

## Accessibility Policy

The goal of this policy is to ensure that Belleville Public Library meets the standards set by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* ("AODA") and its regulations.

Belleville Public Library welcomes and encourages people with disabilities to use library services. The Library will provide access to library services for people with disabilities in a way that respects their rights to dignity, independence and integration.

The Library will establish policies, practices and procedures which support the accessibility standards established under the AODA on customer service, information and communication, employment and the built environment.

This policy applies to the delivery of operations, services and programs provided by Belleville Public Library.

### **Provision of Services**

In keeping with Belleville Public Library's mandate to provide free and equitable access in a welcoming and supportive environment, the Library will:

- Provide services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities and provides them with an equal opportunity to learn about, use or benefit from library services;
- Integrate services for people with disabilities. The Library understands that equitable access sometimes requires different treatment including separate or specialized services. However, such services will be offered in a way that respects the dignity and full participation of people with disabilities.

### **Training**

The Library will train staff, volunteers and contractors who interact with the public to meet the needs of people with disabilities. This includes the training and documentation requirements in the AODA and its regulations.

### **Feedback Process**

The Library welcomes customer feedback and makes information available to all customers on how to provide feedback. Feedback is accepted by the Library in a variety of formats. Staff assistance is available to support all patrons, including people with disabilities, in providing feedback.

### **Support People**

The Library welcomes people with disabilities and accompanying support people. When admission fees are charged for library programs or services, admission fees will be waived for support people, or advance notice will be given of any admission fees that support people must pay.

### **Service Animals**

The Library welcomes service animals that are needed to assist people with disabilities.

### **Assistive Devices**

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The Library will make reasonable efforts to facilitate the use of assistive devices that enable people with disabilities to use the Library's services. The Library also recognizes that accessibility can be achieved and provided in different ways.

### **Notice of Temporary Service Disruption**

The Library will provide notice of service disruptions which include the reason for the disruption, how long the disruption will last and a description of available alternatives, if any. In the event of an unplanned disruption, notice will be provided as quickly as possible.

### **Definitions**

#### **"Assistive Device"**

An assistive device is a tool, technology or other mechanism that enables a person with a disability to do everyday tasks and activities such as moving, communicating or lifting (examples include, walkers, magnifiers for reading, etc...).

#### **"Barrier"**

A barrier is any policy, practice or procedure, or part of the built environment, that prevents someone with a disability from participating fully in library programs or services because of his or her disability.

#### **"Disability"**

As defined in the AODA, disability can include: a) physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement, b) mental impairment or developmental disability, c) learning disability, d) mental disorder, and e) an injury or disability for which government benefits are received.

#### **"Reasonable Efforts"**

The Customer Service Standard requires organizations to make reasonable efforts to meet the needs of people with disabilities. The Library defines reasonable efforts as providing the best possible service within the context of: available resources, balancing the needs of people with disabilities with others who may encounter barriers to access and with the community at large, the health and safety of Library staff and volunteers, the security of Library property and existing laws and contracts.

**Approved by the Belleville Public Library Board  
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