
**BARRIE PUBLIC LIBRARY
ACCESSIBILITY POLICY**

MOTION #16-34

Reviewed June 23, 2016

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Library is compliant with the requirements of the Statutes of Ontario, Ch. 32, *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* (ODA), the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, R.S.O. 1990, Ch. H 19, and the Statutes of Ontario, Ch. 11, *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA).

This policy addresses accessibility policies and standards and includes areas outlined in the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Services* (Ontario Regulation 429/07,) and the *Integrated Accessibility Standards* (Ontario Regulation 191/11).

This policy applies to all persons who deal with patrons, and to third parties who deal with customers on the Library's behalf such as those providing program services. A person or third party can be an employee, volunteer, Board member, student on placement or someone otherwise engaged in the provision of Library services to our patrons.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

The Barrie Public Library will make an organizational commitment to provide barrier free access to library service and resources for people with disabilities. The Barrie Public Library is committed to the independence and integration of persons with disabilities and all who live, learn, work, plan and invest in our community.

In accordance with the *Ontario Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, Ontario Regulation 429/07 and Ontario Regulation 191/11, the Barrie Public Library is committed to meeting the requirements of the Province.

A person with a disability has the right to expect basic service in all Barrie Library core service areas including; collections, borrowing, information, online access to electronic databases and information, assistive technology and programs.

Programs and services are designed and delivered so as to support and respect the dignity and independence of people with disabilities in the community.

The library will make every reasonable effort to ensure that assistive devices, service animals and support persons are accommodated.

A person with a disability has the right to be treated with the same respect, consideration and consistency as any other member of the public.

Library staff are trained to provide accessible customer service and information/communications to people with disabilities. All employees, volunteers, contractors and subcontractors, any other person acting on behalf of the Barrie Public

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Library and persons involved in the creation of Barrie Public Library policies are responsible for adhering to and following the commitments set out in this policy.

3. DEFINITIONS

Accessibility: A set of qualities of a library service or facility that enables people with disabilities to get to, find, reach and use the service or facility, with or without the help of special assistive devices. Accessible library services include collections, programs, meetings, and facilities that are readily usable by a customer regardless of his or her abilities. Accessible formats include large print, front/background colour combinations, braille, audio books, oral presentation, electronic format or other format that makes a document or collection accessible to a library customer.

AODA: *The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.*

Assistive Device: A device used to assist persons with disabilities in carrying out activities or in accessing Library services. Assistive devices may include, but are not limited to, wheelchairs, walkers and electronic communication devices.

Core Services: Reference, referral and readers' services, circulation services, collections, lending, technology, programming and outreach.

Dignity: Respecting and treating every person including persons with a disability as valued and as deserving of effective and full service as any other customer.

Disability or Disabilities:

1. 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 coordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a service animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
2. A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
3. A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken languages;
4. A mental disability/illness; or,
5. An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.*
6. Disabilities can be visible or hidden, permanent or temporary. Interpretive decisions relating to this definition made under the *Ontario Human Rights Code* are accepted as included in this definition.

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Independence: Freedom from control or influence of others; freedom to make your own choices.

Integration of Services: The integration of services that allow people with disabilities to fully benefit from the same service. All policies, practices and procedures are designed to be accessible to everyone including people with disabilities.

Equal Opportunity: Having the same chances, options, benefits and results as others. People with disabilities have the same opportunity to benefit from the way you provide goods or services as others.

Service Animals: Any animal used by a person with a disability for reasons relating to the disability, where it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to their disability, or where the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that they require the animal for reasons relating to their disability. Service animals may include a variety of animals used to assist with sight or hearing, to detect seizures, or to provide any other form of assistance necessary to a person with a disability.

Library Board: A public library board, a union board, a county library board or a county library co-operative board (as defined in the *Public Libraries Act*, 1990).

Library Premises: Premises owned/leased and operated by the Barrie Public Library.

