

Muskoka Lakes Township Public Library  
LIBRARY BOARD POLICY

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| Policy Type: Accessibility                 | Policy Number: ACCESS-01       |
| Policy Title: Accessibility in the Library | Policy Approval Date: 01/16/24 |
| Chairperson: Val Duke                      | Policy Review Date: 01/28      |

### Intent:

The Muskoka Lakes Public Library (herein after referred to as the Library) is committed to providing accessible, equitable, and inclusive access to Library services and facilities. The Library will ensure that each employee, volunteer and user receives equitable treatment with respect to employment and services without discrimination, and receives accommodation where required in a timely manner.

The Library will develop and support a service environment where the needs of persons with disabilities are addressed in accordance with the principles of dignity, respect, equity, and inclusion.

### Regulations:

The Library meets or exceeds the compliance requirements set by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) 2005* and the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) (O.Reg 191/11 as amended by O.Reg 165/16)*.

The Library's implementation of the accessibility legislation will align with the Library's Mission, Vision, and Statement of Values, including the values of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI).

### Definitions

**“Accessible formats”** (also referred to as alternate 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 devices”** are any products, equipment or technological aids used by persons with disabilities that enable a person with a disability to do everyday tasks. Examples include Braille recorders, recording devices, magnifiers, and more.

**“Barrier”** is anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

**“Communication supports”** are tools or devices that facilitate communications for a person with a disability and may include, but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative

communication supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communications.

**“Disability”** as defined in the AODA, 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 co-ordination, 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 a developmental disability,
- (c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- (d) a 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; (“handicap”)

**“Service Animal”** means any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, episodic, intellectual, or a mental health disability. Tasks performed can include, among other things, guiding, pulling a wheelchair, retrieving dropped items, alerting a person to a sound, reminding a person to take medication, or pressing an elevator button.

**“Support Person”** in relation to a person with a disability, is another person who accompanies the individual with a disability in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

## Procedures:

### Responsibilities

The Library acknowledges that accessibility is a shared responsibility between Library users, staff, partners (including the municipality), and the general public.

1. For the purposes of AODA, the Library provides services on behalf of the municipality, and therefore is considered, along with the municipality, to be a designated public sector organization. The Muskoka Lakes Public Library Board (herein after referred to as the Board) formally adopts the Township of Muskoka Lakes’ (herein after referred to as the Township) Accessible Customer Service (C-GG-21) and Integrated Accessibility Standards (C-GG-25) The Library is also included in the Township’s Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.



2. The Board ensures that the Library complies with the spirit, principles, and intent of the AODA and designates the Chief Executive Officer (herein after referred to as the CEO) as the individual accountable for the Library's compliance with legislation.

### **Customer Service**

The Library is committed to supporting the independence and inclusion of persons with disabilities in our community, and in the context of customer service commits to the following:

1. making every reasonable effort to ensure that services and programs are accessible by:
  - a) encouraging the use of personal assistive devices to access Library services and programs;
  - b) providing at least one computer workstation at each location which is equipped with assistive technology and accessibility features;
  - c) where they exist, arranging for the provision of accessible materials, 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);
  - e) supporting the inclusion of support persons or service animals accompanying people with disabilities, by:
    - i. waiving fees for support persons assisting users and when fees are required providing advance notification
    - ii. permitting service animals to assist users. While accessing the Library's premises, the person with a disability is responsible for ensuring their service animal is clearly identified by a vest, harness, or documentation provided by the individual, and that the service animal behaves in a professional manner.
  - f) providing a process for receiving feedback about the manner in which the Library provides services to persons with disabilities, as well as the accessibility of its collections, services, programs and facilities.
  
2. making every reasonable effort to communicate with persons with disabilities in a manner that meets their individual accessibility needs and enables them to use Library services and programs by providing:
  - a) communications in a timely manner, at no additional cost to the individual and in consultation with the person making the request
  - b) communications, upon request, in accessible formats for persons with disabilities and making the public aware of the availability of accessible formats. This applies to communications such as:
    - i. policies,
    - ii. accessibility plans,
    - iii. emergency procedures, plan and public safety information prepared for the public,
    - iv. forms, surveys and other tools used to gather feedback,
    - v. information on collections/materials in accessible format, and
    - vi. employment standards.;
  - c) information on the provision of customer service for people with disabilities and accessible services and programs;

- d) reasonable notification of all interruptions, including the Library’s elevator, that especially relate to the provision of services and programs for people with disabilities;

### **Training**

The Library will provide training to its board members, staff and volunteers on how to provide customer service to people with disabilities and will keep a record of when the training was provided and the individuals who received the training.

### **Related Documents**

*Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*

*Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations*

Township of Muskoka Lakes C-GG-21

Township of Muskoka Lakes C-GG-25

Township of Muskoka Lakes Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

MLPL GF-01 Mission Statement

MLPL GF-02 Vision Statement

MLPL GF-03 Statement of Values

MLPL GF-07 Diversity and Inclusion

