

Policy: Operational - Accessibility

Department: Library

Effective Date: May 2014

Reviewed: September 2022

Next Year of Review: 2024

Purpose

This policy addresses accessibility requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and applicable standards and regulations introduced under the Act.

Policy Statement

Bruce County Public Library remains committed to eliminating barriers to all library goods, services, information and resources for persons with disabilities. All policies, practices and procedures will respect the dignity of persons with disabilities and treat them as customers who are valued and deserving of effective and full service; will ensure them freedom of choice and being able to do things in their own way; will provide integrated services that will allow the full benefit from the same services, in the same place and way as other customers; and will provide equal opportunities to benefit from the Library's goods and services as others do.

Background

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 received Royal Assent on June 13, 2005. This Act applies to public and private sector organizations and mandates the development, implementation, and enforcement of accessibility standards.

Scope

This policy applies to all persons who interact with customers on behalf of the Library, and all persons who participate in developing Bruce County Public Library's policies governing the provision of service to the public. This includes employees, volunteers, students on placement, third parties providing services such as programs, contractors, and Library Board members.

Definitions:

Assistive Device: a technical aid, communication device, or medical aid modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities.

Barrier: as defined by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, means 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.

Disability: as defined by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the Ontario Human Rights Code, is:

- 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 impairment, deafness or hearing impairment, muteness or speech impairment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other 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.

Service Animal: as defined by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if the animal can be readily identified as one that is being used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability, as a result of visual indicators such as the vest or harness worn by the animal; or if the person provides a letter from regulated health professional which includes doctors, nurses, psychologists, audiologists, chiropractors and physiotherapists confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

Support Person: as defined by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) a support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

Operating Principles:

Assistive Devices

A person with a disability may provide their own assistive device for the purpose of obtaining or using Library services.

Exceptions may occur in situations where the Library has determined that the assistive device may pose a risk to the health and safety of the person with a disability or to the health and safety of others on Library premises. In these situations, the Library may offer a person with a disability other reasonable measures to assist him or her in obtaining and using Library services, where the Library has such other measures available.

Accessible Formats

The Library provides a range of collection materials in alternate formats such as large print, audiobooks, close-captioned and described video DVDs, eBooks and eAudiobooks.

The Library is registered with the Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA).

Upon request, Library staff will provide patrons with assistance to retrieve materials.

Accessible Technology

Every library branch provides an accessible public computer station with assistive technologies.

Communication

When communicating with a person with a disability, Library staff will do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability.

Policy documents will be available on the Library's website. When asked, these documents and other information about the Library and its services will be provided in accessible formats or with communication supports.

Feedback Process

Feedback from a member of the public about the delivery of services to persons with disabilities may be given by telephone, in person, in writing, in electronic format or through other methods.

Service Animals

Persons with a disability may enter Library premises accompanied by a service animal and keep the animal with them.

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, Library staff may ask the customer for confirmation of the animal's accreditation.

It is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that his or her service animal is kept in control at all times.

Service Disruptions

In the event of a planned service disruption to facilities, services or systems that are relied upon by persons with disabilities to access Bruce County Public Library goods or services, notice of the disruption shall be provided in advance.

Notice may be given by posting the information in a conspicuous place on library premises, on the library web site or by such other method as is reasonable under the circumstances.

In the event of an unexpected disruption, notice will be provided as soon as possible.

Support Persons

A support person, when assisting a person with a disability to obtain or use Library services, will be permitted to attend Library programs at no charge where an admission fee is applicable.

Training

The Library will ensure that all persons to whom this policy applies receive County training as required by the Integrated Accessibility Standards. The amount and format of training will be dependent on a person's interactions with Library users.

Related Documents:

Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001

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

Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11

Ontario Human Rights Code

Bruce County Accessibility Policy 2017

Bruce County Public Library Collection Development Policy