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GST No. 12202 5059 RT0001 (Town of Espanola)

Accessibility in the Library Procedure

Purpose

The Espanola Public Library is committed to providing equitable access to library service. The Library will ensure that each employee, volunteer, and patron receive equitable treatment with respect to employment and services without discrimination, and receives accommodation where required in a timely manner, and in accordance with the *Ontario Human Rights Code* and the AODA and its regulations.

Espanola Public Library in partnership with the Town of Espanola and in compliance with the standards set out by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) 2005* and its regulations, provides accessible library services. See *Appendix A* for associated definitions under the Act.

Organizational Commitment

The library will establish an accessibility plan, policies, practices and procedures that respect the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. The library is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities, and ensuring they will benefit from the same opportunities and services the library affords to all others.

Responsibilities

1. For the purposes of AODA, the library provides services on behalf of the municipality, and therefore is considered along with the municipality, a “large designated public sector organization.” The library, in partnership with the municipality, complies with the obligations for this sector as set out in AODA and regulations.
2. The board ensures that the library complies with the spirit, principles and intent of AODA and designates the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) as the individual accountable for the organization’s compliance with legislation.
3. The CEO will ensure that policies and procedures comply with the AODA and the associated regulations. The CEO will further ensure that all employees, volunteers, policy makers, and third parties providing goods, services or facilities on the library’s behalf receive appropriate training on the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) and the Human Rights Code.

Accessibility Plan

1. The library will work with the municipality to establish, implement and maintain a multi-year accessibility plan that will outline the library's strategy to prevent and remove barriers.
2. The plan will be reviewed and updated at least every five years. The process of reviewing and maintaining the accessibility plan will be done in consultation with persons with disabilities.
3. The plan and any associated reports will be posted on the library's website, and be provided in an accessible format on request.

Policies and Procedures

1. In accordance with the *O. Reg 165/16*, relating to the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005*, the library has developed this present Accessibility in the Library policy which includes the required Customer Service elements and the library's other policies will support accessibility, in these specific areas:
 - a) the purchasing policy will include accessibility criteria for procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities;
 - b) the Internet services policies will include accessibility provisions with respect to the library's website;
 - c) the human resource policies will address training on *AODA* regulations and the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, accommodation for job applicants and accommodation plans;
 - d) the collection development policy will address the availability of materials in a variety of accessible formats (e.g. print, audio, visual, digital, etc.).
2. In accordance with the *AODA Accessibility Standards for Customer Service*, the library will maintain a policy on accessible customer service.

Customer Service

The Espanola Public Library is committed to the independence and integration of persons with disabilities and all who live, learn, work, play and invest in our community, and in the context of customer service will commit to the following.

1. The library will make every reasonable effort to ensure that services and programs are accessible by:
 - a) encouraging the use of personal assistive devices to access our services and programs;
 - b) providing at least one computer workstation which is equipped with assistive technology and a range of accessibility features;
 - c) arranging for the provision of access to accessible materials where they exist which may include archival material and special collections;
 - d) providing a library website with content that will meet or exceed World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level 2;
 - e) encouraging the inclusion and access of support persons accompanying people with disabilities;
 - f) waiving fees for support persons assisting users and when fees are required providing advance notification;

- g) permitting service animals to assist users and provide alternative accommodation in situations where an animal is disallowed under the law.
2. The library will make every effort to communicate with users in a manner that enables the use of services and programs by providing:
 - a) this "Accessibility in the Library" policy in alternative formats upon request;
 - b) information on the provision of customer service for people with disabilities and accessible services and programs;
 - c) reasonable notification of all interruptions that especially relate to the provision of services and program for people with disabilities;
 - d) a process for receiving feedback about the manner in which the library provides services to persons with disabilities.
3. In partnership with the Town of Espanola, the library will provide training to its board members, staff and volunteers on how to provide customer service to people with disabilities and the municipality will keep a record of when the training was provided and the individuals who received the training.

Communication

1. The library shall make its communications available, upon request, in accessible formats for persons with disabilities and make the public aware of the availability of communication support. In this context, the types of communications include:
 - a. policies,
 - b. accessibility plans,
 - c. emergency procedures, plan and public safety information prepared for the public,
 - d. forms, surveys and other tools used to gather feedback,
 - e. information on collections/materials in accessible format, and
 - f. employment standards.
2. Accessible formats of the library's communications shall be made available:
 - a. in a timely manner,
 - b. at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to others for the communications, and
 - c. in consultation with the person making the request.

Related Documents

Accessibility Plan

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

Ontario Regulation 165/16 made under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2005. S.O. c.11 and amending O Reg. 191/11 (Integrated Accessibility Standards)

Revision History

Date amended: March 11, 2020

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To be reviewed by: March 2024