

REPORT TO THE LIBRARY BOARD

JUNE 26, 2026

SUBJECT: Policy Review – Accessibility Policy

PURPOSE: For Approval

PREPARED BY Staff

PRESENTED BY: Michael Ciccone - CEO

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Library Board approve the revisions to the *Accessibility for Users with Disabilities Policy*.

BACKGROUND:

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) requires organizations to establish policies governing how the organization will meet the requirements outlined in the IASR and ensure compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). Areas covered by the IASR are:

- General Standards
- Information and Communications Standards
- Employment Standards
- Transportation Standards
- Design of Public Spaces Standards
- Customer Service Standards

This Policy is intended to ensure complete alignment with the requirements of the AODA, and consistency with City of London policies, standards and guidelines pertaining to accessibility.

The current policy, a summary of significant revisions, and the revised policy are appended.

NEXT STEPS:

Upon approval, Administration will update the Library's *Accessibility Policy* to incorporate revisions and post online. As part of the Board Policy Revision Cycle, review of this policy is scheduled in June of 2030 unless it is deemed necessary to review sooner.

CURRENT POLICY

ACCESSIBILITY FOR USERS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that the London Public Library (Library) provides accessible Library Services, resources and facilities to persons with Disabilities, and to ensure compliance with the requirements of the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#) (AODA) and consistency with City of London policies, standards and guidelines pertaining to accessibility.

SCOPE:

This Policy governs and supports internal and external services and practices, including, but not limited to, facilities, technology, information and communication, and applies to all Library Staff, Volunteers, Board Members and all persons participating in Library business or activities, including patrons, service providers, and contractors.

DEFINITIONS:

- **Assistive Device:** means a device used to assist persons with Disabilities in carrying out activities.
- **Disability or Disabilities:** means 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, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical coordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, physical reliance on a guide or Service Animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or Assistive Device, an intellectual development Disability, a learning Disability, a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language, a mental disorder, or an injury or Disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the [Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997](#).
- **Library Facility:** means facilities owned and operated, or operated by the Library.
- **Library Services:** means what the Library offers to the public in an effort to meet a defined set of community needs.
- **Persons Who Provide Library Services:** means Board Members, Employees, Volunteers or any other person engaged in the provision of Library Services, and third parties who deal with Library users on the Library's behalf, such as those providing program services or renting Library Facilities for performances and events open to the public.

- **Service Animal:** means any animal used by a person with a Disability for reasons related to the Disability where it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to their Disability; or, where the person provides a letter from a physician, therapist, psychologist, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, optometrist or nurse confirming that they require the animal for reasons relating to their Disability, a valid identification card signed by the Attorney General of Canada, or a certificate of training from a recognized guide dog or Service Animal training school.
- **Support Person:** means a person who accompanies a person with a Disability in order to assist them with communication, mobility, personal care, or medical needs.

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Library is committed to exceptional customer service for all Londoners and is committed to removing barriers to service for persons with Disabilities.

BACKGROUND:

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.

The [Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation 191/11](#) (IASR), effective January 1, 2012 and phased through to 2021, addresses standards related to information and communication, employment, transportation, the built environment, and customer service standards.

COMMITMENT:

The Library is committed to ensuring that compliance with the IASR is achieved according to the effective dates indicated in the legislation. The IASR requires the Library to have in place an up-to-date [Accessibility Plan](#), in which commitments are detailed. Relevant customer service standards and the Library's obligations to uphold those standards are listed below.

Assistive Devices and other Measures that Assist with Accessibility

A person with a Disability may use their own Assistive Device for the purpose of obtaining or using Library Services, Library Facilities, or Library goods unless staff determine 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 in Library Facilities. In these situations, the Library may offer a person with a Disability other measures to assist them in obtaining and using Library Services, where the Library has such other measures available.

It is the responsibility of the person with a Disability to ensure that their Assistive Device is operated in a safe and controlled manner at all times.

- **Availability of Policies**

Library policies will be provided through the Library's website, consistent with the requirements of the AODA.

- **Communications with Persons with Disabilities**

When communicating with a person with a Disability, the Library will do so in a manner that considers the person's Disability.

- **Feedback Related to Goods, Services and Facilities**

Feedback related to goods, Library Services and Library Facilities from a member of the public may be given using the accessible format required by the person with a Disability. Communication supports will be provided upon request.

