

**Municipality of West Grey
Election Accessibility Plan
2022**

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1. Introduction

The clerk is responsible for the appropriate legislative and administrative conduct of the municipal elections in the Municipality of West Grey.

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.

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.

West Grey 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 Voter Assistance Centres. The election will 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 (3) of the MEA requires that within (90) days of voting day the clerk who is responsible for conducting the election shall prepare a report about the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities, and shall make the report available to the public.

2. Staff Training

All staff carrying out election duties will complete the West Grey Accessible Customer Service Training and specific Election Training to recognize and ensure that persons with disabilities are serviced 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;

- what to do if a person is having difficulty accessing election information or services; and
- how to provide voter assistance if requested.

3. 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 Elections page of the Municipality of West Grey's website, www.westgrey.com, and included in election notices posted on the website and in the local media.

4. Notice of Temporary Service Disruption

The clerk shall provide public notice on the Elections page of the municipal website, www.westgrey.com, 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.

5. Staff Assistance

The Clerk's Office 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: 519-369-2200

Email: election@westgrey.com

In Person: Municipal Office
402813 Grey Rd. 4
Durham ON N0G 1R0

Mail: Municipal Clerk
Municipality of West Grey
402813 Grey Rd. 4
Durham ON N0G 1R0

6. Assistance to Electors

The 2022 West Grey municipal elections will be conducted with internet and telephone voting methods. Detailed information about each voting method is set out in the 2022 Municipal Elections Procedures, available on the municipal website, www.westgrey.com or from the Clerk's Office and can be provided in an alternative format upon request.

Please contact us at 519-369-2200 or election@westgrey.com if you require your Voter Information Letter in an accessible format.

The Clerk's Office staff are available throughout the election to assist with any issues that may arise with respect to providing a barrier-free election.

7. Voter Assistance Centres

A Voter Assistance Centre shall be located at the Municipal Office, 402813 Grey Rd. 4, Durham, ON, and shall be available to voters throughout the voting period during regular office hours and on voting day until 8:00 p.m. Additional Voter Assistance Centres may be established for specific times throughout the voting period. The locations, accessible parking and entrance information will be posted on the Elections page of the municipal website, www.westgrey.com.

Parking

Voter Assistance Centres shall be located in buildings that have designated parking that is clearly posted and located close to the entrance of the Voter Assistance Centre for individuals with disabilities.

Entrance

The entrances to Voter Assistance Centres will be level or have steps and ramps with handrails leading to the entrance doors. Doors will have automatic door opening devices or will be propped open in a safe manner. The doors will be wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair or other mobility devices.

Interior

Access to the interior voting area and voting booth will be level. Carpeting and doormats will be level with the floor. The voting area will be well lit and seating shall be made available.

Accessible Voting Kiosk

The Voting Kiosk will be low in height and have a wide area to allow individuals using mobility aids to vote independently and secretly. The Voting Kiosk shall have a touchscreen laptop. The tilt of the touchscreen is adjustable. Election staff and a Voting Kiosk including a touchscreen laptop shall be available for mobile use at Rockwood Terrace long term care facility.

Voting Assistance

Persons with disabilities may be accompanied by a support person within the

Voting Kiosk area or the Voter Assistance Centre staff can assist a voter in casting their vote. The Election Help Centre staff will, in conjunction with the person with the disability, determine the extent to which they need assistance and the best way to provide the assistance.

If public health guidelines and the facilities allow access, election staff will on-site at Grey Bruce Health Service – West Grey, retirement homes and long-term care homes at various times in the voting period to increase accessibility. All election officials are sworn to an oath of secrecy.

Accessible Voting Technologies

Voting Kiosks shall have a touch screen computer for internet voting that will assist voters with disabilities in casting their votes with independence and privacy. Election stalls shall be available at all times at the Voting Kiosks in the Voting Assistance Centres to assist the voter upon request. Support persons and service animals shall be accommodated.

West Grey Public Libraries shall also provide internet access during regular library hours, providing another location option for voters to access the internet.

8. Internet Voting and Telephone Voting

Both internet voting and telephone voting offer persons with a variety of disabilities to cast their vote with independence and privacy.

Internet voting allows voters to vote from their home through secured internet services. Voters have the option to use the assistive tools they have on their own computer such as paddles, a hand-held touchpad, a thumb switch or sip and puff technology.

Telephone voting allows voters to vote from their home through secured telephone services. Landlines or cell phones can be used to vote. This method is compatible with assistive devices.

Both methods are designed to encourage voter participation as voters are not required to attend a physical location to cast their ballot; thus accessibility and privacy for persons with disabilities is maximized.

9. Assistance to Candidates

General Information

The 2022 West Grey municipal elections will be conducted with internet and telephone voting methods. Detailed information about each voting method is set out in the 2022 Municipal Election Procedures, available on the Election page of the municipal website, www.westgrey.com, or from the Clerk's Office and can be provided in an alternative format upon request.

The Clerk's Office staff are available throughout the election to assist with any

issues that may arise with respect to providing a barrier-free election.

Accessibility measures for candidates to consider in regards to their campaign messaging are posted on the Election page of the municipal website

Service Animals/Support Persons

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

10. Feedback

The West Grey Municipal Clerk welcomes feedback to identify areas where changes need to be considered and ways in which the Municipality of West Grey can improve the delivery of an accessible election. This plan is a living document and will continue to undergo changes when necessary. Feedback on this plan can be submitted through the following:

Telephone: 519-369-2200

Email: election@westgrey.com

In Person: Municipal Office
402813 Grey Rd. 4
Durham, ON N0G 1R0

Mail: Municipal Clerk
Municipality of West Grey
402813 Grey Rd. 4
Durham, ON N0G 1R0

Feedback received shall be reviewed by the clerk and appropriate action shall be taken to remove barriers or provide accommodation if necessary. It shall also be summarized and included in the Election Accessibility Report and shall be used to improve accessibility measures in future municipal elections.

11. Additional Information

The Clerk's Office staff are available throughout the election to assist with any issues that may arise with respect to providing a barrier-free election.

Municipality of West Grey Multi-Year Accessibility Plan:
<https://www.westgrey.com/en/discover/resources/MYAP-2020-2024-AA.pdf>

Grey County Multi-Year Accessibility Plan:
<https://www.westgrey.com/en/services/resources/Documents/Grey-County-Multi-Year-Accessibility-Plan-2018-2022.pdf>

Access Forward, Accessibility Training: <https://www.accessforward.ca/>