

# COUNTY OF WELLINGTON POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL



<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	COUNTY WIDE	<b>POLICY NUMBER</b>	HR 16.25
<b>SECTION</b>		<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b>	March 1, 2012
<b>SUBJECT</b>	ACCESSIBILITY POLICY	<b>REVISION DATE</b>	October 2018
<b>AUTHORITY</b>	Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005; Ontario Regulation 191/11 (Integrated Accessibility Standards)		

## Statement of Organizational Commitment

The County of Wellington is committed to being responsive to the needs of all its residents. To do this, we must recognize the diverse needs of all of our residents and respond by striving to provide goods, services and facilities that are accessible to all.

As an employer, and a provider of services, the County is committed to ensuring its services are provided in an accessible manner. The County will strive to meet the accessibility needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner.

## Policy

The County will promote accessibility by ensuring that compliance is met for all regulations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. Timelines for compliance vary. In order to ensure timelines are considered the County will establish, implement and maintain a multi-year accessibility plan. The plan will outline our strategy to prevent and remove barriers to people with disabilities and will be reviewed at least once every five years. In addition, the County will prepare an annual status report on the progress of measures taken to implement the multi-year accessibility plan. The status report and multi-year accessibility plan will be posted on the County website and will be provided in an accessible format, upon request, as soon as is practicable.

We will promote accessibility through the development of policies, procedures and practices and by ensuring they consider people with disabilities. To do this we must ensure the policies, procedures and practices address integration, independence, dignity and equal opportunity.

## **General**

Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure the following:

- That goods and services be provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.
- The provision of goods and services to people with disabilities, and others, will be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or permanently, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods and services.
- People with disabilities will be given an opportunity – equal to that given to others – to obtain, use and benefit from the goods and services.
- When not practicable to incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, staff shall provide, upon request an explanation.
- Staff will receive resources on ensuring that accessibility is considered when purchasing goods, services or facilities. Staff will receive training on processes that are in accordance with the appropriate regulations.
- Staff will be trained on the requirements of the accessibility standards
- “Disability” as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code.

## **Information and Communications Standard**

### **Feedback**

The County welcomes feedback from members of the public relating to the provision of accessible services provided and the feedback process itself provided by the County. Should a member of the public wish to provide feedback, they may do so by:

- Visiting the County of Wellington website Accessibility Page.
- Visiting or writing a letter to: The County of Wellington Human Resources Department 74 Woolwich Street Guelph ON N1H 3T9.
- Contacting Human Resources at 519.837.2600 x 2150.

The public is encouraged to submit feedback directly to the staff member involved in the service. Feedback can also be sent directly to the Human Resources Department.

If a staff member receives feedback from a member of the public, they should:

- Notify their Manager and the Human Resources Department.
- The information to be provided by the member of the public should include their personal contact information, the date, a description of the complaint, and what the member of the public requests to resolve the complaint.
- The Manager will attempt to resolve the complaint in a timely manner, with the assistance of the Human Resources Department.
- The member of the public will be contacted once a resolution has been reached.
- Staff response should include: an explanation of how we will implement the suggestion, a response indicating further investigation or an explanation as to why we are unable to implement the suggestion.

All feedback and any resolutions should be recorded and forwarded to the Manager responsible, Department Head and the Human Resources Department.

## **Accessible Formats and Communication Supports**

The County will provide alternate formats of information upon request in a timely manner and ensure the cost is no more than the regular cost provided to others if applicable. Alternate formats will take into account the individual needs of a person with a disability.

Alternate formats can be requested by:

- Visiting The County website Accessibility Page and submitting a request under Requests for Accessible Formats.
- Contacting Human Resources at 519.837.2600 x 2150.

The County will ensure that emergency procedures, plans and public safety information will be made available to the public and will provide accessible formats in a timely matter upon request.

The County will work toward making its website and web content conform to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), initially at Level A and increasing to WCAG 2.0 Level AA in accordance with the timeframes set out in section 14 (4) of the Integrated Accessibility Standards.

The Wellington County Library will provide access to, or arrange for, the provision of access to accessible materials where they exist. The County library system will make information about the availability of accessible materials publicly available and will provide information in accessible formats or with appropriate communication supports upon request.

## **Employment Standard**

The County is committed to an inclusive workplace and extends to all employment activities including recruitment, selection, orientation, working conditions, career development and performance management. For more information, please view the following policies:

- Modified Work HR 5.5
- Workplace Accommodations for Disabilities HR 5.75
- Performance Appraisals HR 14.5

The County will create individual emergency response plans for employees with disabilities if the disability requires accommodation during an emergency response. Emergency response plans will be created by the Health and Safety Coordinator and the employee with the disability in conjunction with the HR Assistant.

## **Transportation Standard**

Licensed taxicabs are prohibited from charging a higher fare or additional fees for persons with disabilities. Any taxicabs licensed by the County will ensure that owners and operators of taxicabs will place vehicle registration and identification information on the rear bumper of the taxicab.

## **Design of Public Spaces Standard**

The County of Wellington is committed to ensuring that accessibility is considered in all aspects of the built environment. The County of Wellington will comply with the Design of Public Spaces Standards when constructing and redeveloping public spaces. For more information, please view the following document:

- Facility Accessibility Design Manual FADM

## **Customer Service Standard**

### **Use of Assistive Devices**

The County of Wellington will allow people with disabilities to use their own personal assistive devices to obtain services offered by the County of Wellington.