- **Library Services**

All Library core services in all service locations are accessible by persons with a Disability.

The Library strives to provide services that respect the specific needs of the person with a Disability and in a manner that respects dignity, integration, independence, and provides equal opportunity to access and participation.

- **Temporary Service Disruptions**

In the event of a scheduled service disruption, the Library will notify staff and the public about the reason, length of the disruption and alternative access options through internal and external communication channels at least 48 hours in advance.

In the event of an unplanned disruption, the Library will provide notice as quickly as possible through the Library's internal and external communication channels.

- **Service Animals**

Persons with a Disability may enter Library Facilities accompanied by a Service Animal and keep the Service Animal with them if the public has access to such Library Facilities and the Service Animal is not otherwise excluded by law. If a Service Animal is excluded by law, the Library will ensure that alternate means are available to enable the person with a Disability to obtain, use or benefit from Library Services.

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is a Service Animal (e.g. the animal is wearing a sanctioned vest or harness), Library staff may ask the person for confirmation of the animal's status, as outlined above.

It is the responsibility of the person with a Disability to ensure that their Service Animal is kept in control at all times.

If the use of a Service Animal is prohibited by another law, the Library will explain why the Service Animal is excluded and will have a discussion with the person with a Disability about alternate ways to access goods, Library Services, and Library Facilities.

All standards expressed above apply to staff requiring the support of a Service Animal.

- **Support Persons**

The Library welcome persons with Disabilities and their Support Persons. It may be required for a person with a Disability to be accompanied by a Support Person while on Library Facilities in situations where it is necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with a Disability or the health and safety of others on the Library Facilities.

A Support Person, when assisting a person with a Disability to obtain or use Library Services, will be permitted to attend at no charge where an admission fee is applicable.

- **Training**

The Library will ensure that all persons to whom this Policy applies receive training as required by *AODA*. A record of training will be kept by Human Resources. Training will be provided as part of orientation training for new Board Members, Employees and Volunteers and on a continuing basis as required.

INQUIRIES:

CEO & Chief Librarian
Director, Customer Services and Branch Operations
Director, Human Resources

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

1. The current policy primarily addresses the needs of Library users with disabilities, while the broader, revised policy includes the general IASR requirements, employment practices, service delivery, facilities, technology and communications.
2. The operational details contained in the current policy have been removed in the revised policy which is focused on governance, infrastructure and accountability.
3. The revised policy strengthens the Library's Statement of Commitment to accessibility by emphasizing equity and inclusivity.
4. General structure of the policy has been improved to reflect the standards as grouped in the IASR.
5. The title of the policy has been changed to reflect the broader scope of the policy's content.

REVISED POLICY

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

PURPOSE

To ensure that the London Public Library (Library) provides accessible Library services, resources, employment and facilities to persons with Disabilities in accordance with the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#) (AODA) and consistent with City of London policies, standards and guidelines.

SCOPE

This Policy governs and supports internal and external services and practices, including, but not limited to, facilities, technology, information and communication, employment, and service delivery. This Policy applies to all Library Staff, Volunteers, Board Members and all persons participating in Library business or activities, including patrons, service providers, and contractors.

DEFINITIONS

AODA means the provincial act that's purpose is developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards to achieve accessibility for persons with Disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises.

Assistive Device means a device used to assist persons with Disabilities in carrying out activities.

Disability or Disabilities means 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, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical coordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, physical reliance on a guide or Service Animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or Assistive Device, an intellectual development Disability, a learning Disability, a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language, a mental disorder, or an injury or Disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the [Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997](#).

IASR means the [Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation 191/11](#), a section of AODA which addresses standards related to information and communication, employment, transportation, the built environment, and customer service standards.

Library Facility means facilities owned and/or operated by the Library.

Library Services means services offered to the public by the Library to meet a defined set of community needs.

Persons Who Provide Library Services means Board Members, Employees, Volunteers or any other person engaged in the provision of Library Services, and third parties who deal with Library users on the Library's behalf, such as those providing program services or renting Library Facilities for performances and events open to the public.

Service Animal means any animal used by a person with a Disability for reasons related to the Disability where it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to their Disability; or, where the person provides a letter from a physician, therapist, psychologist, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, optometrist or nurse confirming that they require the animal for reasons relating to their Disability, a valid identification card signed by the Attorney General of Canada, or a certificate of training from a recognized guide dog or Service Animal training school.

