

HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION TO OUR MULTI-YEAR PLAN

ABOUT OUR PLAN

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

The Hamilton Public Library is committed to providing Library services that are equitable and accessible to the public we serve and for our employees. We promote an inclusive and respectful environment where Library programs, services and facilities are available to everyone, including persons with disabilities. We are committed to providing library services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.

HPL aims to ensure accessibility for the public we serve and our employees while meeting legislative requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

MESSAGE FROM CEO/CHIEF LIBRARIAN

Library Service accessibility for all Hamiltonians is supported by the Hamilton Public Library. I support everyone having the opportunity to use libraries across our system. HPL has made a lot of progress toward improving accessibility around the system. I look forward working with others to create a truly barrier free environment.

THE PLAN

This is Hamilton Public Library's (HPL) Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for the next five years. It outlines how HPL will continue to increase and improve accessibility through the services and facilities we provide. The plan will guide the Hamilton Public Library to work towards preventing and removing barriers for persons with disabilities and support the province's goal of becoming barrier-free by 2025.

STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

The responsibility for the implementation of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and the various clauses within the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation is a shared responsibility among the various Hamilton Public Library departments. The Human Resources department is responsible for ensuring compliance at the corporate level and is the focal point for legislative analysis and subject matter expertise. All other departments retain the accountability for ensuring that their respective clauses are executed according to legislative requirements pertaining to the service delivery.

CONSULTATION

The content of the Hamilton Public Library's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan was developed in consultation with HPL staff and committees including the Senior Leadership Team.

ACCESSIBILITY LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND IN ONTARIO

ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (AODA), 2005

The AODA was enacted in 2005. The overall purpose of the AODA is to develop, implement, and enforce accessibility standards in order to remove barriers, and ensure that all Ontarians have fair and equitable access to goods, services, accommodation, facilities and employment, with the overall vision of a barrier-free Ontario by 2025.

The Integrated Accessibility Standards (IASR) (O. Reg. 191/11) was later developed to establish accessibility standards and requirements to support the vision of the AODA. The IASR outlines and mandates the persons or organizations described in the standards to develop and/or implement measures, policies and practices within specified time periods.

Standards developed to date through the AODA include:

- Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (O. Reg. 429/07) which came into effect on January 1, 2008 and have become part of the IASR (O. Reg. 191/11)
- Integrated Accessibility Standards (O. Reg. 191/11) which came into effect on July 1, 2011 and provides a number of general and specific requirements in the areas of employment, transportation and information and communications.
- Design of Public Spaces Standards (O. Reg. 413/12) which came into effect on January 1, 2013 and applies to new or redeveloped public space.

PART 2: LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

O.REG 191/11: GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

ESTABLISHMENT OF ACCESSIBILITY POLICIES:

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2014

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: Hamilton Public Library has developed and implemented an Accessibility policy that addresses how the library achieves or will achieve accessibility through meeting the requirements as outlined in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and its Regulations. This policy was approved in 2014 and will be re-approved every four (4) years.

Planned Action: Continued regular review and revision of policy and associated procedures as needed in line with existing policy review schedule.

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN:

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2014

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: The Hamilton Public Library has developed a Multi-year Accessibility Plan that indicates the Library's approach to prevent and remove barriers for members and staff with disabilities and to meet AODA requirements and regulations. Previous HPL Accessibility Plans were submitted with the City of Hamilton plans. The current plan is available on the website, in alternative formats etc. on request.

Planned Action: The next Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will be reviewed in 2026 for implementation 2027-2031.

PROCUREMENT OR ACQUISITION OF GOODS, SERVICES AND/OR FACILITIES:

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2014

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action:

HPL continues to incorporate and develop inclusive and accessible procurement requirements when procuring or acquiring goods, services and facilities, except when it is decided that it is not appropriate or practical to do so. Where accessibility is not practical in the procurement of goods, services or facilities, a clear justification is documented. HPL staff are trained in accessible procurement.

In accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code, Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), the Library will accommodate for a disability, ensuring full and equitable participation throughout the bid process.

If a Bidder requires this RFQ in a different format to accommodate a disability, the Bidder must contact the contact person named above as soon as possible and in any event prior to the closing time. The RFQ in the different format will be issued only to the requesting Bidder and all addenda will be issued in such different format only to the requesting Bidder.

Planned Action: Ensure ongoing compliance

ACCESSIBLE SELF-SERVICE KIOSKS:

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2014

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: HPL continues to incorporate accessibility features in the design, procurement, and acquisition of the library self-service check-out kiosks. All kiosks are easily accessible. Staff are available to assist members to use the self-service kiosks if requested.

Planned Action: Ensure ongoing compliance.

