

Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy	Corporate Accessibility Policy
Category	Corporate
Authority	All Departments
Related Policies	Animal Control Bylaw, Stoop and Scoop Bylaw; Exotic and Non-Domestic Animal Bylaw
Approved By	City of Guelph Council
Effective Date	Tuesday, January-01-2013
Revision Date	

Policy Statement

The City of Guelph is committed to being responsive to the needs of all its residents and employees regardless of disabilities. To meet the needs of people with disabilities the City of Guelph will:

- Ensure its policies, practices, and procedures provide for dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity for people with disabilities.
- Identify, prevent, and remove barriers for people with disabilities in accessing and using City of Guelph goods, services, programs, and facilities.
- Accommodate the accessibility needs of people with disabilities to ensure that they can obtain, use, or benefit from City of Guelph goods, services, programs, and facilities and that they can do so in a timely manner, at a cost no greater than that for people without disabilities.
- Develop and train City of Guelph employees on providing accessible goods, services, programs, and facilities.

This policy provides guidance on how the City of Guelph ensures all its goods, services, programs, and facilities are provided in an inclusive manner that takes into the account the needs of people with disabilities.

Definitions

1. "City": Refers to the City of Guelph and its service areas, but does not include local boards. Local boards may adopt this policy at their discretion.
2. "Disability": As defined in section 10 of the *Human Rights Code*, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19.
3. "Facility or Service Disruption": Means a planned or unplanned unavailability of facilities, programs or services provided or operated by or on behalf of the

City, including but not limited to, washroom facilities that are closed, elevators that are inoperable, and websites that are unavailable.

4. "Service Animal": Means

- a) A guide dog, as defined in section 1 of the *Blind Persons' Rights Act*, R.S.O.1990, c. B.7; or
- b) An animal used by a person with a disability, including but not limited to a dog, if:
 - i. It is readily apparent that such animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
 - ii. The person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires such animal for reasons relating to his or her disability.
- c) "Support Person": Means a person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or access to goods, services, programs or facilities.

Purpose

The City recognizes the diverse needs of all its:

- Residents and strives to provide goods, services, programs and facilities that are accessible to all. As a provider of goods and services, the City is committed to ensuring that its goods and services are provided in an accessible manner.
- Employees and strives to provide a workplace that is accessible to all of them. As an employer, the City is committed to ensuring that its workplace is accessible.

This policy, Corporate Accessibility Policy, is to function as an umbrella policy for the requirements of the standards developed under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, S.O. 2005, c.11.

Principles

The City develops policies, practices, and procedures which contribute to ensuring that goods, services, programs, and facilities are accessible for persons with disabilities. The following principles will be met when developing such policies, practices, and procedures:

1. Accessibility Planning

The City will establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*. The multi-year accessibility plan will outline the ways the City will prevent and remove barriers and meet the requirements of the standards developed under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

The City will:

- Establish, review, and update the multi-year accessibility plan in consultation with persons with disabilities and the municipal accessibility advisory committee.

- Review and update the plan at least once every five years.

City employees will prepare an annual status update report on the progress of measures taken to implement the multi-year accessibility plan and will post the plan and the status update reports on the City's website. City employees will provide accessible formats of the plan and reports upon request.

2. Accessible Customer Service

The City will make reasonable efforts to ensure the following:

- That goods and services are provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.
- That the provision of goods and services to people with disabilities, and to others, are integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods and services.
- That people with disabilities are given an opportunity equal to that given to others, to obtain, use and benefit from the goods and services.

Note: Equal opportunity may require an individual accommodation in addition to this policy.

3. Procurement

Whenever possible, City employees will incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services, and facilities.

When it is not practicable to incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, City employees will provide, upon request, an explanation for this action.

Further, the City will incorporate accessibility features when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.

4. Employee Development (Training)

City employees and volunteers, those who participate in developing the City's policies and procedures, and all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the City will be trained in accordance with Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and the Integrated Accessibility Standards, as well as other regulations under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

The City 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.

5. Alternate Formats

The City will provide information that it produces or controls, in formats that take into account the disabilities of members of the public requesting the information. The City will provide these alternate formats in a timely manner and at a cost no more than the cost of the original format of the information.

City material printed in-house or produced on behalf of the City for the public should contain a note indicating, "Alternate formats are available upon request in

accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and include relevant contact information.

The City and the person with a disability requesting the document will agree upon the format to be used for the City document or information.

The timeframe attached to the process to convert the City document to an alternate format may vary depending on the media, the size, complexity, quality, and number of the source documents to be converted.

When it is not practicable to provide an alternate format, the City will provide an explanation and a summary of the document in an accessible format.