Support Person means a person who accompanies a person with a Disability to assist them with communication, mobility, personal care, or medical needs.

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

The Library is committed to providing equitable, inclusive, and barrier-free access to Library Services, facilities, and employment. We are committed to identifying, removing, and preventing barriers for persons with Disabilities. We believe persons with Disabilities should be treated in a way that preserves their dignity and independence, and we will meet their needs in a timely manner. As part of this commitment, the Library will meet its obligations under the AODA and Ontario accessibility laws.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

The Library will:

- Develop, implement, and maintain policies governing how the Library achieves accessibility and meets the requirements of the IASR.
- Establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year Accessibility Plan outlining the Library's strategy to prevent and remove barriers for persons with Disabilities.
- Provide policies in accessible formats upon request and in a timely manner.
- Integrate accessibility criteria into procurement practices, where practicable.
- Provide and keep records of ongoing training to all applicable individuals on AODA, the accessibility standards, the Ontario Human Rights Code as it relates to Disability and accessible service delivery practices.
- Ensure compliance with all applicable IASR standards.

COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION

The Library will:

- Establish processes for receiving and responding to accessibility feedback that are accessible to persons with Disabilities.
- Provide information and communications in accessible formats upon request and in a timely manner and at no cost greater than the regular cost charged to others.
- Ensure any emergency procedures, plans and public safety information is provided in an accessible format as soon as practicable, upon request.
- Ensure its website and web content meet applicable accessibility standards under IASR.
- Make information about the availability of accessible materials, formats, and communication supports publicly available and provide this information in an accessible format, upon request and in a timely manner.
- Ensure communication processes are inclusive and responsive to user needs.

EMPLOYMENT ACCESSIBILITY

The Library is committed to accessible and inclusive employment practices in accordance with IASR as follows:

Recruitment and Hiring

- Notifying applicants that accommodations are available for persons with Disabilities throughout the recruitment process.
- Providing suitable accommodations upon request during recruitment and assessment.
- Informing successful applicants of policies regarding accommodation for persons with Disabilities when making offer of employment.

Workplace Supports

- Informing employees of policies used to support Library employees with Disabilities as soon as practicable after they begin their employment.
- Providing up-to-date, accessible workplace information and policies to employees.
- Ensuring employee information is provided in accessible formats and with necessary communication supports for employees with Disabilities.

Workplace Emergency Response

- Providing individualized workplace emergency response information to employees with Disabilities as soon as practicable after the need for accommodation due to Disability is identified.

Accommodation and Return to Work

- Developing and maintaining individualized accommodation plans for employees with Disabilities.

- Implementing a documented return-to-work process for employees absent due to Disability.

Performance Management and Career Development

- Considering the accessibility needs of an employee with a Disability in performance management, career development, and advancement.
- Providing accommodations to support employee success.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The Library will comply with accessibility requirements related to the design of public spaces as outlined in the IASR and will consider accessibility in facility planning and renovations.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

The Library will provide accessible customer service by:

- Ensuring all Library core services in all service locations are accessible by persons with a Disability.
- Communicating in a manner that considers the individual's disability.
- Providing accessible formats and communication supports upon request and in a timely manner.
- Accepting and responding to feedback in accessible formats.

The Library will ensure services are delivered in a manner that respects dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity.

Assistive Devices

A person with a Disability may use their own Assistive Device to access Library Services and Facilities unless otherwise prohibited due to health and safety risk to themselves or others. In these situations, the Library may offer other measures to assist them in obtaining and using Library Services.

Temporary Service Disruptions

The Library will provide notice of scheduled and unplanned disruptions affecting accessibility, including expected duration, reason for the disruption and alternative access options.

Service Animals

Service animals, as defined in the IASR, are permitted in all areas open to the public, unless otherwise excluded by law. Where excluded, alternative arrangements will be provided.

Support Persons

Support persons are **welcomed** to accompany individuals with **Disabilities**. Where applicable, support persons may attend **fee-based programs or events** at no charge.

Feedback Related to Services and Facilities

Feedback from a member of the public may be given using the accessible format required by the person with a Disability. Communication supports will be provided upon request.

INQUIRIES

CEO & Chief Librarian
Director, Public Service
Director, Human Resources