

## Accessibility Policy

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**Replaces:**

**Policy Number:** MS-ACC-001  
**Sub Section:** Accessibility

**Section:** Municipal Services

### References and Related Documents

[Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2011](#)  
[Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#)  
[Accessibility Standards for Customer Service-Ontario Regulation 429/07](#)  
[Ontario Human Rights Code](#)  
[Ontario Regulation 31/05 Food Safety and Quality Act 2001](#)  
[Dog Owner's Liability Act](#)  
[Ontario Regulation 562 under Health Protection and Promotion Act](#)  
[Integrated Accessibility Standard-Ontario Regulation 191/11](#)  
[MS-ACC-001-001 Accessibility Procedure](#)  
[Multi Year Accessibility Plan \(DRAFT\)](#)  
Other Accessibility Standards as enacted

## Policy Statement and Organizational Commitment

The Corporation of the County of Grey (herein referred to as Grey County) is enriched by the unique family of communities within our borders and a diverse population of varying talents, abilities and experiences. Grey County values the contributions of all residents and visitors and believes that these contributions have enhanced the spirit and character of our community.

Grey County is committed to and guided by the four core principles of Equal Opportunity, Integration, Full Inclusion, and Dignity, and supports the full inclusion of all members of our community, as set out in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Accessibilities for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). Grey County is committed to building an inclusive society and providing an accessible environment in which all individuals have access to our programs and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of all people, including persons with disabilities.

Grey County supports the goals of the AODA and will establish policies, procedures and practices that are consistent with the standards established under the AODA and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, including accessible customer service, information and communication, and employment.

Through the implementation of this policy and other policies, practices, procedures and other measures, Grey County will continue to identify, remove and prevent barriers to participation by designing programs and services in an inclusive manner and by supporting positive, proactive approaches by addressing attitudes that undervalue and restrict the potential of persons with disabilities. Grey County shall make every effort to ensure that it meet the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner through the implementation of this policy.

A copy of this policy is available on Grey County's website and in hard copy from the Clerk's Office. This policy is available, upon request, in an accessible format in accordance with the terms of this policy. Additionally, communications supports are also available, upon request, in accordance with the terms of this policy.

## Purpose

This policy is intended to address the requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* and related Standards and Regulations introduced under the legislation, ensuring that persons with disabilities are provided equal opportunities and standards of service.

This policy enables the implementation of procedures to ensure compliance with the accessibility standards developed by the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario Standards Development Committee as listed below:

- Accessible Customer Service
- Accessible Information and Communication
- Accessible Built Environments
- Accessible Employment
- Accessible Transportation

The established procedures shall ensure compliance by recognizing the use of assistive devices, support persons, service animals and other accessible means.

This policy applies to Council members, County employees as well as volunteers, agents or contractors representing or performing any function on behalf of the County.

## Application and Scope

This policy has been drafted in accordance with Ontario Regulation 191/11 and addresses how Grey County will achieve accessibility through meeting the requirements of that legislation. This policy provides the overall strategic direction that Grey County will follow to support the full inclusion and participation of Ontarians with disabilities in our community.

The requirements of Ontario Regulation 191/11 include:

- Establishment, implementation, maintenance and documentation of a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the Regulation;
- Incorporation of accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities;
- Training; and
- Other specific requirements under the Information and Communication, Employment, Transportation and Design of Public Spaces Standards.

## Definitions

*“accessible formats”* may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, braille and other formats used by persons with disabilities;

*“communications”* refers to the interaction between two or more persons or entities, or any combination of them, where information is provided, sent, or received;

*“communication supports”* may include, but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language, and other supports that facilitate effective communications;

*“designated public sector organization”* refers to every municipality and every person or organization listed in Column 1 or Table 1 of Ontario Regulation 146/10 (Public Bodies and Commission Public Bodies – Definitions) made under the Public Service of Ontario Act, 2006 or described in Schedule 1 to this Regulation;

*“disability”* refers to:

- a) 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 co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment,

- or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
- b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
  - c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
  - d) a mental disorder, or
  - e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.

“*Government of Ontario*” includes the executive of the government and operational branches, including every ministry of the Government of Ontario and the Office of the Premier;

“*large designated public sector organization*” means a designated public sector organization with 50 or more employees;

“*Legislative Assembly*” includes the office of the Assembly, the offices of members of the Assembly, including their constituency offices and the offices of persons appointed on the address of the Assembly;

“*obligated organization*” means the Government of Ontario, the Legislative Assembly, a designated public sector organization, a large public sector organization and a small public sector organization to which the standards in this Regulation apply;

“*small designated public sector organization*” means a designated public sector organization with at least one but fewer than 50 employees;

“*small organization*” means an obligated organization with at least one but fewer than 50 employees in Ontario, other than the Government of Ontario, the Legislative Assembly, or a designated sector organization.

“*Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)*” means “World Wide Web Consortium Recommendation,” dated December 2008, entitled “Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0”

## General Provisions

### *Multi-Year Accessibility Plan*

In consultation with persons with disabilities and the Accessibility Advisory Committee, Grey County will establish, implement, maintain and update a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. This plan will outline strategies for identifying, removing and preventing barriers to participation and how the County will meet the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards. The Multi-Year Plan and annual status reports will be posted to

Grey County's website ([Grey.ca](http://Grey.ca)) and made available in an accessible format, upon request. The Multi-Year Plan will be reviewed annually for the purpose of providing an annual status report and fully reviewed and updated once every five years.

### *Training*

Grey County will ensure that training is provided as required by the Integrated Accessibility Standards. The content of the training will include the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in Ontario Regulation 191/11 and the *Ontario Human Rights Code* as it pertains to persons with disabilities. The training provided shall be appropriate to the duties of those being trained.

