



**Policies and Procedures Governing the
Provision of Election Information and
Services to Persons with Disabilities**

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1. INTRODUCTION

The City Clerk is responsible for the proper legislative and administrative conduct of municipal elections in the City of Oshawa. In accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, the City Clerk is authorized to establish procedures and provide appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities have the opportunity to participate fully in the 2010 Municipal Elections. Accordingly, the 2010 Municipal Elections will be conducted in such a manner to ensure that:

1. Candidates and electors with disabilities have full and equal access to all election information and services.
2. Persons with disabilities have full access to Voting Places.
3. Persons with disabilities are able to independently and privately mark their ballot and have access to alternative methods of voting assistance.

Following the election, the City Clerk will submit a report to Council concerning the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities.

2. STAFF TRAINING AND ELECTION ASSISTANCE

Staff Training

All staff carrying out election duties will be trained to recognize and ensure that persons with disabilities are served in a way that accommodates their needs. Training will include:

1. How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disability.
2. How to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices or require the assistance of a service animal or support person.
3. How to use voting equipment and assistive devices to deliver election services.
4. What to do if a person is having difficulty accessing election information or services.

Provision of Election Information

Candidates and electors with disabilities will be able to receive information and copies of election documents in a format that takes into account their disability. The format may be agreed upon between the requester and the City Clerk. Notice of this provision is located on the City's Election Website at www.oshawa.ca/election and is included in election notices placed in the local media. In addition, candidates with disabilities may access the election information on the City's election website using technologies such as screen readers.

Notice of Temporary Service Disruption

If there is a temporary disruption in the delivery of election information or services, City Clerk Services shall provide public notice on the City's election website, at the physical site of the disruption and when possible in the local media. The notice shall include the reason for the disruption, anticipated duration and a description of alternative methods of delivering the information or service. Every effort shall be made to provide alternative methods of providing the information or service to persons with disabilities.

Staff Assistance

City Clerk Services staff are available to assist with any issues that may arise with respect to providing a barrier-free election and can be reached by way of the contact information provided below:

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 1. Telephone | (905) 436-3311 |
| 2. In Person | City Clerk Services, 5 th Floor Rundle Tower
50 Centre Street South, Oshawa |
| 3. Fax | (905) 436-5697 |
| 4. TTY | (905) 436-5627 |
| 5. Email | clerks@oshawa.ca |
| 6. Mail | City Clerk Services, 5 th Floor Rundle Tower
50 Centre St. S., Oshawa, ON L1H 3Z7 |

In addition the following members of our election staff can be contacted directly for assistance:

Percy Luther, Manager, Records Information Systems
905-436-5636, Ext. 2226, **E-mail: pluther@oshawa.ca**

Marlou Foster, Records Clerk
905-436-5636, Ext. 2509, **E-mail: mfoster@oshawa.ca**

Mary Medeiros, Manager, Support Services
905-436-5636, Ext. 2239, **E-mail: mmedeiros@oshawa.ca**

Sandra Kranc, City Clerk
905-436-5636, Ext. 2230, **E-mail: skranc@oshawa.ca**

3. ASSISTANCE TO CANDIDATES

Service Animals

Candidates and scrutineers are permitted to be accompanied by a service animal at all Voting Places and other designated election locations.

Campaign Expenses

Expenses that are incurred by a candidate with a disability that are directly related to the disability, and would not have been incurred but for the election to which the expenses relate are excluded from the permitted spending limit for the candidate.

4. ASSISTANCE TO ELECTORS

Voting by Proxy

A person with a disability that is homebound or otherwise unable to go to a Voting Place may appoint another person to act as a voting proxy to cast a ballot on his or her behalf. The appointment must be made on the prescribed form available at City Clerk Services and on the City's Election Website. The person being appointed as a proxy will be required to take a statutory declaration before a Commissioner of Oaths. City Clerk Services

staff can administer this oath (5th Floor, Rundle Tower, 50 Centre Street South). Once completed, the voting proxy may be exercised at any advance voting location or on Voting Day. On Voting Day the proxy must be exercised at the poll of the person for whom the proxy is voting. The appointment of a proxy may only be made after 2:00 p.m. on Nomination Day, September 10, 2010 and does not remain in force after Voting Day.

