AURORA PUBLIC LIBRARY

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

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1. **PURPOSE**

Aurora Public Library is committed to providing services that are accessible, respectful and inclusive to all persons who wish to obtain and use Library services. This policy provides a framework for compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and addresses specific areas required by the Integrated Accessibility Standards regulation associated with the AODA.

2. **SCOPE**

The Accessibility Policy applies to all persons who provide library services including employees, volunteers and all other persons who provide goods, programs, services or facilities on behalf of the Library.

3. **FACILITY**

Aurora Public Library is a tenant in a facility owned by the Town of Aurora. The Library works closely with the Town to ensure that all customers, including those with accessibility requirements, are provided with a welcoming and supportive environment.

All internal construction projects and renovations undertaken by the Library will comply with Ontario Building Code requirements, AODA Design of Public Spaces Standards and Town of Aurora Accessibility Design Standards.

In the event of new construction or significant building renovations undertaken by the Town of Aurora, the Library will work with the Town to reduce barriers and build a universally-designed and accessible facility for residents, visitors and employees.

4. **ACCESSIBILITY PLAN AND REPORT**

The Town of Aurora includes the Library in its multi-year Accessibility Plan Report. The Library will provide input on strategies and initiatives to reach the goal of creating an accessible organization. The Library will also provide the Town's Accessibility Adviser documentation of staff who have received and completed AODA training.

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5.   SERVICES

Aurora Public Library provides equal and inclusive access to information services via telephone, email and chat as well as through remote access to the library catalogue and electronic resources through the Library's website and apps.

The Library provides a Visiting Library Service to people with disabilities who are homebound and who have no alternative means of obtaining library materials. This service is offered to residents of Aurora, subject to a qualifying interview and the availability of volunteers at no additional cost.

6.   COLLECTIONS

Aurora Public Library develops and maintains accessible collections in a variety of formats in accordance with the Collection Development Policy.

Collections also include materials with information on the spectrum of disabilities, disability issues and services for people with disabilities.

The Library partners with other organizations to provide further access to diverse collections either directly or through Interlibrary Loan.

7.   ADAPTIVE TECHNOLOGIES

The Library provides adaptive technologies in order to remove or diminish barriers to information and services. Assistance in using adaptive technologies is provided by library staff; in-depth instruction is not.

8.   ASSISTIVE DEVICES

Persons with a disability may provide their own assistive device to carry out activities or to access library services. It is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that their assistive device is used in a safe and controlled manner.

9.   PROGRAMS, EVENTS AND MEETINGS

The Library will make every reasonable effort to ensure programs, events and meetings are accessible and compliant with the AODA so that persons with disabilities can participate in the experiences available to persons without disabilities.

Advance notice of accommodations is appreciated.

10.   SUPPORT PERSONS

A support person may accompany a person with a disability to assist with communication, mobility or medical needs. A support person, when assisting a person with a disability, will be permitted to attend library programs at no charge when an admission fee is applicable.

A person with a disability may provide their library card to a support person for use on their behalf.

The Library may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises. Before making a decision, the Library will consult with the person/family to understand their needs and consider health or safety reasons to protect the individual or others on the premises.

10.   SERVICE ANIMALS

A service animal refers to an animal used by a person for reasons relating to their disability. Persons entering the Library may be accompanied by a service animal. Persons training service animals are also welcome in the facility.

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, staff may request confirmation of the animal's status.

It is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that their service animal is always kept under control.

11.   INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

The Library will provide access to or arrange for access to accessible materials where they exist and will provide publicity and reports in alternate formats upon request. These will be provided in a timely manner and at a cost not exceeding the regular cost to other persons.

Print and online communications will be compliant with the requirements of the AODA.

The Library will ensure the website and web content is accessible according to current World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)

When interacting with persons with disabilities, staff will communicate in a respectful manner that takes into account the person's disability.

12.   TEMPORARY SERVICE DISRUPTIONS

The Library will make reasonable effort to provide notice of planned or unplanned disruption of library services to the public, including information about the reason for the disruption and its anticipated duration. In the case of unplanned disruption, advance notice will not be possible.

Notice will be given to the public by posting the information at a conspicuous place on the affected premise and by posting a notice on the website and by such other method as is reasonable in the circumstances.

13.   EMERGENCY INFORMATION

The Library will make all reasonable efforts to provide emergency procedures in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports upon request and in a timely manner.

14.   FEEDBACK ON SERVICES

Aurora Public Library will have in place a procedure for receiving and responding to feedback from persons with disabilities so that it may identify areas that require change and to encourage continued service improvements. Such feedback from a member of the public may be given by telephone, in person, in writing, in electronic format or through other accessible methods.

15.   ACCESSIBLE WORKSPACE

The requirements found in this section only apply to paid employees of Aurora Public Library. They do not apply to volunteers.

15.1 **Recruitment**
Aurora Public Library will provide written notification to employees and the public of the availability of accommodations for persons with disabilities, upon request and throughout the hiring process, including:

- All employment postings
- Upon participation in the interview process
- When an offer of employment is made

When arranging for the provisions of accommodations, the Library will consult with the applicant to determine their accessibility needs.

15.2 **Informing Employee of Supports**
The Library will familiarize current employees with its policy relating to the support of employees with disabilities and will provide this information to new employees as soon as practical after they begin their employment.

Updated information will be provided whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of accommodation.

15.3 **Accessible Formats and Communication Supports**
Upon request, the Library will consult with the employee to provide accessible formats and communication supports needed to perform the employee's job as well as information that is generally available to employees in the workplace.

15.4 **Workplace Emergency Response Information**
When an employee has a disability and the Library is aware of their need for accommodation, an emergency response plan will be developed for the employee. This will be done as soon as possible after the Library becomes aware of the need for the accommodation.

15.5 **Return to Work Process**
The Library will have a return-to-work process for employees who have been absent due to a disability and require workplace accommodations. The process will document the steps the Library will take to facilitate the employee's return to work and include an individual accommodation plan.

15.6 **Performance Management, Career Development and Redeployment**
The Library will take into consideration the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities and individualized accommodation plans of employees with disabilities when providing career development and advancement opportunities, performance management and redeployment.

16.   TRAINING

Library employees and volunteers will receive training on the requirements of the AODA and Human Rights Code as applicable to persons with disabilities as part of the new employee orientation or volunteer program. The training provided will be appropriate to the duties of the employee or volunteer.

Ongoing training will be provided in the event of any change to the Library's policies or procedures, or revisions to the AODA legislation.

Third parties or contractors must provide the Library with documentation that they have completed AODA training in customer service prior to the commencement of work.

The Library will maintain records of the training provided, including the date and names of individuals who have received the training.

Related Policies

1. Collection Development Policy
2. Complaint Handling Policy
3. Volunteer Policy

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