



The Corporation of the Town of Thessalon Accessible Procurement of Goods and Services Policy

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA 2005)

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Manager Name: Robert P. MacLean

Title: Clerk-Treasurer

**The Corporation of the
Town of Thessalon**

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Purpose

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 is Provincial legislation that sets out Standards of compliance to ensure that services provided to Ontarians with disabilities are accessible and provided in a manner that uses reasonable efforts consistent with the core principles of:

Dignity – services are provided in a respectful manner consistent with the needs of the individual.

Independence – services for persons with disabilities shall support their independence while respecting their right to safety and personal privacy.

Integration – allow people with disabilities to fully benefit from the same service, in the same place and in a similar way.

Equality of Opportunity – persons with disabilities are given the same opportunity to benefit from the services provided as other clients.

Definitions and Accompanying Policy

Person with a Disability:

The definition of disability under the AODA is the same as the definition of disability in the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Section 2 states that "Disability" 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.

Procuring or Acquiring Goods, Services or Facilities

This section of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation for General Requirements regulates the requirements for procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities.

Requirement as Stated in the Regulation:

- The Government of Ontario, Legislative Assembly and designated public sector organizations shall incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so.
- If the Government of Ontario, Legislative Assembly or a designated public sector organization determines that it is not practicable to incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, it shall provide, upon request, an explanation.

Policy

The Municipality will incorporate accessibility criteria and features into the procurement practices so that goods, services, and facilities are more accessible to people with disabilities, unless it is not practicable to do so.

Accessibility features and criteria must be considered and incorporated where possible. Accessibility features include technical features (e.g. software), and structural features (e.g. physical design, including hardware or product specifications). The Municipality makes decisions on what goods, services, or facilities are procured based on criteria, such as quality, cost and delivery terms.

The Municipality's By-law#2010 for Procurement of Goods and Services Policy has been amended to incorporate these accessibility requirements.

Determining Practicability

Factors relevant to practicability may include:

- availability of accessible goods, services or facilities
- technological compatibility between older products and newer ones being procured

When requested, the Municipality must provide an explanation as to why it did not incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring goods, services, or facilities. The explanation must be provided in an accessible format or appropriate communication supports, if necessary.

This policy is available on The Municipality's website at www.thessalon.ca.

Training

The Integrated Accessibility Standards requires providers to train staff on the requirements of each of the accessibility standards.

Training must include:

- A review of the purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the information and communication standard.
- Information about achieving accessibility by 2025.
- Highlight the General Requirements standard for Procuring or Acquiring Goods, Services or Facilities as it applies to The Municipality.

Policy

The Municipality will ensure that all staff that is involved in the purchase of goods and services is trained as required by the Accessibility Standards for General Requirements. Staff will be trained as needed to perform the duties of their job. Ongoing training to ensure excellence in the way we serve our customers with disabilities will be conducted with “mini” training and awareness as part of our annual accessibility policy reviews. The content of the training will include:

- Overall review to ensure and build on awareness of the purposes of the AODA.
- The specific requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation for General Requirements as it relates to the procurement of goods, services and facilities.

Timeline for Training

Training will be provided as a priority for new hires and included in new employee orientation package, if required as part of the duties of their job. New employees will be required to complete the General Requirements of the Regulation online training module as part of new employee or volunteer orientation, if required as part of the duties of their job.

Ongoing training will be provided to all staff to ensure ongoing learning, development and employee engagement in providing exceptional service to our ratepayers.

Training will also be provided with any change to The Municipality’s policies, procedures and practices governing the provision of services to persons with disabilities.

Training Records

The Municipality will keep records of all training, to include dates and content of training provided to each employee.

Modifications to this and future policies

The Municipality is committed to developing customer service policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

Therefore, any changes made to this policy will consider the needs of people with disabilities.

Any policy of The Municipality that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.