

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF SPANISH
MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN
Bylaw 2018-33; 'Schedule A'

COMMITMENT

The Town of Spanish 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. We believe in integration and we are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner. We will do so by removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and meeting our accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and Ontario's accessibility laws. This Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines our approach to ensuring that our services are provided in an accessible manner to our employees and the public.

BACKGROUND

Ontario Regulation 429/07 made under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) established accessibility standards for customer service and it applies to every designated public sector organization and to every other person or organization that provides goods or services to members of the public or other third parties and that has at least one employee in Ontario.

OBLIGATIONS

Ontario Regulation 191/11 made under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 requires that municipalities prepare a multi-year accessibility plan (by 2014), which outlines the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under this Regulation. The AODA sets out the roadmap for an accessible Ontario by 2025. It contains standards in the following areas:

- Customer service
- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Transportation
- Built Environment

APPROACH

- Develop and review policies and procedures
- Incorporate accessibility into planning processes
- Continued training for staff
- Engage the public in feedback
- Work to remove barriers to employment
- Continue to make facilities accessible
- Ensure there is access to information and communications

PROCUREMENT

The Town of Spanish will incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, including self-serve kiosks, unless it is not possible or practical. If it is not possible and practical to do so, we will provide an explanation on request.

SELF-SERVICE KIOSKS

The Town of Spanish will incorporate accessibility features and consider accessibility for people with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.

ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE

The Town of Spanish is committed to ensuring that all customers receive services in a timely and accessible manner. Members of the public will receive customer service in a manner that will meet their needs and ensures independence, dignity and equal opportunity. This will be achieved by:

- Reviewing and updating policies to ensure accessible service delivery in consideration of all persons with disabilities
- Including accessibility requirements into staff training and orientation materials and continuing to provide Accessible Customer Service Training to all staff
- Reviewing customer feedback and taking appropriate action

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

Information and communications are an important part of the operations and service provision of the Town of Spanish. They must be created in a way that considers accessibility. The Town will follow best practices when developing, implementing and maintaining information and communications strategies. This will include our website, printed materials as well as face-to-face interactions. We will ensure that information and communications are available and accessible to people with disabilities by:

- Achieving compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines to ensure our website is accessible to people with disabilities
- Having resource materials provided in large print
- Ensuring staff have the knowledge, tools and advise necessary to create accessible materials.

EMPLOYMENT

The Town of Spanish is committed to ensuring that the process of finding, getting and keeping a job is as inclusive as possible in order to build an effective workforce. Staff will receive training

in order to meet compliance under the Integrated Accessibility Regulation. It is expected that training will cover a variety of topics, including:

- Understanding employer obligations to provide employment accommodations
- How to identify and remove barriers in the workplace
- Revising individual work plans and developing a guide, tools and templates to remove barriers from the recruitment process.

TRAINING

The Town of Spanish is committed to training staff and volunteers in Ontario's accessibility laws and aspects of the Ontario Human Rights Code that relate to persons with disabilities.

We will train our employees and volunteers on accessibility as it relates to their specific roles. We will train all persons who participate in developing Town policies, and all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the Town of Spanish.

Every person referred to above shall receive training as soon as practicable and ongoing training will be provided in the event of changes to any of the Town's accessibility policies.

ACCESSIBLE EMERGENCY INFORMATION

The Town of Spanish is committed to providing people with disabilities with publicly available emergency information in an accessible way upon request. We will also provide employees with disabilities with individualized emergency response information when necessary.

TRANSPORTATION

The transportation standard does not apply to the Town of Spanish, as the Town does not have public transit systems.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The Town will strive to ensure that new facilities and extensive renovations are designed and built to accessibility standards.

As they become available, funding applications will be submitted to both the Federal and Provincial levels of government to help address the accessibility issues that the municipality is faced with. The Town will continue to identify any opportunities to enhance accessibility requirements within the community.

REVIEW AND MONITORING OF THE PROCESS

The Town of Spanish is committed to the continual improvement of access to all municipally owned facilities, premises, and services for all those with disabilities and the provision of services to all members of the community with disabilities.

The plan will be reviewed and monitored regularly in order to identify and monitor barriers and the direction in which the Town is moving to remove barriers under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act. Department Heads together with Council will make decisions on which barriers are to be addressed; these recommendations will be based and subject to budget restraints and feasibility. This Municipal Accessibility Plan shall be adopted by Council.

