



CITY POLICY

SECTION: Municipal Government

NO: MU-AC-02

REFERENCE: Accessibility

Date: April 2014

**Next Review Date:
April 2016**

TITLE: Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy

1.0 Purpose

Under the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (A.O.D.A.)** all public and private sector organizations must meet the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards (I.A.S.) in accordance with Ontario Regulation 191/11

The purpose of this policy is to outline the overall strategic direction that the City of Dryden will follow in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to persons with disabilities to enable better access to the City's goods, services and facilities.

2.0 Application

2.1 This Policy and its related procedures apply to the following, unless otherwise stated:

- (a) All City employees, volunteers, agencies, boards and committees.
- (b) Anyone who participates in or oversees the development of City policies, practices, and procedures governing the provision of municipal goods, services, or facilities to members of the public or other third parties.

3.0 Definitions

See Appendix "A" Definitions attached.

4.0 Policy Statement

The City of Dryden is committed to providing persons with disabilities with the same opportunities to access our resources and services, in a manner consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity.

The City of Dryden recognizes the importance of meeting the needs of all those with whom we network in the conduct of our business and will endeavour to provide services and facilities in our community that are universally accessible to all.

The City shall use every effort to ensure that we meet the needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner through the implementation of this policy in accordance with the spirit and intent of all applicable legislation including the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (A.O.D.A.)**, the **Ontario Human Rights Code**, and the **Occupational Health and Safety Act**.

5.0 General Requirements

5.1 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan:

The City of Dryden shall establish, maintain, and update a multi-year Accessibility Plan outlining a phased-in approach to prevent and remove barriers and address the current and future requirements of the **A.O.D.A.** The plan shall be reviewed and updated at least every five (5) years or as required and an annual status report on the plan shall be prepared for Council and achievements incorporated into the Plan.

5.0 General Requirements (cont'd)

5.2 Procuring or Acquiring Goods, Services, or Facilities:

- (a) The City of Dryden is committed to incorporating accessible design, criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities, where practical, with the intent to make purchases more accessible to people with disabilities, unless it is not practicable to do so.
- (b) The City of Dryden will ensure appropriate steps are taken to make self-service kiosks accessible so they can be used independently and securely by people with disabilities. Where it is not practicable, the City will provide an explanation, upon request.

5.3 Training:

- (a) The City of Dryden will ensure that training is provided on an ongoing basis regarding the requirements of the I.A.S. and the **Human Rights Code** as it pertains to persons with disabilities. Such training will be provided as soon as practicable to all paid employees, volunteers and persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the City.
- (b) The City will keep records of the training provided, including the training dates and the number of individuals to whom training was provided.
- (c) Training will occur as soon as possible:
 - (i) after an employee is hired
 - (ii) when any policy changes have occurred
 - (iii) when an employee moves to another role which warrants additional accessibility training
 - (iv) on an ongoing basis.
- (d) Training will be provided in a way that best suits the duties of employees, volunteers and persons who provide goods, services, or facilities on behalf of the City.

6.0 Information and Communication

- 6.1** The City of Dryden will provide direction on how to create, notify, provide and receive information and communication in methods that are accessible to person with disabilities.
- 6.2** This policy does not apply to products and product labels, unconvertible information or communications and information that the City of Dryden does not control directly or indirectly through a contractual relationship.
- 6.3** These accessible formats and communication supports will be provided in a timely manner and in a way that takes into account the individual's accessibility needs.
- 6.4** If it is determined that it is not technically feasible to convert the information or communication, or the technology to convert the information or communication is not readily available the person requesting the information shall be provided with:
- (a) an explanation as to why the information or communication is not convertible;
 - (b) a summary of the unconvertible information or communication.

6.5 Emergency & Public Safety Information:

- (a) The City of Dryden will prepare emergency procedures, plans or public safety information and make the information available in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, as soon as practicable, with the following exception:
 - (i) Real-time public safety information used during an actual emergency, such as an evacuation.

6.0 Information and Communication (cont'd)

6.6 Feedback:

- (a) The City of Dryden will ensure processes, such as a feedback form, are in place for receiving and responding to feedback that:
 - (i) is accessible to people with disabilities;
 - (ii) is available in accessible formats should it be requested;
 - (iii) provides appropriate communication supports upon requests;
 - (iv) continues with the obligations of the City of Dryden Policy under the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service and the feedback process governed under this standard.

