrideshare.ca/en/my/>

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## **Design of Public Spaces Standards**

The Municipality of Central Huron will meet the Design of Public Spaces Standards, including consultation with the public, persons with disabilities and the Huron County Accessibility Advisory Committee, when building or making significant alterations to public spaces. Public spaces include:

- Recreational trails and beach access routes
- Outdoor public use eating areas
- Outdoor play spaces
- Exterior paths of travel
- Accessible parking, and
- Service-related elements, like service counters, fixed queuing lines and waiting areas

The Municipality of Central Huron will ensure that the multi-year accessibility plan will include the following:

1. Procedures for preventative and emergency maintenance of the accessible parts of public spaces; and
2. Procedures for handling temporary disruptions when an accessible part of a public space is not useable.

## **Customer Service Standards**

The Municipality of Central Huron is committed to excellence in serving people of all abilities, in accordance with the requirements set out in the Customer Service Standards. The Municipality will ensure that its facilities, premises and environments are maintained free from discrimination and harassment and will provide accessible service in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. This includes:

### **a) Use of Assistive Devices, Service Animals and Support Persons**

The Municipality is committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use, access or benefit from our goods, services and facilities. People with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal will be welcomed on the parts of Municipal premises that are open to the public and allowed by law, and customers who are accompanied by a support person will also be welcome on Municipal premises.

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#### **b) Notice of Temporary Disruptions**

Should a planned or unplanned service disruption occur that would limit a person with a disability from accessing Municipal facilities, goods or services, the Municipality will provide appropriate notice to inform staff, employees, customers and visitors. In accordance with the IASR, the Municipality of Central Huron will post temporary disruption notices on the Municipal website

#### **c) Training**

The Municipality will provide training, as soon as practicable, to all employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on its behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of customer service policies, on Accessible Customer Service and on the Ontario Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities, including instruction on the following:

- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disability;
- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person;
- How to use equipment or devices available on the Municipality's premises or otherwise provided by the Municipality that may help with the provision of goods, services or facilities to a person with a disability; and
- What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the Municipality's goods, services or facilities.

The complete training listing and content summary will be available on the Municipality's website.

#### **d) Feedback Process**

In order to meet the needs of its customers, including the requirements of people with disabilities, the Municipality has established a process for receiving and responding to feedback regarding the manner in which goods, services and access to facilities is provided to people with disabilities.

#### **e) Format of Documents**

Documents will be provided in an accessible format or with communication supports, upon request, and will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

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### 5. Definitions:

“**Accessible**” means capable of being entered or reached, approachable; easy to get at; capable of being influenced, obtainable; able to be understood or appreciated.

“**Assistive devices**” are auxiliary aids such as communication aids, cognition aids, personal mobility aids and medical aids (e.g., canes, crutches, wheelchairs or hearing aids).

“**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 arrangements 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.

“**Career development and advancement**” includes providing additional responsibilities within an employee’s current position and the movement of an employee from one job to another in an organization that may be higher in pay, provide greater responsibility or be at a higher level in the organization or any combination of them and, for both additional responsibilities and employee movement, is usually based on merit or seniority, or a combination of them.

“**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.

“**Conventional transportation services**” means public passenger transportation services on transit buses, motor coaches or rail-based transportation that operate solely within the Province of Ontario and that are provided by a designated public sector transportation organization.

“**Customers**” or people you refer to as clients, friends, associates, patients, wholesalers, buyers or patrons are people who receive goods or services from your organization.

“**Dignity**” means respecting and treating every person, including persons with a disability, as valued and deserving of effective and full service, just as any other customer.

“**Disability**”, as per the Ontario **Human Rights Code**, means:

- a) 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

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- coordination, 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;
- b) A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- c) A learning disability or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- d) A mental disorder; or
- e) An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the **Workplace Safety and Insurance Act**.

**“Employees”** means every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the Municipality of Central Huron whether the person does so as an employee (part-or full-time), agent, volunteer, consultant or otherwise.

**“Independence”** means freedom from control or influence of others, freedom to make your own choices.

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

**“Performance management”** means activities related to assessing and improving employee performance, productivity and effectiveness, with the goal of facilitating employee success.

**“Persons with Disabilities”** are individuals who have a disability, as defined under the **Ontario Human Rights Code**.

**“Reasonable efforts”** means taking approaches that meet the required needs of the individual.

**“Redeployment”** means the reassignment of employees to other departments or jobs within the organization as an alternative to termination or temporary layoff, when the organization eliminates a job or department.

**“Service animal”** means,

- a) the animal can be readily identified as one that is being used by the person for reasons relating to the person’s disability, as a result of visual indicators, such as a vest or harness worn by the animal; or
- b) the person provides documentation from one of the following regulated health professionals confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons related to the disability:

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- (i) A member of the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario.
  - (ii) A member of the College of Chiropractors of Ontario.
  - (iii) A member of the College of Nurses of Ontario.
  - (iv) A member of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario.
  - (v) A member of the College of Optometrists of Ontario.
  - (vi) A member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario.
  - (vii) A member of the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario.
  - (viii) A member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario.
  - (ix) A member of the College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario. O. Reg. 165/16, s. 16.
- c) A “guide dog” is defined in section 1 of the Blind Persons’ Rights Act. A “guide dog” means a dog trained as a guide for a blind person and having the qualifications prescribed by the Guide Dogs Regulations (R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 58).

**“Specialized transportation services”** means public passenger transportation services that:

- a) operate solely within the Province of Ontario,
- b) are provided by a designated public sector transportation organization, and
- c) are designed to transport persons with disabilities.

**“Support person,”** in relation to a person with a disability, is another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or with access to goods, services or facilities.

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## 6. References:

[Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#)<sup>2</sup>

[Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ont. Reg. 191/11](#)<sup>3</sup>

[Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c.H.19](#)<sup>4</sup>

[Blind Persons' Rights Act, R.S.O. 1990, O. B.7](#)<sup>5</sup>

[Guide Dogs Regulations, R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 58](#)<sup>6</sup>

## 7. Contact:

For further information about this policy, contact:

Clerk, 519-482-3997

[clerk@centralhuron.com](mailto:clerk@centralhuron.com)

**Accessible formats and communication supports are available, upon request.**

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/05a11>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/110191#BK120>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90h19>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90b07>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/900058>