COMMUNICATION OF THE PLAN

This plan will be available on the website as well as at the Town Office. We will make it available for all persons for their review and perusal. Should Braille copies of the plan be requested, Council will try to accommodate by having staff contact the Canadian Institute for the Blind, with respect to translation, if required.

CONCLUSION

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act requires municipalities to prepare an accessibility plan. The Town of Spanish has made accessible progress in its buildings and service delivery over the years. As the community continues to grow the Town will respond to the needs of the community. This plan establishes a benchmark and strategy to become a barrier free community.

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

Bylaw 2018 –33; Schedule ‘B’

1. PURPOSE / BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (the “AODA”) is a Provincial Act with the purpose of developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for persons with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises.

Under the AODA, Ontario Regulation 429/07 entitled “Accessibility Standards for Customer Service” came into force on January 1, 2008. That Regulation establishes standards specific to customer service for public sector organizations and other persons or organizations that provide goods and services to members of the public or other third parties.

This policy is drafted in accordance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 420/07) and addresses the following:

- the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities; • communication with persons with disabilities;
- the use of assistive devices by persons with disabilities;
- the use of service animals by persons with disabilities;
- the use of support persons by persons with disabilities;
- notice of temporary disruption in services and facilities;
- training;
- customer feedback regarding the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities; and
- notice of availability and format of documents.

2. APPLICATION

This policy applies to all persons who deal with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of the Town, whether the person does so as an employee, member of Council, agent, volunteer, student on placement, or otherwise and all persons who participate in developing the Town’s policies, practices and other procedures governing the provision of goods and services to members of the public or other third parties.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Town of Spanish that citizens with disabilities achieve accessibility in the provision of goods and services by the Town to this community, consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity as set out in the regulations of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

4. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

a. The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities

The Town will use reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following principles:

- the Town's goods and services are provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities;
- the provision of the Town's goods and services to persons with disabilities are integrated with those provided to persons who do not have disabilities unless an alternative measure is necessary to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Town's goods or services and,
- persons with disabilities are given an opportunity equal to that of persons without disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from the Town's goods and services.

b. Communication with Persons with Disabilities

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

c. Assistive Devices

The Town of Spanish will ensure that our employees are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by people with disabilities. If a person with a disability requires assistive devices to access goods or services of the Town, they are allowed to use such devices.

d. Guide Dogs, Service Animals

If a person with a disability is accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal, the Town will permit the person to enter the premises with the animal and keep it with him or her, unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law from the premises. If the service animal or guide dog is excluded by law from the premises, the Town will look to other available measures to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Town's goods and services.

e. Support Persons

If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, they are permitted to enter the premises together and are not prevented from having access to each other while on the premises. The Town may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person while on its premises, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises.

f. Disruption of Services

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for individuals with disabilities, the municipality will notify residents promptly. The clearly posted notice will include information about the reason for disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. The notice will be posted in a location wherein it will be easily found.

g. Training

The Town of Spanish will provide training to employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public on their behalf. The training provided shall be appropriate to the duties of the employees, volunteers and other persons; and such training shall be provided as soon as practicable.

Training will include:

- An overview of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard.
- The *Human Rights Code*, as it pertains to persons with disabilities.
- The Municipality's plan related to the customer service standard.
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.
- How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person.
- How to use the assistive devices (e.g. wheelchair lifts, TTY, etc.) available on-site or otherwise that may help with providing goods or services to people with disabilities.
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing the municipality's services.
- Any changes to the policies, on an ongoing basis.

The Town will log and maintain records which will record the details of the training provided, as well as the name of the person, location, and date the training was completed.

h. Feedback Process

Should a member of the public wish to make a complaint regarding the accessible provision of goods or services they have received, they can advise the Town of their complaint or concern by:

- Sending an e-mail outlining the nature of the complaint or concern to the following e-mail address: info@townofspanish.com
- Contacting by telephone the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) or designate responsible for delivering the goods or services for which there is a complaint or comment
- Attending the municipal office and meeting with the CAO or designate responsible for delivering the goods or services for which there is a complaint or comment

A response will be provided to anyone providing a complaint or comment regarding the provision of accessible goods and services, in the same manner as the complaint or comment was received, within 30 days.

If deemed appropriate, a complaint or comment regarding the provision of accessible goods and services may be directed to the CAO for recommendations on how to address the complaint or comment. If the CAO is unable to provide a satisfactory resolution to the complaint, the complainant has the option of presenting the complaint to the Town Council for final disposition.

