

	<b>THE CORPORATION OF THE COUNTY OF LAMBTON LAMBTON COUNTY LIBRARY POLICY MANUAL</b>			
	Subject:	<b>Accessibility Policy</b>	<b>Section A24</b>	<b>Index #01</b>
	Effective Date:	October 4, 2023	Approved By: Lambton County Council	
	Revision Date:	September 6, 2023		
	Drafted on:	August 2, 2023		

**PURPOSE**

This policy ensures that Lambton County Library meets or exceeds the compliance requirements set by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) 2005 and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) (O.Reg 191/11 as amended by O.Reg 165/16).

Lambton County Library’s implementation of the accessibility legislation is in alignment with the County of Lambton Cultural Services Division’s strategic plan, and aligns with the Library’s values of equity, diversity and inclusion. Lambton County Library acknowledges that accessibility is a shared responsibility between Library patrons, staff, partners, lower-tier municipalities and the general public.

**POLICY**

This policy addresses the requirement for public libraries to serve all people in the community and ensures accessibility is incorporated into the Library’s physical structures and its programs and services.

**RESPONSIBILITY**

The responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with the Manager, Library Services.

**DEFINITIONS**

**“Accessible formats”** – may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, braille and other formats used by persons with disabilities. Also referred to as alternate formats.

**“Assistive devices”** – any products, equipment or technological aids used by persons

with disabilities that enable a person with a disability to do everyday tasks. Examples include Braille recorders, recording devices, magnifiers and more.

**“Barrier”** – anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of their disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

**“Communications supports”** – tools or devices that facilitate communications for a person with a disability that may include but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communications.

**“Disability”** – as defined in the AODA 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.

**“Service Animal”** – means any animal that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, episodic, intellectual, or a mental health disability. Tasks performed can include, among other things, guiding, pulling a wheelchair, retrieving dropped items, alerting a person to a sound, reminding a person to take medication, or pressing an elevator button.

**“Support Person”** – another person who accompanies the individual with a disability in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, or medical needs or with access to goods or services.

## REGULATIONS

1. Lambton County Library is committed to providing accessible, equitable and inclusive access to library services and facilities. The Library will ensure that each employee, volunteer and patron receives equitable treatment with respect to employment and services without discrimination and receives accommodation where required in a timely manner, and in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code and the ADOA and its regulations.
2. Lambton County Library will develop and support a service environment where the needs of persons with disabilities are addressed in accordance with the principles of dignity, respect, equity and inclusion.

3. Lambton County Library will adhere to requirements set forth in the County of Lambton Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy (L11.04).
4. For the purposes of the AODA, the library provides services on behalf of the municipality and therefore is considered, along with the municipality, to be a designated public sector organization that is a “large organization” [...] with 50 or more employees in Ontario, other than the Government of Ontario, the Legislative Assembly or a designated public sector organization” as defined within the O.Reg. 191/11. The Library complies with the obligations for this sector as set out in the AODA regulations.
5. Lambton County Council, as the Library’s Board, ensures that the Library complies with the spirit, principles, and intent of the AODA and designates the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) as the individual accountable for the organization’s compliance with legislation.
6. The CAO will ensure that policies, procedures and training comply with the AODA and any regulations made under the AODA.
7. The Library will adopt the multi-year Accessibility Plans authored by the County of Lambton and lower-tier municipalities that outline the Library’s strategy to identify, prevent, and remove systemic accessibility barriers and meet its legislated compliance requirements under the IASR.
8. The plan will be posted on the Library’s website in an accessible format and be provided in accessible formats upon request.
9. Lambton County Library will ensure that accessibility is incorporated into its Internet and Computer Services Policy (A04.01), Training Policy (H12.01), Collection Development Policy (R02.03), and Programming Policy (R06.01). Accessibility provisions will be incorporated into communications tools including the Library’s website, and in its training programs.
10. Lambton County Library will make every reasonable effort to ensure that its services and programs are accessible by:
  - a. Encouraging the use of personal assistive devices to access library services and programs.
  - b. Providing at least one computer workstation at each library which is equipped with assistive technology and a range of accessibility features.
  - c. Arranging for the provision of accessible materials where they exist which may include archival materials and special collections.
  - d. Providing a library website with content that will meet or exceed World Wide Web consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).
  - e. Supporting the inclusion of support persons or service animals accompanying people with disabilities, such as by waiving fees for support persons assisting users and when fees are required, providing advance notification and permitting service animals to assist users and providing alternative accommodation in situations where a service animal is excluded from the premises by law. While using the Library’s premises, the person with a disability is responsible for ensuring their service animal is clearly identified by a vest, harness, or documentation provided by the individual, and that the service animal behaves in a professional manner. Section 80.45(3) of 191/11 *Integrated Accessibility Standards* defines a

service animal.

11. The Library will make every effort to communicate with users in a manner that enables the use of services and programs by providing:
  - a. Its Accessibility Policy in alternative formats upon request.
  - b. Information on the provision of customer service for people with disabilities and accessible services and programs.
  - c. Reasonable notification of all interruptions that especially relate to the provision of services and programs for people with disabilities such as the Library's elevator.
  - d. A process for receiving feedback about the manner in which the Library provides services to persons with disabilities.
12. The Library will provide training to its board members, staff and volunteers on how to provide customer service to people with disabilities and will keep a record of when the training was provided and the individuals who received the training.
13. The Library shall make its communications available, upon request, in accessible formats for persons with disabilities and make the public aware of the availability of accessible formats. This applies to communications such as:
  - a. Policies.
  - b. Accessibility plans.
  - c. Emergency Procedures, plan and public safety information prepared for the public.
  - d. Forms, surveys and other tools used to gather feedback.
  - e. Information on collections / materials in accessible format.
  - f. Employment standards.
14. Accessible formats of the Library's communications shall be made available:
  - a. In a timely manner.
  - b. At no additional cost to the individual.
  - c. In consultation with the person making the request.
15. In the event of a scheduled service disruption that will impact persons with disabilities in accessing the Library, notice of the planned disruption will be provided at least 48 hours in advance. The notice will include the reason for the disruption, anticipated length of the disruption and a description of alternate accommodations (if any). In the event of an unplanned service disruption, notice will be provided as quickly as possible.
16. The Library welcomes feedback from persons with disabilities on the accessibility of its collections, services, programs and facilities. The Library will strive to communicate with persons with disabilities in a manner that meets their individual accessibility needs.

## **ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

County of Lambton Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy (L11.04)

Integrated Accessibility Standards

Lambton County Library Internet and Computer Services Policy (A04.01)

Lambton County Library Training Policy (H12.01)

Lambton County Library Collection Development Policy (R02.03)

Lambton County Library Programming Policy (R06.01)

**POLICY HISTORY**

<b>REVISION</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>PREPARED BY</b>
Reviewed/Created	August 2, 2023	Manager, Library Services