6.7 Accessible Formats and Communication Supports:

- (a) The City of Dryden will endeavour to establish guidelines that ensure information is formatted in an appropriate accessible format that can be compatible with other assistive technology such as screen reading software.
- (b) The City will provide notification to the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports on the City's website that will include a link to the "Request for Information in an Accessible Format" form.
- (c) The City of Dryden will provide or arrange for accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities as follows:
 - (i) A person who requires information in an accessible format may complete a "Request for Information in an Accessible Format" form, and submit by e-mail, telephone, facsimile, mail or in person;
 - (ii) Information will be provided in a timely manner, that takes into account the person's accessibility needs; and,
 - (iii) At a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to another person.

This policy is subject to any specific provisions of the Municipal Act, or other relevant legislation or Union agreement.

6.0 Information and Communication (cont'd)

6.8 Website Accessibility:

The City of Dryden shall make their corporate Internet 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 shall conform to WCAG 2.0 Level A. By January 1, 2021 all website and web content shall conform to WCAG 2.0 Level AA.

6.9 Public Libraries:

The Dryden Public Library will:

- (a) arrange for people with disabilities to obtain accessible formats of library materials in the Library's collection, where the materials exist;
- (b) provide public information about the availability of accessible materials and communication supports;
- (c) consider accessibility when procuring new library materials, so that collections are accessible to the widest range of people.

7.0 Employment

7.1 Section 7 Employment of the City of Dryden I.A.S. Policy does not apply to volunteers and other non-paid individuals.

7.2 The City of Dryden will:

- (a) provide a framework for integrating accessibility into the City's job application process and employment relationship;
- (b) foster an employment environment by identifying, preventing, and removing barriers across the employment life cycle that will:
 - (i) allow all employees to reach their full potential;
 - (ii) increase our pool of highly qualified candidates who are available for future employment.
- (c) create a suitable accessible work environment for an employee with a disability as soon as is practicable after the City becomes aware of their disability.

7.2 Employees are responsible to make the City aware of their disability; however, if an employee appears to be stressed in the workplace or is clearly unwell, supervisors should consult with the City's Human Resources Department to obtain advice.

7.3 The **Employment Standard Act** builds upon the existing requirements under the **Ontario Human Rights Code** in relation to how to accommodate individuals with disabilities throughout the employment cycle.

7.0 Employment (cont'd)

7.4 Recruitment:

The City of Dryden shall notify internal and external job applicants about the availability of accommodations upon request for applicants with disabilities. This may take the form of a notice posted to the company website or a statement on a job posting for which "accommodation for applicants with disabilities is available upon request." In addition, job applicants who have been selected to participate in an assessment or selection process shall be notified that accommodations are available. The related materials or processes required specific to the job applicant's disability shall be discussed in consultation with the applicant.

7.5 Employee Notification of Supports:

The City of Dryden will inform employees of policies and procedures used to support and accommodate employees with disabilities. The City will provide this information to new employees as soon as practicable after commencing employment. Whenever there is a change to existing policies and procedures for accommodating employees with disabilities, updated information will be provided and made available to all employees on a timely basis as well as any necessary training to be provided.

7.6 Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees:

Where an employee with a disability requests it, the City of Dryden will:

- (a) The City will consult with the employee making the request in order to determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.
- (b) provide and/or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for information that is required in order to perform the job, and other information that is generally available to employees in the workplace.
- (c) include an employee's appropriate accessible format and communication support in their Individual Accommodation Plan, should one exist.

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or other relevant legislation or Union agreement.**

7.0 Employment (cont'd)

7.6 Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees:

- (d) ensure accessible formats and communication supports are carried out in accordance with Section 6.0 Information and Communication of the City of Dryden I.A.S. Policy and comply with City of Dryden procedures and/or established guidelines.