Library Services: Services that the Library does for, or offers to, the public and includes referral and readers' advisory services, collections, circulation services, technology, programming and outreach.

Persons who Provide Library Services: Employees, volunteers, board members, students on placement or other persons engaged in the provision of Library Services to our patrons and includes third parties who may create library services or deal with patrons on the Library's behalf.

Procedure: The steps that staff are expected to take to comply with this policy.

Readily Apparent: An animal which is a service animal when it is obvious by its harness/vest that has a sign identifying the animal as a service animal.

Support Person: A person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to assist them with communication, mobility, personal care, or medical needs, with access to goods or services.

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Supports: For the purposes of this policy, supports are defined as:

- **Accessible formats which may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities**
- **Communications supports with may include, but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language, and other supports that facilitate effective communications**

4. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

4.1 Requests for Accommodation under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

The Barrie Public Library will continue to meet the standards set by the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, 1990 (OHRC). Where a request for accommodation is made, the Library will strive to provide accommodation in a way that most respects the dignity of the person. The library recognizes that people with disabilities may require individualized accommodation and that each person's needs are unique. Accommodation will be provided unless the Library experiences "undue hardship" as defined in the OHRC.

4.2 Customer Service

The following directives address the requirements established by the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service* (Ontario Regulation 429/07):

4.3 Provisions of Services

Barrie Public Library will:

- Provide services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities and provide them with an equal opportunity to learn about, use or benefit from library services;
- Integrate services for people with disabilities. The Library understands that equitable access sometimes requires different treatment including separate or specialized services. However, such services will be offered in a way that respects the dignity and full participation of people with disabilities.

4.3.1 Use of Service Animals, Support Persons and Assistive Devices

A person with a disability may enter the Library premises accompanied by a service animal, and may keep the animal with them if the public has access to such premises and the animal is not otherwise excluded by law.

A person with a disability may enter Library premises with a support person, and have access to the support person at all times while on the premises.

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The Library may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person while on Library premises in situations where it is necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with the disability or the health and safety of others.

A support person, when assisting a person with a disability to obtain or use Library services, will be permitted to attend at no charge where an admission fee is applicable.

A person with a disability may provide their own assistive device for the purpose of obtaining or using Library 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 person with a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises, In these situations the Library may offer a person with a disability other reasonable measures to assist them in obtaining and using Library services, where the Library has such other measures available.

It is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that their assistive device is operated in a safe and controlled manner at all times.

4.3.2 Temporary Service Disruptions

The Library will make reasonable effort to provide notice of any planned disruption of Library services to the public, including information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or service, if any, that may be available. If a disruption is unplanned, the Library will provide notice as soon as possible.

4.3.3 Feedback Process

Feedback from a member of the public about the delivery of goods and services to persons with disabilities may be given by telephone, in person, in writing, in electronic format, or through other methods.

4.3.4 Availability of Documents

Policy documents will be available on the Library website at <http://library.barrie.ca>. Policy documents will be provided, consistent with the requirements of the AODA, Ontario Reg. 429/07 and the Ontario Reg. 191/11.

4.4 Information and Communications

The following directives address the requirements established by the *Integrated Accessibility Standards* (Ontario Regulation 191/11):

4.4.1 Provision of Information and Communications:

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Barrie Public Library shall provide access to or arrange for the provision of access to accessible materials where they exist.

Barrie Public Library shall make information about the availability of accessible materials publicly available and shall provide the information in accessible format or the appropriate communication supports, upon request.

The Barrie Public Library will communicate with people with disabilities in a manner that will take into account their disability.

Barrie Public Library staff will be trained on how to interact and communicate with patrons with various types of disabilities.

Patrons with disabilities will be offered alternative communication formats that will meet the needs of the patron.

Documents will be provided to patrons in an alternative format that will meet the needs of the patron in a timely fashion.

4.5 Accessible Workplace – Employment

4.5.1 Scope

The requirements found in this section only apply to paid employees of the Barrie Public Library. They do not apply to volunteers.