6. Communication Supports

The City will provide communication supports to members of the public, upon request. The City will provide the support in a timely manner, and in consultation with the person to determine suitability of the communication support so that it takes his or her disability into account. The City will not charge a cost that is more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

If City employees are unable to obtain the requested communication support, they will work with the requestor to determine a practicable and appropriate method for communication.

The City will notify the public about the availability of communication supports no less frequently than annually.

7. Feedback Process

The City has established a process for receiving and responding to feedback on the manner in which the City provides goods and services to persons with disabilities. Information about this process is available to any person.

Should members of the public wish to provide feedback they can do so:

- In person to a City Manager, Supervisor, Executive Director or the Accessibility Service Coordinator;
- By telephone, via the City's General Inquires telephone line: 519-822-1260 or TTY: (519) 826-9771;
- In writing to the attention of the Accessibility Services Coordinator, 1 Carden St, Guelph, ON, N1H 3A1;
- By using the form included in Appendix B: or
- In an electronic format or by email: info@guelph.ca

Once feedback has been received, the City will implement the following process:

- If the feedback is received by a City employee other than a Manager, Supervisor, Executive Director or Accessibility Service Coordinator, the employee will forward the feedback form to his or her supervisor and the Accessibility Services Coordinator.
- The Supervisor will forward the form to the relevant Service Area or employee.
- The relevant employee will take appropriate action in a timely manner with the assistance of the Accessibility Services Coordinator and members of other departments if needed.

- Whether the feedback is intended to be a helpful suggestion or a complaint, the employee along with the Accessibility Service Coordinator will assess current policies, practices, and procedures to determine if any changes are required.
- Employees will follow up with the person who submitted the feedback if more clarification is needed, or if the person has requested that follow up take place.
- Employees will keep records of all steps taken, including any discussions with the person submitting the feedback and any actions taken.
- All feedback will be provided to relevant City employees who will follow up as appropriate.

8. Service Disruptions

If, in order to obtain, use or benefit from the City's goods, services, programs or facilities, persons with disabilities usually use particular facilities or services of the City, and if there is a temporary Facility or Service Disruption to those facilities or services, in whole or in part, the City will give notice of the Facility or Service Disruption to the public. The City employees responsible for posting such notice include facility and service managers or their designates.

Notice of the Facility or Service Disruption will include: information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that are available.

The City will give notice of the Facility or Service Disruption by posting the information in a conspicuous place on the relevant City premises and, whenever possible, by posting it on the City website and in the media as appropriate.

If the City should expect a planned temporary Facility or Service Disruption, the City will provide on its website, if possible, advance notice, in keeping with the conditions of this section of this policy.

9. Support Persons

The City will allow a person with a disability to be accompanied by a Support Person in all City owned and operated public facilities. The City reserves the right to request that a person with a disability be accompanied by a Support Person, in the event that the City considers such accompaniment as necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with the disability or others on the premises.

The City will provide notification of any applicable admission fees or fares that apply to Support Persons by posting such admission fees or fares where all other fees or fares are posted.

10. Service Animals

The City welcomes Service Animals into all City-owned or -operated facilities where the public is allowed. The person requiring the Service Animal may keep it with him or her unless it is otherwise excluded by law.

If a Service Animal is excluded from premises by law, which could include, but is not limited to, City policy, bylaw, Federal or Provincial Public Health law, or government policy or guideline, the City will, upon request, use reasonable efforts

to ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with the disability to obtain, use or benefit from the City program, service, or facility. Appropriate "other measures" will be addressed on a case by case basis.

The concept of Service Animals may be new for some customers. As a result, there is a potential for misunderstandings between customers. People who use Service Animals often find themselves providing education about the use of Service Animals to those they meet. At times they report that they have difficulty with some individuals. If a customer accessing City services experiences difficulty from another person regarding the treatment of the Service Animal or himself/herself the following could take place. The person with the Service Animal could;

1. Mention to the other person that his/her animal is a Service Animal, and /or
2. Request assistance from City employees. City employees will, upon request, assist in a professional manner within their capacity.

A Person with a disability with a Service Animal is responsible for the control of that animal at all times. As well he or she must comply with all applicable legislation, which includes, but is not limited to, the *Dog Owners' Liability Act* and City by-laws (such as the Animal Control By-law, Stoop and Scoop By-law and Exotic and Non-Domestic Animals By-law).