TRAINING:

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2014

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: All HPL employees, volunteers and persons who deliver services on behalf of HPL, such as partners providing community services at HPL locations, are required to complete AODA training appropriate to their role as part of their orientation. Completion records, including the dates and content covered in training, are maintained by Human Resources. All staff are expected to repeat this training every three years to remain current.

Planned Action: Ensure ongoing compliance.

O.REG 191/11: CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD

ESTABLISHMENT OF POLICIES

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2010

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: Accessibility for Individuals with a Disability Policy:

Hamilton Public Library has created a policy, associated procedures, and practices that were approved in 2014 by the CEO/Chief Librarian and Library Board. This policy and the associated procedures indicate how HPL provides service and goods in an accessible manner to persons with disabilities. The policy is available on the Hamilton Public Library website as well as internal intranet. In addition, this policy is available in alternate formats and/or with communication supports upon request.

Planned Action: Ensure ongoing compliance.

USE OF SERVICE ANIMALS AND SUPPORT PERSONS

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2010

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: Provisions for Service Animals and Support Persons in the Library are outlined in the Accessibility for Individuals with a Disability Policy. Persons entering Library facilities may be accompanied by a service animal. If it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, Library employees may ask if an animal is a service animal and whether documentation of the animal's status is available. If documentation is not immediately available, the person and the animal, normally, will be allowed access to the Library for the current visit and asked to bring documentation for future visits.

Service animals are generally dogs but do include other animals. It is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that his or her service animal is always kept under control.

Persons with a disability may enter Library premises with a support person to assist with communication, mobility or medical needs or with access to Library Services and may have access to the support person while on the premises.

A support person, when assisting a person with a disability to obtain or use Library services, will be permitted to attend at no charge where an admission fee is applicable. Persons with disabilities may provide their Library card or its duplicate fob to a support person for use by the support person on their behalf.

O.REG 191/11: CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD

The Library may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises. Before making a decision to require a support person, the Library will consult with the person with a disability to understand their needs, consider health or safety reasons based on available evidence and determine if there is any other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person or others on the premises.

Planned Action: Continued monitoring and updating of related policies and procedures.

NOTICE OF TEMPORARY DISRUPTIONS

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2010

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: HPL Library has a Service Disruption Policy and Procedure that outline the Accessibility requirements of service interruptions. HPL will make reasonable effort to provide notice of planned or unplanned disruption of Library services to the public, including information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of any alternative facilities or services that may be available. In the case of unplanned disruption, advance notice will not be possible.

Notice will be given to the public by posting the information at a conspicuous place on affected premises and by posting notice on the Library website, and by such other method as is reasonable in the circumstances. HPL Library will have a procedure document that sets out the steps to be taken in connection with a temporary disruption and, upon request, will give a copy of the document in an accessible format to any member of the public.

Planned Action: Continued monitoring and updates to policies and procedures as needed.

STAFF TRAINING

O.REG 191/11: CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2010

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: All HPL employees, volunteers and persons who deliver services on behalf of HPL, such as partners providing community services at HPL locations, are required to complete AODA training appropriate to their role as part of their orientation. Completion records, including the dates and content covered in training, are maintained by Human Resources. All Staff are expected to repeat this training every three years to remain current.

Planned Action: Maintain compliance and ensure training content is updated when necessary.

FEEDBACK PROCESS

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2010

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: Policies and procedures have been developed and implemented to receive and respond to feedback from HPL customers. This feedback process is accessible in a variety of channels and formats and is advertised on the HPL website and in physical Library locations.

Feedback can also be received in various formats including telephone, email, chat, mail, or in-person meeting. Paper feedback forms can be requested in alternative formats, or with communication supports upon request. All feedback is reviewed and responded to by the Hamilton Public Library's Senior Leadership Team.

Planned Action: Ensure ongoing compliance.

FORMAT OF DOCUMENTS

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2010

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: Feedback to HPL can be received in various formats including telephone, email, chat, mail, or in-person meeting. Paper feedback forms can be requested in alternative formats, or with communication supports upon request. All feedback is reviewed and responded to by the Hamilton Public Library's Senior Leadership Team.

Planned Action: Ensure ongoing compliance.



O.REG 191/11: CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD

O.REG 191/11: INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

FEEDBACK

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2014

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: Hamilton Public Library welcomes feedback on its Accessibility Plan as well as all related policies, procedures, and services, from community members. The feedback process is available in a variety of formats on request.

Planned Action: Ensure ongoing compliance.

ACCESSIBLE FORMATS AND COMMUNICATION SUPPORTS:

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2014

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: Policies and procedures have been developed and implemented to receive and respond to feedback from HPL Members. The accessible feedback process is advertised at each Library branch location service desk. In addition, feedback can be received in a variety of formats including telephone, email, mail, or in-person. Paper feedback forms are available and can be requested in an alternate format or with communication supports upon request.