4.5.2 Recruitment

The Barrie Public Library will provide written notification to employees and the public of the availability of accommodations for persons with disabilities, upon request, throughout the hiring process, including:

- All employment postings
- Upon participation in the interview process
- When an offer of employment is made

When arranging for the provision of accommodations, the Library will consult with the applicants to determine their specific accessibility needs.

4.5.3 Informing Staff of Supports

The Barrie Public Library will inform all employees of its policies and procedures used to support employees with disabilities, including, but not limited to, the provision of workplace accommodations. In doing so, the Library will provide this information to new employees during their workplace orientation training.

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4.5.4 Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees

When requested, the Barrie Public Library will consult the employee with a disability when providing, or arranging for the provision of accessible formats or communication supports for information related to the employee's job performance, and information generally provided to all employees.

4.5.5 Workplace Emergency Response Procedures

Where an employee has a disability and the Library is aware of his or her need for accommodation, an emergency response procedure will be developed for the employee, and included as part of the library's emergency response for all library staff and patrons. The library's Emergency Response Procedures, will be posted at each service area and program area of the library. This will be done as soon as possible after the Library becomes aware of the need for accommodation.

If the employee who receives a workplace emergency response plan requires assistance, with the employee's consent, the Library will provide the workplace emergency information to the person designated by the Library to provide assistance to the employee.

4.5.6 Workplace Accommodation Procedures

The Library will establish workplace accommodation procedures and a return to work process for employees with disabilities.

Workplace accommodation procedures will include information about accessible formats and communication supports if they have been requested, the employee's workplace emergency response procedures where one has been identified and any other accommodation that is to be provided.

4.5.7 Performance Management, Career Deployment and Redeployment

The Library will take into consideration the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, and all workplace accommodation procedures of its employees with disabilities when providing career development and advancement opportunities, performance management and when considering redeployment of an employee with a disability.

4.6 Procurement

The Library will incorporate accessibility criteria and features into the procurement of goods, services and facilities, except where it is not practical as defined in the Act. The Library will incorporate accessibility features and criteria when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.

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4.7 Workplace Emergency Procedures

The Library will provide emergency procedures in accessible formats upon request.

5. STAFF TRAINING

The Library will ensure that all persons to whom this policy applies receive training as a requirement by the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Services* (Ontario Regulation 429-07) and *Integrated Accessibility Standards* (Ontario Regulation 191/11): The content of the training will include:

1. A review of the purpose of the AODA
2. The requirements of the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Services* (Ontario Regulation 429-07);
3. The requirements of the *Integrated Accessibility Standards* (Ontario Regulation 191/11) and parts of the *Human Rights Code* pertaining to peoples with disabilities;
4. Instructions on Library policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of Library services;
5. How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities;
6. What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing Library services;
7. How to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices or who require the assistance of a support person or service animal; and
8. Information about the equipment or devices available on the Library premises that may help with the provision of Library services to persons with disabilities.

A record of training provided under this policy will be kept by the Manager, Human Resources. Training will be provided as part of orientation training for new employees or as required to those covered by this policy.

6. ACCESSIBILITY WORKING GROUP

The Accessibility Working Group is a system-wide, multi-departmental advisory team authorized by the CEO, Barrie Public Library. The Working Group will be established in accordance with specific Terms of Reference. The Working Group shall report to the CEO through the Management Team. Recommendations of the Working Group will be reviewed by the Management Team and are not final until approved by the CEO.

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7. MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Under the AODA, designated/large organizations may prepare multi-year accessibility plans that identify which of the actions Barrie Public Library has used in the past year as well as our future plans to identify, remove and prevent barriers confronting people with disabilities. This multi-year accessibility plan and report will be prepared with input from our Accessibility Working Group.

MOTION #11-16	April 28, 2011
MOTION #13-22	July 24, 2013
MOTION #14-36	November 27, 2014
MOTION #15-27	June 25, 2015
MOTION #16-34	June 23, 2016