

To:	Chair Burley and Members of the Joint Grey County Accessibility Committee
Committee Date:	September 5, 2019
Subject / Report No:	CCR-JAAC-15-19
Title:	Accessible Customer Service Policy Update
Prepared by:	Kathie Nunno
Reviewed by:	Heather Morrison
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	None
Status:	Recommendation adopted by Committee as presented September 5, 2019; Endorsed by Committee of the Whole September 26, 2019 per Resolution CW184-19; Endorsed by Council October 10, 2019 per Resolution CC80-19;

Recommendation

1. **That Report CCR-JAAC-15-19 regarding the updated Accessible Customer Service Policy be received, and**
2. **That the updated Accessible Customer Service Policy MS-AAC-001 be approved as presented, and**
3. **That MS-AAC-001-001 being the Accessible Customer Service Procedure be rescinded as it is now contained within the updated Policy.**

Executive Summary

Accessibility legislation requires municipalities to implement and maintain accessibility policies.

Part of the requirement is to include a statement of organizational commitment to meet the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner in their policies.

Background and Discussion

Grey County Council approved the Accessible Customer Service Policy MS-AAC-001 and Procedure MS-AAC-001-001 through report CCR-CS-11-12 on February 7, 2012. The Policy has been reviewed by staff and the updates are administrative in nature.

Change Highlights:

1. The policy includes the required statement of organizational commitment.
2. The policy references the updated legislation.
3. The feedback form was updated and is now available to auto-complete and submit online.
4. The notices for scheduled service disruptions and unexpected service disruptions have been updated.
5. The policy format conforms to the updated corporate approach for policies and procedures.

Legal and Legislated Requirements

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, Ontario Regulation 191/11 Integrated Accessibility Standards, Part I General: Establishment of accessibility policies, states:

3. (1) Every obligated organization shall develop, implement and maintain policies governing how the organization achieves or will achieve accessibility through meeting its requirements referred to in this Regulation. O. Reg. 191/11, s. 3 (1).

(2) Obligated organizations, other than small organizations, shall include a statement of organizational commitment to meet the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner in their policies. O. Reg. 191/11, s. 3 (2).

(3) Every obligated organization, other than a small organization, shall,

(a) prepare one or more documents describing the policies it developed under subsection (1); and

(b) make the documents publicly available and, on request, provide them in an accessible format. O. Reg. 165/16, s. 3 (1).

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no additional financial and resource implications anticipated with this update.

Relevant Consultation

- Internal (CAO, Clerk, Housing, Human Resources, Long-Term Care, Grey Roots, Communications, Purchasing, Transportation, Planning)
- External (list)

Appendices and Attachments

Accessible Customer Service Policy

Accessible Customer Service Policy

Approved by: County Council

By-law: N/A

Replaces: MS-AAC-001-001

Section: Municipal Services

Policy: **MS-AAC-001**

Date Approved:

Last Revision Date: August 2019

Scheduled for Review by: 2024

Policy Statement

Grey County is committed to providing accessible and inclusive services to people of all abilities.

Purpose

The Accessible Customer Service Policy meets the municipal requirements under Ontario Regulation 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards made under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*: Information and Communications Standards, Employment Standards, Transportation Standards, Design of Public Spaces Standards (Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment), and Customer Service Standards.

Scope

This policy provides direction to Grey County Council, employees, and volunteers to fulfill Grey County's commitment to providing accessible and inclusive services to people of all abilities.

1.0 Definitions

1.1 "Accessible" means: Capable of being entered or reached, approachable; easy to get at; capable of being influenced; obtainable; easy to understand or appreciate.

1.2 "Disability" means (Ontario Human Rights Code definition):

- any degree of physical, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, induces diabetes, mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical coordination, blindness or visual impediment, hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or

- physical reliance on a dog guide or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- a condition of mental impairment of a developmental disability;
 - a learning disability or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
 - a mental disorder;
 - an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety Insurance Act, 1997.
- 1.3 “Service animal” means: an animal trained in providing assistance to a person with a disability; and
- a) it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
 - b) the person provides documentation from one of the following regulated health professionals confirming that the animal is required for reasons relating to the disability:
 - 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.
- 1.4 “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 service.

2.0 Statement of Commitment

- 2.1 Grey County is committed to providing accessible and inclusive services to people of all abilities in a timely manner.
- 2.2 The Grey County Multi-Year Accessibility Plan explains how the County is improving accessibility. It also explains how Grey County follows provincial accessibility laws.

3.0 Training

- 3.1 Grey County is committed to training staff, councillors and volunteers in Ontario's accessibility laws and aspects of the Ontario Human Rights Code that relate to persons with disabilities.
- 3.2 Grey County trains its employees, councillors and volunteers on accessible customer service as well as other accessibility training as it relates to their specific roles.
- 3.3 Grey County keeps records of the training provided in accordance with legislation.

4.0 Information and Communication

- 4.1 Grey County staff ask how they can best help. When asked, County staff provide information about the organization and its services, including public safety information, in accessible formats or with communication supports. County staff meet the needs of its customers
- 4.2 Grey County meets internationally-recognized Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA website requirements in accordance with Ontario's accessibility laws. Information related to accessibility is posted on grey.ca.
- 4.3 Automated updates on a variety of topics are available by signing up for Grey County News / Updates on grey.ca.