Notification to the public about the feedback process shall be provided by posting in the main foyer of the municipal office and on the municipal website.

i. Notice of the Availability of Documents

Should the Town be requested to provide a copy of a document to a person with a disability, the Town shall give the person the document, or the information contained in the document, in a format that takes into account, as much as possible, the person's disability.

Material printed in-house and publications produced on behalf of the Town should contain a note indicating "alternate formats are available upon request" and include relevant contact information.

The Town will consult the person requesting the document to determine what an accessible alternate format of the document or information would be, in accordance with the provisions of this policy.

The time frame attached to the conversion process varies depending on the media chosen, the size, complexity, quality of source documents and number of documents to be converted. Documents shall be returned in a timely manner depending on the factors previously noted.

Conversion shall be processed in-house wherever possible. When a member of the public requests a Town's document, or portion thereof, in an alternate format, the department of origin shall be responsible for the cost of the conversion, materials and distribution, not the public requestor.

In-house printing, where possible, should adhere to the CNIB's Clear Print Standards or any subsequent accessible information and communication policies.

Notification to the public about the availability of accessible formats shall be provided by posting in Town's monthly newsletter and on the municipal website.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS/ACCOMMODATION
Bylaw 2018-33; Schedule 'C'

1. PURPOSE/BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This policy is intended to meet the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11 for the Employment Standard set forth under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

2. ACCESSIBLE WORK ENVIRONMENT, GENERAL

The Town will:

- Make reasonable effort to create an overall accessible work environment.
- Create a suitable accessible work environment for an employee with a disability, as soon as practicable after the Town becomes aware of their disability. It is the employees' responsibility to make the Town aware of their disability.
- Consult with the employee to take into account their accessibility needs.

3. RECRUITMENT, ASSESSMENT, SELECTION PROCESS

During a recruitment process, the Town shall notify job applicants, when they are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process that accommodations are available upon request in relation to the materials or processes to be used.

If a selected applicant requests an accommodation, the Town shall consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability.

When making an offer of employment, the Town shall notify the successful applicant of its policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

4. INFORMING EMPLOYEES OF SUPPORTS

The Town will provide the policies and procedures for accommodating employees with disabilities to new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment as part of their employment orientation.

Whenever there is a change to existing policies and procedures for accommodating employees with disabilities, the employee's accessibility needs shall be taken into account.

5. ACCESSIBLE FORMATS AND COMMUNICATION SUPPORTS

Where an employee with a disability so requests it, the Town shall consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for

information that is generally available to employees in the workplace and information that is required to perform the job effectively. The Town shall consult with the employee making the request to determine which accessible format or communication support is suitable.

6. WORKPLACE EMERGENCY RESPONSE INFORMATION

The Town shall provide individualized workplace emergency response information for employees who have a disability if individualized information is necessary and the Town has been made aware of the employee's need for accommodation due to the disability.

If an employee who receives individualized workplace emergency response information requires assistance and with the employee's consent, the Town shall provide this information to a designated person that will assist the employee.

The individualized workplace emergency response information shall be reviewed when the employee moves to a different location in the organization, when the employee's overall accommodation needs or plans are reviewed and when the Town reviews its general emergency response policies.

7. INDIVIDUAL ACCOMMODATION PLANS

The Town shall develop written individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities (Appendix A) that shall include:

- The manner in which the employee can participate in the development of the plan.
- The manner in which the Town can request an evaluation by an outside medical or other expert, at the employer's expense, to determine if and how accommodation can be achieved.
- The steps that will be undertaken 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 shall include any information regarding accessible formats and communication supports that are to be provided, the individualized workplace emergency response information, and any other accommodation that is to be provided, upon request.

Individualized accommodation plans are not required for employees of which the Town has not been made aware of their disability.

8. RETURN TO WORK PROCESS

The Town shall ensure the written return to work process will adequately support employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and who require accommodations to return to work.

The return to work process shall outline the steps the Town will take to facilitate the return to work, including the development of an individual accommodation plan.

The return to work process does not replace or override any other return to work process created by or under any other statute.

9. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT, CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND ADVANCEMENT AND REDEPLOYMENT

The Town will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities and individual accommodation plans in the performance management process, when providing career development and advancement opportunities and when considering redeployment.