Planned Action: Ensure ongoing compliance.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES, PLANS AND PUBLIC SAFETY INFORMATION:

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2012

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: Any emergency procedures, plans or public safety information made available to the public is provided in an accessible format electronically or in print. HPL will provide communication supports upon request, as soon as practicable.

Planned Action: Maintain compliance with the legislation.

ACCESSIBLE WEBSITES AND WEB CONTENT:

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2014

(Level A)

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2021

(Level AA)

Status: **IN PROGRESS**

Completed Action: HPL's website and web content conform with the Level AA, WCAG 2.0 Guidelines. HPL offers the JAWS program at the Central Library, Red Hill and Turner Park branches. JAWS is a computer program that reads aloud the content of documents and web pages and speaks standard computer functions for someone who is visually impaired. In addition, HPL offers the Aroga Merlin Text Enlarger at the Central Library, Red Hill and Dundas branches which features a brightly lit large screen with adjustable or stationary platform, custom text blocking, use of lines to assist with tracking of text and background colour change options. All public computers have the Ease of Access Center that can be used to set up the accessibility settings and programs available in Windows.

Planned Action: As HPL moves to the Windows10 environment, accessible computer apps will be made available. As part of HPL's ongoing partnership with Apple, accessibility training will also be planned.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2013

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: HPL continues to make information about accessible materials publicly available. Assistive devices and technologies are provided at various branches and information about these services are advertised on the Library website. All branches provide wheelchair accessibility, automatic doors at entrances, accessible checkout stations, computer workstations that are wheelchair accessible, headphone accessibility for all internet workstation, and magnifying sheets and handheld magnifiers.

HPL continues to offer Visiting Library Service (VLS) to homebound individuals, providing access to Library materials that are delivered directly to their homes. HPL is a member of the Centre for Equitable Library Access Partners (CELA) and provides free access to CELA's collections and Daisy audio books. In addition, accessible collections available include audio-described DVDs, books on CD, Braille for Children, Closed Captioned DVDs eAudio Books, eBooks and Large Print Books. HPL has also partnered with Magnusmode, an app that is designed to assist Library members needing more personalized, step-by-step guidance to complete everyday Library activities independently by using photos and simple instructions to guide members through essential activities while at the Library.

Planned Action: Starting in 2021, HPL will begin to remove RFID gates at entrances to Library branches. Where new construction of branches occurs, RFID gates will no longer be incorporated into the design. This will enhance accessibility for all individuals.

O.REG 191/11: EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS

RECRUITMENT: GENERAL

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2014

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: HPL includes the following statement is included in all of our job postings, internal and external;

The Hamilton Public Library is an equal opportunity employer that is committed to inclusive, barrier-free recruitment and selection processes. If contacted for an employment opportunity, please advise Human Resources if you require accommodation.

Planned Action: Maintain compliance with legislation.

RECRUITMENT: ASSESSMENT OR SELECTION PROCESS

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2014

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: HPL includes the following statement is included in all of our recruitment correspondence;

The Hamilton Public Library is an equal opportunity employer that is committed to inclusive, barrier-free recruitment and selection processes. If contacted for an employment opportunity, please advise Human Resources if you require accommodation.

HPL has provided accommodations to applicants in the assessment and selection process when requested, such as by offering additional time to complete assessment tasks.

Planned Action: Maintain compliance with legislation.

RECRUITMENT: NOTICE TO SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2014

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: HPL ensures the following statement is included in all of the Offer Letters;

The Hamilton Public Library is an equal opportunity employer that is committed to inclusive, barrier-free recruitment and selection processes. If contacted for an employment opportunity, please advise Human Resources if you require accommodation.

Planned Action: Ensure ongoing compliance.

INFORMING EMPLOYEES OF SUPPORT:

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2014

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: HPL has a Workplace Accommodation Policy in place which is reviewed every four years by the Senior Leadership Team. The policy available to all employees through our intranet. Upon hire, employees review the Workplace Accommodation Policy as a part of their onboarding.

Planned Action: Maintain compliance with the legislation

ACCESSIBLE FORMATS AND COMMUNICATION SUPPORTS FOR EMPLOYEES:

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2014

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: Upon request, HPL consults with employees with a disability to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for information that is needed to perform the employee's job and information that is generally available to employees in the workplace. The requesting employee is consulted in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

Planned Action: Ensure ongoing compliance.

WORKPLACE EMERGENCY RESPONSE INFORMATION:

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2012

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: Employees who have a disability that requires an individualized emergency response plans are provided with an individualized emergency response plan as soon as practicable after HPL becomes aware of the need for accommodation. In the event of an emergency evacuation if assistance is required, with the employee's consent, HPL will provide the emergency response plan to the person(s) designated to provide assistance to the employee. The emergency response plan is reviewed should the employee be relocated to a different location, when their overall accommodation needs or plans are reviewed, and when HPL reviews its general emergency response policies.