7.7 Workplace Emergency Response Plan:

- (a) The City of Dryden is committed to ensuring the safety of its employees.
- (b) Where an employee with a disability requires assistance, the City of Dryden shall develop an Individualized Workplace Emergency Response Plan, in consultation with the employee. The plan may include, with the employee's consent, an assigned support person(s) to assist during emergency situations that require evacuation of the premises. The plan or process shall be shared with the support person(s) only with full agreement by the employee, ensuring their privacy at all times and not disclosing details of the employee's disability.
- (c) The City of Dryden shall review the Individualized Workplace Emergency Response Plan when or if the employee moves to a different location or workgroup, or there is a change to their disability or there is a change or review of the City's general information emergency response plans to ensure all plans and policies are up-to-date. This shall be undertaken in consultation with the reporting supervisor, Human Resources Manager and the employee.
- (d) In addition, a general emergency evacuation process shall be in place for any facility that may have visitors with disabilities that require further assistance. This process shall be communicated to all employees.
- (e) Individualized Workplace Emergency Response Plans are not required for employees of which the City has not been made aware of their disability.
- (f) Individualized Workplace Emergency Response Plans shall be included in an employee's Individual Accommodation Plan, should one exist.

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7.0 Employment (cont'd)

7.8 Individual Accommodation Plans:

- (a) The City of Dryden will develop written Individual Accommodation Plans for employees with disabilities that will consider at a minimum:
 - (i) the manner in which the employee can participate in the development of the plan;
 - (ii) the manner in which the City can request an evaluation by an outside medical or other expert, at the employer's expense, to determine if and how accommodation can be achieved;
 - (iii) the manner in which the employee can request the participation of a representative from their bargaining unit, where applicable, or other representative from the workplace, in the development of the plan;
 - (iv) the steps that will be undertaken to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information;
 - (v) the frequency that the plan will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which it will be done;
- (b) If a plan is denied, the reasons for the denial will be provided to the employee;
- (c) Provide the plan in a format that takes into account the accessibility needs of the employee due to a disability.
- (d) Individual Accommodation Plans will include any information regarding Accessible format and communication supports that are to be provided, the Individualized Workplace Emergency Response Plan, and any other accommodation that is to be provided, upon request.
- (e) Individual Accommodation Plans are not required for employees of which the City has not been made aware of their disability.

7.0 Employment (cont'd)

7.9 Return to Work Process:

The City will ensure a written return to work process will support employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and who require accommodations to return to work. At a minimum, the process will:

- (a) Outline the steps to be undertaken to facilitate the return to work, including the development of an Individual Accommodation Plan for employees who have permanent, recurring, or temporary disabilities.
- (b) Acknowledge that any return to work process does not replace or override any other return to work process under any other statute such as Ontario's Human Rights Code, the Employment Standards Act, and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act.

7.10 Performance Management, Career Development and Advancement, and Redeployment:

- (a) The City of Dryden will take into account the accessibility needs and/or Individual Accommodation Plans of employees when providing any performance management review, career development and/or advancement.
- (b) When redeploying employees to another department or job within the City as an alternative to layoff, the City will also take into account the employee's accessibility needs or Individual Accommodation Plan.

8.0 Transportation

8.1 Accessible Taxicabs:

- (a) The City of Dryden will consult with the public and persons with disabilities and establish a process to determine the portion of on-demand accessible taxicabs required in the community.
- (b) The City of Dryden will identify what progress it has made and steps taken to meet the need for on-demand accessible taxicabs and will identify the information in the City's multi-year accessibility plan.

8.2 Taxicabs:

As the City of Dryden licenses Taxicabs under Chapter 240 Taxicabs of the City of Dryden Municipal Code, the City shall ensure the owners and operators of taxicabs:

- (a) Do not charge a higher fare or an additional fee for persons with disabilities more than they would other passengers;
- (b) Do not charge a fee for storage of mobility aids or mobility assistive devices;
- (c) Place vehicle registration and identification information on the rear bumper of the taxicab;
- (d) Make available vehicle registration and identification information in an accessible format to persons with disabilities who are passengers;

8.0 Transportation (cont'd)

8.3 Specialized Transportation Service:

The City of Dryden will ensure that the contracted service provider of Handi-Transit Services on behalf of the City of Dryden has in place the appropriate procedures and processes that meet the I.A.S. for specialized transportation services including:

