



Municipality of Lambton Shores

Policy # 55

Effective Date: 2009, November 16

Updated: 2021, July 14

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

Purpose

To ensure all Lambton Shores programs and services are accessible to everyone in the community in accordance with Ontario Regulations 429/07 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.

Policy Overview

These policies and procedures apply to all goods and services that are delivered by Lambton Shores, by any means including in person, by telephone, electronically, by mail, visually, orally or by written means.

This policy applies to all Lambton Shores' staff, volunteers, elected officials and third parties who deal with the public, on behalf of Lambton Shores.

Statement of Lambton Shores' Commitment

Lambton Shores is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities. We are committed to treating people with disabilities in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and we are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner. We will do so by removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and meeting our accessibility requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and Ontario's accessibility laws.

Lambton Shores is committed to meeting its current and ongoing obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code respecting non-discrimination.

Lambton Shores understands that obligations under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) and its accessibility standards do not substitute or limit its obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code or obligations to people with disabilities under any other law.

Lambton Shores is committed to excellence in serving and providing goods, services or facilities to all customers including people with disabilities. Our accessible customer service policies are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

Policy

The Corporation shall meet its duties and responsibilities under Ontario Regulation 429/07 by adhering to the following principles and practices:

1. Training

We are committed to training all staff and volunteers in accessible customer service, other Ontario's accessibility standards and aspects of the Ontario Human Rights Code that relate to persons with disabilities.

In addition, we will train:

- a) all persons who participate in developing the organization's policies; and
- b) all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the organization

Training of our employees and volunteers on accessibility relates to their specific roles.

Training includes:

- purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the requirements of the Customer Service Standards
- our policies related to the Customer Service Standards
- how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- how to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
- what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing Lambton Shores' goods, services or facilities.

We train every person as soon as practicable after being hired and provide training in respect of any changes to the policies. We maintain records of the training provided including the dates on which the training was provided and the number of individuals to whom it was provided.

2. Assistive Devices

People with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing our goods, services or facilities.

In cases where the assistive device presents a significant and unavoidable health or safety concern or may not be permitted for other reasons, staff will consult with the individual to determine what other measures can be used to ensure the person with a disability can access our goods, services or facilities.

We ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices we have on site or that we provide that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods, services or facilities.

3. Service Animals and Support Persons

Service Animals

A person with a disability accompanied by a service animal is permitted to enter Lambton Shores' premises with the animal unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law. Should a service animal be excluded from the premises then the municipality will consult with the individual to ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with the disability to obtain, use or benefit from the good and/or services.

Section 4(9) of the Accessibility Standards on Customer Service indicates that an animal is a service animal if (1) it is readily apparent that the animal is being used for reasons related to a person's disability; or (2) if the person provides a letter from a regulated health professional confirming that the animal is required for reasons relating to the disability.

Support Persons

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises.

In certain cases, Lambton Shores might require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person for the health or safety reasons of:

- the person with a disability
- others on the premises

Before making a decision, Lambton Shores will:

- consult with the person with a disability to understand their needs
- consider health or safety reasons based on available evidence
- determine if there is no other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person or others on the premises

If Lambton Shores determines that a support person is required, we will waive the admission fee or fare (if applicable) for the support person.

4. Notice of Temporary Disruptions

Lambton Shores will give notice of temporary disruptions to service or facilities including the reason(s) for the disruption. The notice shall be posted appropriately at the facility and on the municipal web site when appropriate. When the disruption is planned, advanced notice will be

provided. This notice will include a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that are available.

This notice may be made in the following ways:

- Telephone Call
- Website/Social Media
- Facility Notices

5. Procurement

When procuring goods, services, self-service kiosks or facilities, the Municipality shall incorporate accessibility criteria and features, unless it is not feasible (practicable) to do so. If not practicable, the Municipality shall provide an explanation, upon request. Furthermore it is the expectation of the Municipality that as required by law, any selected vendor shall comply with the accessibility standards under the Accessibility for Ontarians With Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA).

6. Communications and Feedback

Communications

We communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. When asked, we will provide information about Lambton Shores and its services, including public safety information, in accessible formats or with communication supports.

- a) In a timely manner, taking into account the person's accessibility needs due to disability; and
- b) At a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

We will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support. If Lambton Shores determines that information or communications are unconvertible, Lambton Shores shall provide the requestor with:

- a) An explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible; and
- b) A summary of the unconvertible information or communications.

Feedback

Customer feedback is welcomed and valued for the continual improvement of services.

- An accessible process for customers to provide feedback or complaints will be in place

- Staff will make note of feedback given in person, verbally or in writing, online, by telephone, TTY or any other means.
- The Municipality of Lambton Shores website states that we strives to continually improve accessibility. We welcome your comments, suggestions, and questions. Please contact the Clerks Department by email or at 519-243-1400 (option 4), or submit an online feedback form using the Report It portal on our website.
- If requested, the Accessibility Advisory Committee will consult with customer service staff regarding feedback and complaints and on improvements to customer service.

7. Notice of Availability of Documents

Lambton Shores will provide these documents in an accessible format or with communication support, on request. We will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of the format or communication support. We will provide the accessible format in a timely manner and, at no additional cost.

8. Employment

We notify employees, job applicants and the public that accommodations can be made during recruitment and hiring. We notify job applicants when they are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process that accommodations are available upon request. We consult with the applicants and provide or arrange for suitable accommodation.

We notify successful applicants of policies for accommodating employees with disabilities when making offers of employment.

We will notify staff that supports are available for those with disabilities as soon as practicable after they begin their employment. We provide updated information to employees whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodation that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to a disability.

We will consult with employees when arranging for the provision of suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the accessibility needs due to disability. We will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication supports specifically for:

- a) information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job; and
- b) information that is generally available to employees in the workplace

Where needed, we will also provide customized emergency information to help an employee with a disability during an emergency. With the employee's consent, we will provide workplace emergency information to a designated person who is providing assistance to that employee during an emergency.

We will provide the information as soon as practicable after we become aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability.

We will review the individualized workplace emergency response information:

- a) when the employee moves to a different location in the organization;
- b) when the employee's overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed; and
- c) when the employer reviews its general emergency response policies.

We have a written process to develop individual accommodation plans for employees.

We have a written process for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work.

Our performance management, career development and redeployment processes will take into account the accessibility needs of all employees including the need for individual accommodation during performance management in respect of employees with disabilities.

9. Design of Public Spaces

We will meet accessibility laws when building or making major changes to public spaces. Our public spaces include:

- Recreational trails/beach access routes
- Outdoor public picnic areas
- Outdoor play spaces, like playgrounds
- Accessible off-street parking
- Accessible on-street parking
- Service-related elements like service counters, fixed queueing lines and waiting areas.