Planned Action: Maintain compliance with the legislation

DOCUMENTED INDIVIDUAL ACCOMMODATION PLANS:

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2014

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: HPL has a documented process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities. The process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans includes:

- How an employee requesting accommodation can participate in the development of the individual accommodation plan.
- The means by which the employee is assessed on an individual basis.
- The manner in which HPL can request an evaluation by an outside medical or other expert, at the employer's expense, to assist in determining if accommodation can be achieved and, if so, how accommodation can be achieved.
- The manner in which the employee can request the participation of a Union representative, where the employee is represented by a bargaining agent, or other representative from the workplace, where the employee is not represented by a bargaining agent, in the development of the accommodation plan.
- The steps taken to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information.
- The frequency with which the individual accommodation plan will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which it will be done.
- If an individual accommodation plan is denied, the manner in which the reasons for the denial will be provided to the employee.
- The means of providing the individual accommodation plan in a format that takes into account the employee's accessibility needs due to disability.

Individual accommodation plans will,

- a) if requested, include any information regarding accessible formats and communications supports provided.
- b) if required, include individualized workplace emergency response information; and
- c) identify any other accommodation that is to be provided.

Planned Action: Maintain compliance with legislation.

RETURN TO WORK PROCESS:

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2014

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: HPL is committed to facilitating the early and safe return to work for employees. HPL's Workplace Accommodation Policy outlines the return-to-work process for employees that have been absence from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodation to return to work. The return-to-work process includes the steps necessary to facilitate the employee's safe return to work, including but not limited to, obtaining required medical documentation, and documented individualized accommodation plans.

Planned Action: Maintain compliance with legislation.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT:

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2014

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: HPL's Performance Management Policy includes a requirement that accommodations be made to support accessibility needs, stating,

"The Library's Performance Management process takes into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, when using its performance management process in respect of employees with disabilities."

Planned Action: Ensure ongoing compliance.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND ADVANCEMENT:

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2014

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: HPL takes accessibility and individual accommodations into consideration when offering and providing career development opportunities. Alternative forms of training will be provided where possible in response to requests for accommodation. Accessibility standards are considered when new training is developed, such as text styles, sizes and colour contrasts and the inclusion of closed captions with audio or video media.

Planned Action: Ensure updates to older training programs incorporate accessibility standards where they weren't included in the past and ensure ongoing compliance.

STAFF REDEPLOYMENT:

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2014

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: HPL will continue to take into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities and individual accommodation plans when re-deploying union and non-union employees with disabilities.

Planned Action: Ensure ongoing compliance.

Ensure ongoing compliance.

O.REG 191/11: DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACE REQUIREMENTS

EXTERIOR PATHS OF TRAVEL

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2017

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: HPL's library facilities are designed and built to comply with the Hamilton Barrier-free Design Guidelines and the Ontario Building Code and will follow any regulations and authorities that have jurisdiction in our service area.

When a major renovation occurs, the construction will incorporate all accessibility features as required as per the Hamilton Barrier-free Design Guidelines and the Ontario Building Code where feasible.

Planned Action: Ensure ongoing compliance.

ACCESSIBLE PARKING

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2017

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: Our facilities incorporate accessible parking spaces as per the municipal site plan approval process as required. Design will comply with all authorities that have jurisdiction.

Planned Action: Continue to plan for and incorporate accessible parking spaces and ensure ongoing compliance.

OBTAINING SERVICES

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2017

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action: All HPL library branches have at least one or more service counters that are accessible to Members with mobility aids. This includes a clear space to approach the service desk which is usable by an individual sitting in a mobility aid.

Most Library branches have a waiting area where individuals using a mobility aid can wait to receive service.

Planned Action: Ensure ongoing compliance

MAINTENANCE

Compliance Date: Jan 1, 2017

Status: **COMPLIANT**

Completed Action:

HPL continues to regularly inspect, monitor and restore spaces and areas of all Library branches. HPL has in place procedures for preventative and emergency maintenance of the accessible elements in public spaces. In the event of a planned service disruption to facilities, notices of the disruption are provided in advance (i.e. elevators, accessible washrooms). The notice includes information about the reason for disruption and the anticipated duration as well as a description of alternative facilities or services. In the event of an unexpected disruption, notice is provided as soon as possible.

HPL relies on contract services for specific maintenance including snow clearing, salting, ramps, and unloading. HPL Library has ongoing contracts to look after weather-related accessible services.

Planned Action: Ensure ongoing compliance

PART 3: FEEDBACK

Hamilton Public Library's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan is available online at hpl.ca

HPL welcomes feedback on our Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and on the accessibility of our services and programs.

Please contact:

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