- (a) ensuring information on the accessibility features of the service is made available to the public and is also available in an accessible format;
- (b) ensuring non-functioning accessibility equipment is repaired as soon as possible;
- (c) providing accessibility training to specialized transportation service personnel on the following:
 - (i) the safe use of accessibility equipment and features;
 - (ii) modifications to procedures during instances where temporary barriers exist or equipment fails;
 - (iii) emergency response procedures that provide for the safety of persons with disabilities.
- (d) implementing emergency preparedness and response policies and making them available to the public;
- (e) not charging, at any time, for support persons to pay a fare when providing assistance to a person with a disability while utilizing this service;
- (f) allowing companions and/or children of persons with disabilities to travel with the person, if space is available;
- (g) developing an accessibility plan to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities that shall be reviewed, through an annual public meeting, by persons with disabilities;

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8.0 Transportation (cont'd)

8.3 Specialized Transportation Service: (cont'd)

- (h) ensuring the Specialized Transit Service provided by the City through a contracted provider is included in the City of Dryden Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and in progress reports as well as providing for managing, evaluating and taking action with respect to customer feedback;
- (i) establishing three categories as part of an eligibility application process for users as well as visitors, of this service – unconditional, temporary, and conditional including an independent appeal process;
- (j) ensuring there is fare parity and similar hours of services with other conventional transit services that may be provided;
- (k) ensuring that technical requirements under the A.O.D.A. and I.A.S. are taken into consideration when purchasing a replacement vehicle;
- (l) establishing a process for accepting reservation bookings and developing a method of accepting bookings that takes into consideration, and accommodates, the needs of persons with disabilities;
- (m) when accepting reservations, inform them of any service delays and do so in a manner that takes into account the needs of the person.

9.0 Design of Public Spaces (Accessibility Standard for the Built Environment)

9.1 The City of Dryden shall comply with the A.O.D.A. Design of Public Spaces Standards (Accessibility Standard for the Built Environment) when undertaking new construction and redevelopment of public spaces in the following areas:

- (a) Recreation trails and beach access routes;
- (b) Outdoor public use eating areas;
- (c) Outdoor play spaces;
- (d) Exterior paths of travel;
- (e) Accessible Parking;
- (f) Obtaining Services; and
- (g) Maintenance of accessible elements.

9.2 This policy does not apply to construction that is external to the City of Dryden for which the City has provided a permit; however, compliance with the **A.O.D.A. Built Environment Standards** should be encouraged.

9.3 The City of Dryden shall ensure that the City's design standards for accessibility reflect the **A.O.D.A. Built Environment Standards**.

10.0 Compliance and Regulations

- 10.1** This policy is legislated under Section 3 of the Integrated Accessibility Standards (Ontario Regulation 191/11 under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 as amended), which requires broader public sector organizations , including municipalities, to develop and implement policies, procedures, and best practices governing how they will meet the requirements set out within the Regulation.
- 10.2** This policy is intended to support the purpose and application of the Ontario Human Rights Code. At no time will this policy replace or supersede the rights afforded to persons with disabilities under the Code.
- 10.3** Failure to comply with this Policy or the requirements of the IAS could result in penalties as prescribed in Part V of the Integrated Accessibility Standards.
- 10.4** This Policy shall be reviewed every two years or sooner to ensure on-going compliance with regulated accessibility standards.

11.0 Roles and Responsibilities

- 11.1** The Human Resources Department has overall responsibility for establishing and reviewing this policy annually and recommending amendments to ensure on-going compliance with the regulated accessibility standards and legislative obligations.
- 11.2** Council, Senior Leadership Team, Department Managers and employees are responsible for adhering to the parameters of this policy and ensuring the needs of persons with disabilities are addressed, including those who work within our organization and for those with whom we interact in the conduct of our business.

12.0 Related Document

12.1 Related Policies, Procedures, By-laws, Documents:

- (a) MU-AC-01 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service
- (b) Appendix "A" Glossary of Terms and Definitions for the Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy
- (c) Chapter 169 Procurement of the City of Dryden Municipal Code
- (d) Chapter 240 Taxicabs of the City of Dryden Municipal Code
- (e) Chapter 14 Animals of the City of Dryden Municipal Code
- (f) City of Dryden Multi-year Accessibility Plan
- (g) Dryden Public Library – Accessibility Policy and Plan

History			
Approval Date:	April 21, 2014	Approved by:	By-law 4180-2014
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