

THE CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF NEEBING

ACCESSIBILITY: INTEGRATED-ACCESSIBILITY-STANDARDS POLICY

Date approved: December 18, 2024

Review Cycle:

This policy will be reviewed on an as needed basis. The Accessibility Plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every five years.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005 provides for the establishment of accessibility standards. Accordingly, Ontario Regulation 429/07, Accessible Standards for Customer Service, was enacted. Under this Regulation municipalities must establish policies, procedures and practices governing the provision of its goods or services to persons with disabilities. In addition, the Municipality must use all reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, procedures and practices provide accessible customer services to people with various kinds of disabilities and that the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equal opportunity, as defined herein, are respected.

The purpose of this Policy is to fulfil the Requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (S.O. 2005, c. 11, as amended) and regulations passed pursuant to the Act. Further, implementation of this Policy will assist the Province in making Ontario an accessible province for all Ontarians.

SCOPE

This policy applies to

- All employees and volunteers
- All members of Council
- All other persons who provide goods, services or facilities to the Corporation

DEFINITIONS:

“Act” means the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (S.O. 2005, c. 11, as amended). The term includes all regulations passed pursuant to that legislation.

“Clerk” means the person who holds the role of the municipal clerk, regardless of that person’s job title, under the Municipal Act, 2001 (S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended).

“Corporation” means The Corporation of the Municipality of Neebing.

“Council” means the elected council of the Corporation in accordance with the Municipal Act, 2001 (S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended) and the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 (S.O. 1996, c.32, Schedule, as amended).

“Suppliers” means persons who provide goods, services, or facilities to the Corporation.

POLICY

Statement of Commitment

The Municipality of Neebing 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.

The Municipality believes in integration, and is committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner. This will be accomplished by removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and by meeting the accessibility requirements under Ontario’s accessibility laws.

Integrated Accessibility Standards

In 2011, the AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards became law, enacting standards in the areas of Employment, Information, Communication, and Transportation. In accordance with this, the Municipality of Neebing will develop, maintain and document compliance with this Standard.

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

The Municipality will develop a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan which outlines a phased in strategy to prevent and remove barriers and addresses the current and future requirements of the Act. The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan shall be available on the Municipal website.

An annual update will be provided to Council on the progress and implementation of the plan and a full review of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will be completed every 5 years.

Training

The Municipality of Neebing will ensure that training is provided to all Council members, employees, and other staff members on the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in the Regulation and on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities. Ongoing training will be provided to new employees as soon as practicable. If any changes are made to this policy or the requirements, additional training will be provided. The Municipality of Neebing will maintain a record of the dates when training is provided and the number of individuals to whom it was provided. Training will be provided in a way that best suits the duties of Council, employees, or other staff members.

Procuring or Acquiring Goods, Services, or Facilities

The Municipality will use accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities except where not practicable to do so. If it is identified that a good, service or facility cannot meet accessible criteria an explanation will be provided if requested.

Modifications to this or Other Policies

Any policies that do not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified and removed as necessary.

Accessible Formats and Communication Standard

The Municipality of Neebing will create, provide or arrange for accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities:

- Upon request, in a timely manner that takes into account the persons' accessibility needs due to a disability;
- At a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons;
- In consultation with the person making the request to determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

If the Municipality of Neebing determines that it is not technically feasible to convert the information or communications, or the technology to convert the information or communication is not readily available, that person who requires the information will be provided with:

- an explanation as to why the information or communications are not convertible; and
- a summary of the unconvertible information or communications

Emergency Information

The Municipality of Neebing will provide emergency procedures, plans or public safety information to the public in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, as soon as practicable, upon request. Employees are responsible for advising the Clerk-Treasurer or their Department Manager of the need for accommodation regarding Emergency Response.

If needed, an individualized Emergency Response Plan will be created for an employee with a disability. The Municipality will work directly with the individual requiring the individualized plan in order to understand and accommodate their needs. If the employee requires assistance and with the employee's consent, the workplace emergency information will be shared with the person designated by the Clerk-Treasurer to provide assistance to the employee.

The Municipality will work in collaboration with those responsible for evacuation to ensure the individual Emergency Response Plan is consistent with current practices and recorded. The individualized Emergency Response Plan shall be reviewed on an annual basis or when an employee moves to a different location in the organization.