Voting Locations

A site map of all advance voting and voting day locations will be available on the City's election website at www.oshawa.ca/election. Using the site map, persons with disabilities can determine where to park and enter the voting location. The site map will also include information such as the nearest transit stop and the location of transit curb cuts.

Transit to the Voting Location

Proximity of the voting location to accessible public transit routes shall be considered in selection of voting locations, however, the location may not necessarily be located on the same street as the transit stop. Identification of the voting location shall be clearly visible from the street level.

Parking

Designated or reserved parking for people with disabilities and seniors is to be provided close to the entrance of the Voting Place where possible. Accessible parking spaces will be clearly posted and easy to see from the road and marked with the international Symbol of Accessibility. An increase in the usual parking limits for people with disabilities will be requested where possible. Curb cuts will be identified so users of mobility aids (such as wheelchairs, scooters, canes, or crutches) can access the road and sidewalk. Routine checks of routes to the entrance of the Voting Place will be made throughout the day.

Service Animals

Electors requiring service animals are permitted to be accompanied by a service animal at all voting locations.

Entrance to the Voting Place

Where the Voting Place has steps up to the entrance, ramps with handrails will be provided to assist people using mobility aids or who have mobility impairments. The slope of the ramp will conform to the barrier-free design requirements of the Ontario Building Code or the Canadian Standards Association Barrier-Free Guidelines. If the ramp is temporary, it will be securely attached to the steps so it cannot slip or wobble. Where the main entrance to the voting station is inaccessible, another entry point that is accessible will be used. Where possible the accessible entrance is to be used as the main entrance for everyone.

The entrance for people with disabilities will be clearly sign-posted, using the International Symbol of Accessibility. Every effort shall be made to ensure that the door into the Voting Place is wide enough for a wheelchair or scooter to pass through easily. The door hardware is to be accessible and operated by a person using a closed fist. If the doors are heavy, awkward to open or have handles that are out of reach, where possible they will be propped open in a safe manner or an alternative entrance provided.

Interior Voting Area

Access to the interior voting area and voting booth shall be level and easily traversed. Any doormats or carpeting shall be level with the floor to prevent potential tripping hazards. All voting areas are to be well lit and seating made available.

Accessible Voting Booths

Accessible voting booths will be available at each Voting Place. Voting booths will be low in height and have a wide area to allow for individuals who use a wheelchair or scooter to vote independently and secretively. A large print Notice of Ballot shall be displayed in close proximity to the voting booth. Magnifying sheets will be made available to assist any individual with low vision.

Accessible Voting Technologies – Advance Voting

Advance voting locations will be equipped with a ballot marking device for voters with disabilities. The Ballot Marker Device produces a human and machine readable marked paper ballot from a blank sheet of paper, completely indistinguishable from a paper ballot marked by hand. The voter uses headphones to hear the ballot presentation and a handheld controller device to control the voting session and select votes. The controller can also be operated by assistive devices such as sip and puff and paddles, for voters who are unable to use their hands to press the selection buttons.



Accessible Voting Handheld Controller, with Braille labels and buttons of different colours and shapes for visually-impaired voters

When a voter wishes to use the accessible voting feature, the poll worker positions the voter behind privacy screens near the tabulator equipped with the ballot marking device. The poll worker then inserts a blank sheet of ballot paper into the printer slot of the device and provides the voter with the headphones and the handheld controller. The poll worker then keys in the ballot ID number on the tabulator.

The voter hears the audio ballot and uses the controller to adjust volume, speed of the audio presentation, move between contests, and select votes. The audio presentation will confirm votes selected for voter verification. When the voter has made and confirmed all their vote selections they use the handheld controller to print their actual paper ballot. The printer device will automatically process the blank sheet of paper, printing the full ballot on the sheet complete with the vote markings selected by the voter.

The printed ballot is indistinguishable from a ballot marked by hand because the unit has a library of random handmade marking images which

it prints on the ballot, so that the printed markings look just like marks made by hand with a pen. This feature ensures that if the paper ballots are later reviewed by election officials, they will not be able to determine which ballots were made by the Ballot Marker Device, thereby maintaining voter privacy.