If the Service Animal is not kept under control, City employees may use their discretion to request that the Service Animal, accompanied by a person, leave the premises until the Service Animal is under control. If the Service Animal has bitten another person or animal or is a menace to the safety of other persons or animals, the Service Animal, accompanied by a person, may be required to leave the premises. If this occurs, the person would be permitted to continue to access the City goods or services without the Service Animal. In addition, City employees will, upon request, consider alternate accommodations for the person in such circumstances. The City may refuse to permit the Service Animal to accompany the person until such time as the person has demonstrated to the City that the issue has been resolved and steps have been taken to correct the situation. The person could present the City with a letter from a veterinarian and physician or nurse that explains how the issue has been resolved and the steps taken to correct the situation. If the person plans on using City facilities, programs or services with the Service Animal, the City expects that the person would make every effort to ensure the issue would be resolved within a reasonable period of time as alternate accommodations provided by the City may be discontinued after a limited amount of time. City employees may take further action as described in the laws noted above.

If a conflict should arise concerning a Service Animal, employees will attempt to balance the needs of all persons involved by following conflict resolution strategies. These strategies will include collecting appropriate information from all persons involved and observing the rights of all individuals involved according to the *Human Rights Code* and the *Canadian Human Rights Act*, R.S.C. 1985, c. H-6.

11. Use of Assistive Devices

The City will allow people with disabilities to use their own personal assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from the services offered by the City.

Should a person with a disability be unable to access the City's services through the use of his or her own personal assistive device, the City will assess service delivery and potential service options to meet the needs of the individual.

12. Accessible Workplace

The City will establish policies, practices, and procedures that ensure that the City remains an inclusive workplace for people with disabilities. These policies, practices, and procedures will:

- Ensure that the recruitment process is inclusive of people with disabilities.
- Inform employees of supports available for employees with disabilities.
- Appropriately accommodate employees with disabilities in the areas of:
 - Workplace emergency response information,
 - Information and communications needed to perform jobs or that are generally available to employees in the workplace, and
 - Any other accommodations required.
- Take into account employee accommodations in:
 - Performance management,
 - Career development and advancement, and
 - Redeployment.
- Develop and implement a return to work process for employees who have been absent from work due to disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work.

13. Transportation

In addition to adhering to the policies within this Policy, Guelph Transit will develop and maintain policies and procedures unique to its service, and that are required in the regulations under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

Guelph Transit will make the policies required in the regulations under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* available to the public upon request.

14. Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment

The City is committed to providing a universally accessible built environment at its facilities. The City of Guelph Facility Accessibility Design Manual (FADM) acts as a guiding standard for building and renovating City facilities. Updated periodically and upon the release of new legislation, the FADM meets or exceeds the Ontario Building Code and in many regards it exceeds the Design of Public Spaces regulation O. Reg. 413/12. The FADM will continue to be the guiding standard for City renovations and newly constructed buildings.

Review Period

This policy shall be reviewed by Council when the Multi-year Plan is reviewed and/or once per Council term and/or as accessibility legislation changes.

Responsibilities

City Council, employees, volunteers and those providing a good, service, program or facility on the City's behalf are responsible for adhering to the parameters of this policy and for ensuring that the needs of people with disabilities are addressed when accessing the City's goods, services, programs, and facilities.

Contact Information

For more information about this policy, or questions related to accessibility at the City, please contact:

Accessibility Services Coordinator, City of Guelph
1 Carden St., Guelph, ON N1H 3A1
Phone: 519-822-1260 ext. 2670
TTY: 519-837-5688 Fax: 519-837-5661
Email: leanne.warren@guelph.ca

Links

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005: http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_05a11_e.htm
- Customer Service Standard, Ontario Regulation 429/07: http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/source/regs/english/2007/elaws_src_regs_r07429_e.htm
- Integrated Accessibility Standard <http://www.search.e-laws.gov.on.ca/en/isysquery/9be78d7d-0bd4-4cd0-8819-fcff68be4caf/1/doc/?search=browseStatutes&context=#hit1>
- Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Employment: <http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/en/mcass/programs/accessibility/index.aspx>
- Ontario Human Rights Commission: <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en>
- Dog Owners Liability Act (Provincial Act): http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90d16_e.htm
- Blind Persons' Rights Act (Provincial Act): http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_900058_e.htm
- City of Guelph documents related to Service Animals and Guide Dogs:
 - Animal Control By-law: http://guelph.ca/uploads/PDF/By-laws/animal_control.pdf
 - Stoop and Scoop By-law: <http://guelph.ca/uploads/PDF/By-laws/stoop%20and%20scoop.pdf>
 - Exotic and Non-Domestic Animals: http://guelph.ca/uploads/PDF/By-laws/exotic_animals.pdf
- Guelph Police Services AODA Information: <http://www.guelphpolice.com/aoda/>
- City of Guelph Facility Accessibility Design Manual: <http://guelph.ca/living/accessibility/facilities/>

City of Guelph Resource Documents

Available on the Internet and/or Intranet under Accessibility:

- Service Disruption Notice
- Feedback Form
- Workplace Emergency Response Information for Employees and Volunteers with Disabilities Policy (available upon request)