

Policy Title:

Accessibility Policy

Policy Type	Approval Date	Motion No.	Review Date
Operational	September 2023	013-2023	2026

Brockville Public Library’s accessibility program includes a statement of commitment, an accessibility policy and an accessibility plan. Together, these three elements make accessibility a permanent part of the Library’s culture and business practices.

See the Library Board’s Governance Policy: Accessibility - 8

Statement of Commitment

Brockville Public Library upholds the City of Brockville’s goal, ‘Accessibility a Reality’. Accessibility for everyone is reflected in the Library’s mission and values statements.

The Library will be guided by the service values of equity and diversity in the treatment of individuals. The Library will make reasonable efforts to establish, implement and monitor policies, services and practices that balance the needs of persons with disabilities and others to support the accessibility standards of customer service, information and communication, employment and the built environment established under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*.

See [Appendix A](#) for Definitions.

See supplementary document Brockville Public Library Accessibility Plan - 8A, 2016 – 2017.

General Policy

Brockville Public Library (BPL) is included in and adopts The Corporation of the City of Brockville’s, 2012 –2017 Accessibility Plan. BPL is included in the City’s compliance reporting.

The following guidelines highlight the accessible delivery of operations, services and programs provided by the Brockville Public Library.

Guidelines

Library Policies

Library policies will be applied in a way that considers the needs of persons with disabilities and respects the principles of dignity, independence and integration.

Information and Communication

Library trustees, staff, and volunteers will communicate with persons with disabilities in a way that takes their needs into consideration. Brockville Public Library's website and web content is compliant with the Web Content Accessibility guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, Level A.

Training for Board, Staff and Volunteers

The Library will provide and document on-going training on the AODA legislation and requirements for all trustees, employees, volunteers and contractors associated with the Library. (IASR, July 1, 2016).

Feedback Process

The Library welcomes customer feedback and makes information on how to provide feedback available in accessible format. Staff assistance is available to support customers, including persons with disabilities, when requested. Staff will make all reasonable efforts to communicate with customers in a format of choice. Responses to customer feedback will be given in a timely manner.

Requests for Accommodation under the Ontario Human Rights Code

The Library will continue to meet the standards set by the *Ontario Human Rights Code*. 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 persons 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 *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

Provision of Services

In keeping with Brockville Public Library's mission of providing a welcoming, resourceful environment open for everyone to explore, learn, create and share, the Library will:

- Provide services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities and provides them with an equal opportunity to learn about, use or benefit from library services.
- Integrate services for persons 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 persons with disabilities.

Service Animals

The Library welcomes service animals that are needed to assist persons with disabilities. At times it may be difficult to differentiate between a person with a disability using a service animal and an individual being accompanied by a pet; if it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, Library staff may ask the person for confirmation of the animal's status; as of July 1, 2016, this confirmation can be provided by a regulated health professional.

For a list of regulated health professionals please visit:

http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/hhrsd/about/regulated_professions.aspx
Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 (RHPA).

Support People

The Library welcomes persons with disabilities and accompanying support people. If discussing personal or confidential information, Library staff will ask the person if they prefer the support person to remain present.

As of July 1, 2016, before making a decision to require a support person to accompany a person with a disability, Library staff must:

- Consult with the person with a disability to understand their needs.
- Consider health or safety reasons based on the available evidence.
- Determine if there is any reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person or others on the premises; in such a situation, any applicable fees must be waived for the support person.

In most cases, the Library does not charge for the programs and services that it offers. However, when admission fees are charged for Library programs or services, admission fees will be waived for support people, or advance notice will be given of any admission fees that are required.

Assistive Devices

The Library will make reasonable efforts to facilitate the use of assistive devices that enable persons with disabilities to use the Library's services. The Library offers a broad range of assistive devices including communication supports.

The Library also recognizes that accessibility can be achieved and provided in different ways. Persons with disabilities may use personal assistive devices while accessing the Library, unless there is a health and safety risk.

Notice of Temporary Service Disruption

The Library will provide notice of service disruptions which include the reason for the disruption, how long the disruption will last and a description of available alternatives, if any. In the event of an unplanned disruption, notice will be provided as quickly as possible.

Information and Documentation on Accessible Customer Service

The Library will document its policies, practices and procedures as required by the AODA. Members of the public will be notified of the availability of this documentation, which will be available in a variety of formats, upon request and at no additional cost.

Accessible Materials

The Library will provide access to materials in accessible formats, given an alternative format exists.

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 AODA. The Library will incorporate accessibility features and criteria when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks (included in BPL's future plans).

Employment

The Library will incorporate accessibility considerations into its human resources policies and procedures.

Emergency Plans

The Library will provide emergency plans in accessible formats upon request. Emergency Procedures are displayed throughout the facility.

Accountability

The Library Board and CEO are responsible for the implementation of this policy.

Legislative and Administrative Authorities

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, O. Reg. 429/07

Integrated Accessibility Standards, O. Reg. 191/11

Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19

The Corporation of the City of Brockville's, 2012 —2017 Accessibility Plan

Brockville Public Library Strategic Plan, 2022-2028

Policy History

Review Date	Board Motion
September 2011	023-2015
August 2016	024-2016
September 2023	013-2022

Appendix A: Definitions

"Accessible Formats"

May include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

"Assistive Device"

An assistive device is a tool, technology or other mechanism that enables a person with a disability to do everyday tasks and activities such as moving, communicating or lifting (examples include, walkers, magnifiers for reading, etc...).

"Barrier"

A barrier is any policy, practice or procedure, or part of the built environment, which prevents someone with a disability from participating fully in Library programs or services because of a disability.

"Communication Support"

A tool or device that facilitates communication for a person with a disability, including but not limited to captioning, sign language, and personal listening systems.

"Disability"

As defined in the AODA, disability means:

- 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 coordination, 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 developmental disability,
- c. learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- d. 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*.

"Facilities"

Refers to services in buildings or premises that are offered for use to members of the public or third parties (e.g. meeting rooms). It does not refer to the structure or physical features of the built environment which are covered by the building code.

"Kiosk"

An interactive electronic terminal, including a point of sale device, intended for public use that allows users to access one or more services or products or both.

"Reasonable Efforts"

The Customer Service Standard requires organizations to make reasonable efforts to meet the needs of people with disabilities. The Library defines reasonable efforts as providing the best possible service

within the context of: available resources, balancing the needs of people with disabilities with others who may encounter barriers to access and with the community at large, the health and safety of Library staff and volunteers, the security of Library property and existing laws and contracts.

“Service Animal”

Means 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 regulated health professional 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.

“Support Person”

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