5.0 Maintenance of Public Spaces

- 5.1 Service Disruption (Scheduled and Unexpected)

Grey County Housing staff coordinate maintenance of accessible features. Notice of Scheduled Service Disruption and Notice of Unexpected Service Disruption forms are posted on the County's website and at the location of the service disruption.

- 5.2 Long-Term Care

The Long-Term Care department maintains a policy for the County's long-term care facilities: V-C-10.00 Preventative Maintenance Program

6.0 Service

6.1 Providing Goods, Services, or Facilities

Grey County is committed to complying with all accessibility legislation while providing excellence in customer service to all customers. Grey County's accessible customer service policies are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity for people of all abilities.

6.2 Self-service Kiosks

Grey County incorporates accessibility features and considers accessibility for people with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.

Grey County staff are available to help when asked.

6.3 Assistive Devices

The use of personal assistive devices is permitted. Where possible, the County shall make assistive devices available in the form of lifts, wheelchairs, audio and visual enhancements, etc.

If a person with a disability is unable to access the County's services through the use of their own personal assistive device, the County will:

- Determine if service is accessible based upon individual requirements
- Assess service delivery and potential service options to meet the needs of the individual
- Explain and help with accessing the alternative service

6.4 Service Animals

Please refer to Grey County's Pets and Service Animals in the Workplace policy.

6.5 Support Persons

Grey County recognizes the need for a support person to support and assist an individual with a disability when accessing goods and services provided by the County. The County of Grey reserves the right to request the person with a disability be accompanied by a support person, in the event that it is considered necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with a disability or others on the premises.

Grey County does not charge admission fees for support persons who accompany a person with a disability.

Grey County staff will obtain consent from the person with the disability before confidential information is discussed.

7.0 Employment

- 7.1 Grey County notifies employees, potential hires and the public that accommodations can be made during recruitment and hiring.
- 7.2 During orientation, staff are advised that supports are available for those with disabilities. Individual accommodation and/or customized emergency information plans are created as needed.
- 7.3 Grey County's performance management, career development and redeployment processes consider the accessibility needs of all employees.

8.0 Purchasing

- 8.1 Grey County considers accessibility in the design, criteria and features when purchasing new goods, services or facilities. If this is not possible or practical, an explanation will be provided upon request.

9.0 Design of Public Spaces

- 9.1 Grey County meets accessibility laws when building or making major changes to public spaces. Public spaces include:
 - Recreational trails/beach access routes
 - Outdoor public eating areas like rest stops or picnic areas
 - Outdoor play spaces, like playgrounds in provincial parks and local communities
 - Outdoor paths of travel, like sidewalks, ramps, stairs, curb ramps, rest areas and accessible pedestrian signals
 - Accessible off-street parking
 - Accessible on-street parking
 - Service-related elements like service counters, fixed queuing lines and waiting areas

10.0 Feedback Process

- 10.1 The County provides a feedback form so members of the public can comment on the provision of goods and services to people of all abilities. Feedback can also be received in any form (i.e. in person, by telephone (TTY), in writing, fax or in electronic format, including email). Feedback and responses are logged by the County and maintained through the County's records management policy.
- 10.2 All questions and concerns received shall be acknowledged within a maximum of two days from the date of receipt, response time to such submissions shall be dependent on the complexity of the issue, but shall not exceed 15 business days, unless there are extenuating circumstances that have been communicated to the submitter.

11.0 Responsibilities

11.1 All Departments are responsible for:

- Working with the Clerk's Department to respond to and track feedback
- Providing documents in a suitable format upon request
- Ensuring compliance with Ontario Regulation 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards
- Notifying the Clerk's Department of any additional training requirements
- Budgeting for accessibility requirements
- Following Grey County's Pets and Service Animals in the Workplace Policy

11.2 The Clerk's Department is responsible for:

- Reporting to Grey County Committee of the Whole and Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee as necessary
- Submitting legislated reports as required
- Maintaining accessibility feedback forms
- Coordinating accessibility training
- Providing leadership to the Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Providing incidental advice on accessibility

12.0 Grey County Accessibility Policies

12.1 Grey County will modify or remove existing policies that do not respect and promote dignity and independence.

12.2 The Long-Term Care department maintains the policy III-J-10.00 Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

13.0 Legislated Requirements

Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2011

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

Ontario Human Rights Code

Integrated Accessibility Standard-Ontario Regulation 191/11

Grey County Corporate Policy: Pets and Service Animals in the Workplace

Forms

[Notice of Scheduled Service Disruption](#)

[Notice of Unexpected Service Disruption](#)

[Feedback Form](#)



Notice of Unexpected Service Disruption

There is currently an unexpected service disruption. The estimated time of the service disruption will be from _____ until _____.

The disruption includes:

- _____
- _____
- _____

The following alternate services are available:

Thank you for patience in this matter.

Questions or additional information please contact:

519-376-2205 (phone)

519-376-7970 (fax)

clerks@grey.ca (email)

Grey County is committed to providing accessible and inclusive services to people of all abilities.



Notice of Scheduled Service Disruption

There will be a scheduled service disruption for/at

- _____

The disruption is anticipated to be from _____ until _____.

The disruption includes:

- _____
- _____

The following alternate services are available:

Thank you for patience in this matter.

Questions or additional information please contact:

519-376-2205 (phone)

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Feedback Form

Submit to: Clerks@grey.ca

Name: _____ Date: _____

Email: _____ Phone Number: _____

Address: _____

Comments or Questions

Response from Grey County

Name: _____ Date: _____

Details:

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