



RICHMOND HILL PUBLIC LIBRARY

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

1.0 **PURPOSE**

Richmond Hill Public Library is committed to providing equal treatment to people with disabilities with respect to the use and benefit of Library services, programs, goods and facilities in a manner that respects their dignity and independence. This commitment extends to residents, visitors and employees with visible or non-visible disabilities.

The purpose of this policy is to provide the overarching framework to guide the review and development of Richmond Hill Public Library policies, standards, procedures and guidelines in order to ensure that:

- Library services, programs, goods and facilities are to be available to people with disabilities in a manner that:
 - is free from discrimination
 - reflects the principles of dignity and independence
 - seeks to provide integrated service
 - provides an opportunity equitable to others to obtain, use and benefit from the Library's goods and services
 - takes into consideration a person's disability.
- The Library is compliant with the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and is consistent with the Town of Richmond Hill Accessibility Policy.

2.0 **SCOPE**

This policy applies to all Library employees, volunteers and to any individual or organization that provides goods, services or facilities to the public or other third parties on behalf of the Library, in accordance with the legislation.

3.0 **GENERAL STANDARDS**

Richmond Hill Public Library is a designated public sector organization under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of people with disabilities.

It is the policy of the Richmond Hill Public Library that the Library is committed to providing quality Library services that are accessible to all persons who wish to obtain and use Library services.

3.1 Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

Upon request, the Library shall endeavour, whenever possible to provide accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities, in a timely manner, taking into account the person's accessibility needs at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

3.2 Training

All Library employees and volunteers are required to undergo training on the requirements of the AODA accessibility standards and on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities. *Training will be provided on a continuing basis to new employees and volunteers as part of the new employee orientation and training program.*

The training provided will be compliant with the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and will be appropriate to the duties of the employee or volunteer.

Third parties or contractors must verify customer service training has been received and provide the Library with appropriate documents as it relates to the legislation prior to commencement of work.

The Library will keep a record of the training provided including the dates on which accessibility training took place *and the individuals to whom it is provided.*

3.3 Feedback on Services

The Library is committed to providing high quality service to all members of the public it serves. Feedback from the public is welcomed as it may identify areas that require change and encourage continuous service improvements.

Feedback may be given by telephone, in writing, by e-mail and in person at any one of the Library's sites. Feedback will be accepted in accessible formats and with other communication supports as required.

Information about the feedback process will be available to the public and notice of the process will be posted on the Library's website.

4.0 CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

4.1 Assistive Devices

A person with a disability *is welcome* to utilize their own assistive device to obtain or use the Library's services. Exceptions may occur in situations where the Library has determined that the assistive device may pose a risk to the health and safety of a customer with a disability or the health and safety of others.

In these situations and others, the Library will provide an explanation and may offer a customer with a disability other measures to assist him or her to obtain or use the Library's services, where the Library has such other measures available.

It is the responsibility of the customer with a disability to ensure that his or her assistive device is operated in a safe and controlled manner at all times.

4.2 Adaptive Technologies

The Library provides adaptive technologies for persons with disabilities in order to eliminate or diminish barriers to information and maximize independence. Assistance in using adaptive technologies is provided by Library staff; in-depth instruction cannot be provided.

4.3 Service Animals

A person with a disability is welcome to visit the Library accompanied by a service animal. Persons training service animals are also welcome in the facility. If it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, the Library may ask the person for confirmation of the animal's status. It is the responsibility of the person to keep their service animal in control at all times.

4.4 Support Persons

A person with a disability may require an accompanying support person to facilitate use of Library collections, programs and services.

At times, the Library may require that a person with a disability be accompanied by a support person while on Library premises. This will be required where it is deemed necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises.

In situations where the confidential information of a person with a disability is to be discussed, the Library may require a statement of permission and/or consent from the person to allow their support person to be present.

A support person, when assisting a person with a disability in the enjoyment of Library programs, will be permitted to attend at no charge where an admission fee is applicable.

4.5 Temporary Service Disruptions

The Library will make *all* reasonable efforts to provide notice of *planned or unplanned* disruptions to the public, including information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that may be available. In the case of an unplanned temporary disruption, advance notice will not be possible. Notice will be posted at all Library sites and on the Library's website.

5.0 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STANDARDS

5.1 Communication

When communicating with a person with a disability, Library employees and volunteers will do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

Website communications will be compliant with the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Information and Communications.

5.2 Emergency Procedures, Plans and Information

Richmond Hill Public Library will provide all existing public emergency procedures, plans and public safety information, upon request, in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports in a timely manner.

6.0 EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS

6.1 Recruitment

Richmond Hill Public Library will post information about the availability of accommodations for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment process.

Job applicants who are selected for an interview and/or testing will be notified that accommodations for material to be used in the process are available, upon request.

Successful applicants will be notified about the Library's policies for accommodating employees with disabilities as part of their offer of employment.

6.2 Employee Supports

The Library will inform employees of the policies used to support employees with disabilities. The Library will provide this information to new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment. Updated information will be provided to all employees whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of accommodation.

6.3 Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees

Upon an employee's request, the Library will consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for:

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

6.4 Documented Individual Accommodation Plans

Written individualized accommodation plans, including return-to-work plans, will be provided for any employee who has been absent from work due to a disability and requires disability-related accommodations to return to work.

6.5 Performance Management and Career Development and Redeployment

The Library will take into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities, as well as any individual accommodation plans when *managing* their career development *and advancement*, *assessing their* performance and when considering redeployment.

6.6 Workplace Emergency Response Information

If the Library is aware of *an employee's* need for accommodation, and if the disability makes it necessary for the employee to have individualized workplace emergency response information, the Library will provide this information as soon as is practical once it becomes aware of the need for accommodation.

In addition, this information will be provided, with the employee's consent, to any person designated to provide assistance. The information will undergo review when the employee moves to a different location, when the employee's overall accommodation needs or plans are reviewed and when the Library reviews its general emergency response plan.

7.0 NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTS

Notice of the availability of all documents required by the Accessibility Standards will be posted on the Library's website, and be made available through the Office of the Chief Executive Officer.

Availability and Format of the Documents Required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

All documents required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service are available upon request, subject to the ***Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)***.

When providing a document to a customer with a disability, the Library will provide the document, or the information contained in the document, in a format that takes the customer's disability into account.

8.0 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.

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.

Disability: - is defined, per Section 2 of the *AODA*, 2005, S.O. 2005, c.11 and the *Human Rights Code*, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19, as follows:

- 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 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;
- 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;
- e) An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the ***Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997***

Library - The Richmond Hill Public Library, including its Board and committees.

Service Animals – are defined, per Section 4(9) of the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service*, O. Reg. 429/07, as follows;

An animal is a service animal for a person with a disability:

- (a) if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
- (b) if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relation to the disability;
- (c) if the person provides a valid identification card or training certificate from a recognized guide dog or service animal training school.

Support Person – is defined, per Section 4(9) *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service*, O.Reg. 429/07, as follows:

A support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

9.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS

Federal Law and Covenants

Canadian Human Rights Act (1997)

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982)

Canadian Employment Equity Act (1995)

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Ratified 2010)

Legislative and Administrative Authority

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, O. Reg. 429/07

Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, O. Reg. 191/11

Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c H. 19

Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c 32

10.0 RELATED POLICIES

1.0 Code of Conduct – Customer (December 2014)

Enriching Your Choices, Connections and Community

Approval Date: February 11, 2016	Motion # 16:15
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