The paper ballot printed by the Ballot Marker Device will emerge from the unit hidden under a covering and will be placed in a secrecy folder. The voter, or poll worker if requested by the voter, will then insert the ballot into the scanner component of the tabulator. The scanner can be configured to perform a second independent review of the ballot, by interpreting the vote markings and playing them back over the headphones for voter confirmation. This allows the voter to ensure that the paper ballot generated by the Ballot Marker Device is correctly marked with the votes they selected. The voter can use the handheld controller to cast the ballot or return for further review.

While an accessible voting session is in process, the tabulator can simultaneously process paper ballots inserted by regular voters, allowing the single tabulator to handle both voting channels and maintain the flow of voters.

Accessible Voting Technologies – Voting Day

On Voting Day a Voting Place will be located at City Hall specifically designated for persons with disabilities. The same ballot marking device and tabulator used at the Advance Voting Places will be used at the Voting Place located at City Hall. When the voter has completed his or her ballot, the ballot will be inserted into the scanner component of the tabulator and processed. When results are tabulated at the close of the poll on Voting Day, the results from all Advance Voting Places and the Voting Place located at City Hall will be consolidated and reported as one total. In this way the results from the City Hall Voting Place can not be identified separately and disclose how persons with disabilities voted on Voting Day.

Voting Assistance

Persons with disabilities may be accompanied by a support person within the Voting Place. In addition, the Deputy Returning Officer in each Voting Place can assist the voter in casting their vote. Prior to entering the voting

booth, the Deputy Returning Officer shall, in conjunction with the person with the disability, determine the extent to which they need assistance and the best way in which this assistance can be provided. This may include actually marking the ballot as directed by the person with the disability. Where a Voting Place is located in an institution or retirement home, the Deputy Returning Officer can attend on voters in their specific living areas or at their bedside to assist them to vote. All Deputy Returning Officers are sworn to an oath of secrecy.

5. FEEDBACK PROCESS

Feedback about the manner in which election services are provided to persons with disabilities may be submitted to City Clerk Services through a variety of methods including:

1. Telephone (905) 436-3311
2. In Person City Clerk Services, 5th Floor Rundle Tower
50 Centre Street South, Oshawa
3. Fax (905) 436-5697
4. TTY (905) 436-5627
5. Email clerks@oshawa.ca
6. Mail City Clerk Services, 5th Floor Rundle Tower
50 Centre St. S., Oshawa, ON L1H 3Z7
7. Website www.oshawa.ca/service

The Service Oshawa Feedback and Request Form located on the Service Oshawa website at www.oshawa.ca/service can be completed by persons with disabilities. This form will be forwarded to City Clerk Services for action. In addition, staff working in City facilities can complete the feedback form and submit the feedback on behalf of the persons with a disability. Alternatively, the form may be printed and provided to the person for manual completion. Manually completed forms are date stamped and forwarded to City Clerk Services via inter-office mail. Each completed form is reviewed by City staff who will respond to the candidate or elector directly within two business days providing an anticipated action and timeframe for a full response where appropriate.

Notification of this process will be printed and displayed at Service Oshawa, City Clerk Services and on the City's election website (www.oshawa.ca/election). Alternate notice formats are also available upon request to City Clerk Services.

The feedback process provides election staff with an opportunity to take corrective measures to prevent similar recurrences, address training needs, enhance service delivery and provide alternative methods of providing election services.

6. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

City of Oshawa – City Clerk Services

City Clerk Services is located at City Hall on the 5th Floor, Rundle Tower, 50 Centre Street South, Oshawa. City Clerk Services staff can answer any questions you may have about running for office, the election in general or specific provisions for those persons with disabilities. See Section 2 for additional contact information.

City of Oshawa - Election Website

The City of Oshawa's Election Website is continuously updated to reflect the most recent developments and information. Visit the site for an up-to-date list of candidates and other important messages or events throughout the election year at www.oshawa.ca/election

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing - Election Website

This website contains information about municipal elections, the Province of Ontario 2010 Municipal Elections Candidates Guide and the Ministry's commitment to promote greater accessibility for voters and candidates with disabilities www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page219.aspx.

Ministry of Community and Social Services

The Ministry of Community and Social Services has developed several quick reference guides with respect to the overall management of an accessible election campaign. For more information candidates can visit: <http://www.mcscs.gov.on.ca/en/mcscs/programs/accessibility>

Service Ontario – e-Laws

This website contains all current statutes including the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, www.e-laws.gov.on.ca

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