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:

- Consult with the HR Assistant on the service.
- Assess service delivery and potential service options to meet the needs of the individual.
- Notify the individual of alternate services or;
- Make appropriate changes to the service to ensure equal access for people with disabilities.

### **Service Animals**

A service animal is defined as either:

- A "guide dog," as defined in section 1 of the **Blind Persons Rights' Act**; or
- A "service animal" for a person with a disability. For the purpose of this policy, an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability.

Service animals are identified in the following ways:

- It must be readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for the reasons relating to his or her disability; or
- A letter from a regulated health professional confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

The County will allow service animals into all County owned or operated facilities. Service animals will be allowed to accompany a person with a disability to allow them to access facilities and services. If a service animal is excluded by law from the premises, we will ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the provider's goods or services.

## **Support Persons**

Support person means a person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

The County will allow people with disabilities to be accompanied by a support person in all County owned and operated public facilities. The County 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 and there are no reasonable alternatives available.

The County of Wellington will waive admission fees for support persons who accompany a person with a disability into facilities where admission is charged.

- Member of public should notify a staff member the presence of the support person.
- Admission fees will be waived for the support person.
- If there is confidential information to be disclosed, consent must be received from the person with the disability.

## **Service Disruption**

If a temporary disruption of service is planned, the County will give notice of the disruption.

The notice must:

- Include the reason for the disruption.
- The anticipated duration.
- If alternate facilities or services are available, and their description.

Notice will be given by posting the information in a conspicuous place on premises as well as by posting it on the County of Wellington website.

If the County Website should expect a temporary service disruption, advance notice where possible, will be provided on the website.

## **Training**

Staff will be trained in accordance with the regulations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

- Every person who is an employee or a volunteer with the County.
- Every person who participates in developing the County's policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to members of the public or other third parties.

The training will include:

- Overview of the Act, Regulations and the Ontario Human Rights Code as it pertains to people with disabilities.
- County policies related to accessibility.

- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities, as outlined in this policy and procedures.
- How to interact with people 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, as outlined in this policy and procedures.
- How to use equipment or devices available on the provider's premises or otherwise provided by the provider that may help with the provision of goods or services to a person with a disability.
- What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the provider's goods or services.

The training shall be appropriate to the duties of the employees, volunteers and other persons. The County of Wellington will log and retain records, which will record the details of the training provided, as well as the name of the person, location, and date the training was completed.

## **Feedback Process**

The County will accept and respond to feedback regarding the manner in which it provides goods, services or facilities to persons with disabilities. The County will ensure the feedback process is accessible by providing, or arranging for the provision of, accessible formats and communication supports upon request.

A member of the public may submit feedback by:

- Visiting the County of Wellington website Accessibility Page and submitting the Feedback Form.
- Request the Feedback Form in an alternate format by contacting the HR Assistant at 519.837.2600 x 2650.
- Contacting Human Resources at 519.837.2600 x 2150.
- Visiting or writing a letter to: The County of Wellington Human Resources Department 74 Woolwich Street Guelph ON N1H 3T9.

The HR Assistant will review the feedback and work with the appropriate parties to resolve or work towards resolving the complaint submitted. The HR Assistant will respond to the person who has submitted the feedback in a timely manner with a solution or an update to the process.

## **Format of Documents**

### **Alternate Formats**

The County will provide alternate formats of information to members of the public upon request.

All staff will adhere to the County's Accessible Communications Guideline, and the Style Guidelines.

If a member of the public requests an alternate format:

- Staff will access the electronic form located on The Well.
- Fill out the appropriate information, which will be forwarded to the HR Assistant.

- The HR Assistant will provide the document or;
- Contact the individual if it is not technically feasible to provide the specified document or format.
- The HR Assistant will work with the individual to determine an appropriate format;
- If no solution is found, the HR Assistant will provide an explanation outlining the reasons.

Conversion shall be processed in-house wherever possible. If requested for documentation in an alternate format, the department of origin shall be responsible for the cost of the conversion, materials and distribution, not the public requestor.

The County will only provide alternate formats for documents that we produce.

### **Communication Supports**

The County will provide communication supports to members of the public, upon request.

If a member of the public request a communication support:

- Staff will access the electronic form located on The Well.
- Fill out the appropriate information, which will be forwarded to the HR Assistant.
- The HR Assistant will arrange for the communication support or;
- Contact the individual if it is not technically feasible.
- The HR Assistant will work with the individual to determine an appropriate alternate solution;
- If no solution is found, the HR Assistant will provide an explanation outlining the reasons.

### **Legislation**

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005  
 Integrated Accessibility Standard – Ontario Regulation 191/11  
 Ontario Human Rights Code

### **Additional Documents**

Workplace Accommodations Policy – HR 5.75  
 Workplace Accommodations Guideline for Human Resources  
 Modified Work Policy – HR 5.5  
 Facility Accessibility Design Manual  
 Purchasing Policy  
 Accessible Procurement Guideline  
 Accessible Communications Guideline  
 Taxi By-Law 5266-11