Training will be provided as soon as practicable, as well as on an ongoing basis if changes to this policy occur. Grey County will keep records of training, including the date on which training is provided and the number of individuals to whom it is provided. The names of individuals trained will be recorded for training administration purposes, subject to the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* ("MFIPPA").

### *Accessible Procurement*

Grey County shall incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so. In the event that it is not practicable to do so, an explanation of the decision-making process will be provided, upon request.

## **Procurement of Self-Service Kiosks**

Grey County shall incorporate accessibility features when designing, procuring, or acquiring self-service kiosks.

## Information and Communications Standards

Grey County will create, provide and receive information and communications in ways that are accessible and meet the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards. Grey County will notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communications supports, as required.

Upon request, Grey County will provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities in a timely manner and at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

In determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support, Grey County will consult with the person making the request.

If Grey County determines that specific information or communications cannot be converted to an accessible format or that it cannot accommodate a request for a particular format or communications support, an explanation and a summary of the unconvertible information or communications will be provided to the individual making the request.

### *Feedback*

Grey County has processes in place for receiving and responding to feedback from the public and will ensure that these processes are provided in an accessible manner and with communication supports, upon request.

### *Emergency Information*

Where Grey County prepares emergency procedures, plans or public safety information and makes that information available to the public, Grey County shall provide the information in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, as soon as practicable, upon request.

### *Accessible Website and Web Content*

Grey County shall make its websites and web content conform to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0), to the level(s) required by the Integrated Accessibility Standard.

## Employment Standards

The Employment Standard under the AODA builds upon existing requirements under the Ontario Human Rights Code with regard to accommodating individuals with disabilities throughout the job application process and the employment relationship. This standard applies to employees and does not apply to volunteers and other non-paid individuals.

Grey County is committed to fair and accessible employment practices, including but not limited to the measures set out in this policy.

### *Recruitment*

Grey County shall notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment process.

Specifically, Grey County shall:

- Notify job applicants when they are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process that accommodations are available, upon request, in relation to the materials or processes to be used;
- If a selected applicant requests an accommodation, consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for the provision of a suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs;
- Notify successful applicants of the policies for accommodating employees with disabilities when making offers of employment.

### *Informing Employees of Supports*

Grey County shall inform its employees of policies used to support its employees with disabilities, including but not limited to, policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to a disability.

This information shall be provided to new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment and all employees shall be updated whenever there is a change to the existing policies.

### *Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees*

Upon request by an employee with a disability, Grey County shall consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of suitable accessible formats and communication supports for information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job duties and information that is generally available to employees in the workplace.

### *Workplace Emergency Response Information*

Grey County shall provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability, if the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary and Grey County is aware of the need for accommodation. Grey County shall provide the information as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation.

If an employee who receives individualized workplace emergency response information requires assistance, with the employee's consent, Grey County shall provide the workplace emergency response to a designated person who will provide assistance to the employee.

Grey County shall review the individualized workplace emergency response information: when the employee moves to a different location in the organization; when overall accommodation needs or plans are reviewed; and/or when reviewing general emergency response policies.

## *Documented Individual Accommodation Plans*

Grey County shall develop and have in place a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities. The process shall include the following elements:

- The manner in which an employee requesting accommodation can participate in the development of the individual accommodation plan;
- The means by which the employee is assessed on an individual basis;
- The manner in which Grey County may request an evaluation by an outside medical or other expert, at Grey County's expense, to assist with determining if accommodation can be achieved and, if so, how to achieve accommodation;
- The manner in which the employee can request the participation of a representative from their bargaining agent, where represented, or other representative from the workplace where the employee is not represented by a bargaining agent;
- The steps taken to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information;
- The frequency with which the individual accommodation plan will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which it will be done;
- If an individual accommodation plan is denied, the manner in which the reasons for the denial are to be provided to the employee;
- The means of providing the accommodation plan in a format that takes into account the employee's accessibility needs;

Individual accommodation plans shall, if requested, include any information regarding accessible formats and communications supports provided; if requested, include individualized workplace emergency response information; and identify any other accommodation that is to be provided.

## *Return to Work Process*

Grey County shall have in place a documented return to work process for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodation in order to return to work. The process shall outline the steps Grey County will take to facilitate the return to work of employees absent due to disability and include documented individual accommodation plans.



## *Performance Management, Career Development and Advancement, Redeployment*

Grey County shall take into account the accessibility needs and/or individual accommodation plans of employees when using performance management processes; providing career development and advancement; and using redeployment.

## Transportation

Grey County does not provide public transportation nor does it regulate taxis or other transportation providers.

Where possible and practicable, public consultation on accessible transportation has been and will be completed through relevant consultation processes such as the Transportation Master Plan and other major public outreach campaigns.

## Design of Public Spaces

Grey County shall incorporate and meet the standards set out under the Design of Public Spaces Standard and the accessible design standards in the Ontario Building Code, as applicable, when undergoing a significant redevelopment or new construction on physical spaces covered under the Standard.

## Regulatory Requirements

An Administrative Monetary Penalties scheme is established under the AODA. The scheme allows a director or a designate to issue an order against a person, organization or corporation to pay a penalty amount as a result of non-compliance with the AODA or IASR. The Administrative Monetary Penalties Program will prescribe administrative penalties. Use of administrative monetary penalties will be considered an avenue of last resort when all other compliance assistance and improvement options have been exhausted.

The License Appeal Tribunal (LAT) has been designated to hear appeals of Directors Orders under the AODA. The LAT will hear appeals from organizations of director's orders, but not individual complaints. Individuals who feel their human rights have not been met would continue to complain to the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

## Policy Review

This policy shall be reviewed a minimum of once per Council term to continued alignment with relevant legislation and overall organizational effectiveness.