The employee's personal information will be kept confidential unless the health and safety of the employee or other employees is at risk.

Website Accessibility

The Municipality shall make the municipal website and web content conform to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA.

Employment Standard and Recruitment

The Employment Standard builds upon the existing requirements under the Ontario Human Rights Code in relation to how to accommodate individuals with disabilities throughout the job application process and the employment relationship. It applies in respect to employees and does not apply to volunteers and other non-paid individuals.

When recruiting new employees, the Municipality of Neebing will:

- Notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodations for applicants with disabilities during the recruitment process when job applicants are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process;
- Consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for the provision of a suitable accommodation that takes into account the applicant's disability, if a selected applicant requests an accommodation;
- Notify successful applicants of the policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

Employee Notification

All employees will be advised of the Municipality's policies to support 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 will be provided to employees as part of their orientation and whenever there is a change in policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to a disability.

Accessible Formats

When an employee with a disability requests it, the Municipality of Neebing will consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports:

- For information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job;
- For information that is generally available to employees in the workplace; and
- In consultation with the employee making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

Individual Accommodation Plan

The Municipality supports employees with disabilities including providing employment related accommodations. Employees requiring accommodation must inform the Clerk-Treasurer of the need for accommodation and provide the supporting medical documentation. The Clerk-Treasurer and the Department Manager will consult with the employee to determine accommodation needs and to develop a mutually agreed upon individual accommodation plan.

Employees can request an associate/representative be involved with them in the process and assist with the accommodations.

The Accommodation Plan shall include:

- Documentation of participation in the development of the individualized plan by the employee requesting accommodation.
- Means by which the employee was assessed on an individual basis.
- Any information from an outside medical resource used to determine if the accommodation can be achieved.
- An annual review, which can be part of the annual performance review interview, in an accessible format taking into account the accessibility needs of the employee.

If deploying an employee with a disability to a new role, the Municipality will ensure that the accommodations are adjusted to fit the new role prior to moving the employee. The current accommodation plan will then be reviewed in relation to the requirements of the new job.

If an individual plan is denied, reasons for the denial will be discussed with the employee and provided in an accessible format, taking into account the accessibility needs of the employee.

The employee's personal information will be kept confidential unless the health and safety of the employee or other employees is at risk.

Return to Work

The Municipality supports employees with disabilities including providing employment related accommodations for employees returning to work who have been absent from work due to a disability. An employee who requires disability related accommodation in order to return to work must inform the Clerk-Treasurer of the need for accommodation and provide the supporting medical documentation.

The Clerk-Treasurer and the Department Manager will consult with the employee to determine accommodation needs and when necessary, develop a mutually agreed upon individual Accommodation Plan..

The Accommodation Plan for an employee who is returning to work shall be reviewed as necessary until such time as it is mutually agreed by the Municipality and the employee that the accommodation is no longer needed or it is determined by the Clerk-Treasurer, Department Manager and the affected employee that a permanent Accommodation Plan is required.

The employee's personal information will be kept confidential unless the health and safety of the employee or other employees is at risk.

Performance Management, Career Development and Advancement

The Municipality of Neebing will take into account the accommodation needs of employees when:

- Using performance management processes;
- Providing career development and advancement information

Transportation Standard

The Corporation does not offer any public transportation services. However, if it does offer transportation in the future then the Municipality will consult with persons with disabilities and the public to determine the proportion of specialized transportation services required in the community including steps to meet the need.

Should a specialized transportation service become available to residents, the Municipality shall ensure that the specialized transportation service does not charge a higher fee or an additional fee to persons with disabilities; does not charge a fee for storage of assistive devices; and that the appropriate information is displayed on the rear bumper and is available to passengers in an accessible format.

Design of Public Spaces

Both Blake Hall and the Municipal Office are accessible, with appropriate ramps and barrier-free entrance doors for the main office/hall as well as for washroom facilities.

Service animals, assistive partners or other accommodation aids are welcomed in all of the Corporation's facilities.

All new outdoor facility washrooms (porta-potties will to be installed as barrier-free. As they become worn, all such facilities will be replaced with barrier-free models.

The Municipality will conduct a public consultation process which involves specific barrier-free design considerations prior to finalizing the design of future public play-spaces.