

Provision of Accessible Formats Policy & Procedure

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to establish a corporate-wide approach for providing City documentation in accessible formats upon request.

The objectives are to:

- ensure the delivery of information for people of all abilities; and,
- establish the City of Oshawa's commitment for carrying out their roles and responsibilities as required by legislation.

2. References

- *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, (AODA) 2005*
- Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation – O. Reg. 191/11;
- Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, O. Reg. 429/07
- *Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990*
- Oshawa Community Strategic Plan 2013-2018 – Social Equity Goal: Ensure an inclusive, healthy and safe community;
- City of Oshawa - Customer Service Standards – Ensuring Exceptional & Accessible Customer Service
- City of Oshawa Customer Service Strategy – 2006 – Goal 3 – Information and Technology Access/Process Documentation and Streamlining;
- City of Oshawa Accessibility Policy; and
- City of Oshawa Accessible Document and Website Standards

3. Definitions

Information includes data, facts and knowledge that exists in any format, including text, audio, digital or images, and that conveys meaning (“information”).

Accessible formats may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

Documentation includes, but is not limited to, marketing publications, brochures, flyers, minutes, agendas, reports, correspondence and forms.

Unconvertible information and communication includes information and communication that is not technically feasible to convert or the technology to convert the information or communications is not readily available.

4. Application

This policy and procedure applies to City employees, volunteers and other persons or agents that provide goods, services or facilities to the public or third parties on behalf of the City of Oshawa in accordance with the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (Ontario Regulation 191/11)* made under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

These requirements apply to information and communications produced by the City of Oshawa for release to the public whether produced in house or on behalf of the City (e.g. consultant reports). It does not apply to unconvertible information and information that the City does not control directly or indirectly through a contractual relationship.

For the purposes of this policy and procedure, any reference to “staff” also applies to City volunteers and agents.

5. Responsibilities

Management is responsible for:

- i. ensuring the implementation and adherence of this policy;
- ii. ensuring that all employees, volunteers and agents are provided information about the rights and obligations of the City with respect to accessible formats, pursuant to the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*; and
- iii. making every effort to provide services that best meet the requirements of the requestor.

Employees, volunteers, agents and members of the public who require accessible formats for their own use are responsible for:

- i. identifying as soon as possible any accessible format needs that relate to their ability to perform job duties, participate fully in the workplace or comprehend corporate documents; and
- ii. completing a City of Oshawa “Request for Accessible Formats” form (Appendix 1) to request accessible corporate information.

Employees responding to a request for an accessible format are responsible for:

- i. providing, and, if applicable, assisting with the completion of a City of Oshawa “Request for Accessible Formats” form (Appendix 1);
- ii. responding to a request within two (2) business days to advise the customer of the process and next steps; and
- iii. making every effort to provide services that best meet the requirements of the requestor.

6. Procedure

6.1 Notification

Notification includes:

- the City's internet and intranet (accessibility main pages) will announce the availability of accessible formats and communication supports upon request and will direct inquiries to the "Request for Accessible Formats" form;
- signage at public service counters will advise about the availability of accessible formats upon request and "Request for Accessible Formats" forms will be available at the service counters to be completed with the assistance of staff, as required;

the phrase "If this information is required in an accessible format, please contact Service Oshawa. Tel: 905-436-3311; TTY: 905-436-5627; email: service@oshawa.ca." In terms of placement, ideally the statement should be located wherever the City contact information is located on marketing publications.

- on public meeting agendas (i.e. Council, Committee, Planning Act public meetings), the following information shall appear on the cover page "The City of Oshawa is committed to providing services as set out in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*. If you have accessibility needs and require alternate formats or other accommodations please contact [add staff member name, email address and telephone number, including TTY number]. Please provide a minimum of one business day notice in advance of the meeting if accommodation is required."

6.2 Processing Requests

Requests for an accessible format will be received by staff in the following manner:

- telephone (905) 436-3311 or 1 (800) 667-4292
- in Person at most City facilities
- fax (905) 436-5642
- TTY (905) 436-5627
- email service@oshawa.ca
- website www.oshawa.ca/accessibility
- mail Service Oshawa, 50 Centre St. S., Oshawa, ON L1H 3Z7.

Upon receipt of a request for an accessible format:

- a "Request for Accessible Format" form will be completed by the requestor and/or with staff member assistance, if required. The staff member will then forward the completed form to the Director of the City branch where the information originated from or, if it is unclear, to Service Oshawa for further action;

- staff from the branch of the original information will then consult with the person requiring accessible format to clarify their needs (e.g. is the entire document or one section required in large print?) and will make arrangements to provide the accessible format in a timely manner and in a format that takes the requestor's disability into account.
- the City will endeavor to accommodate accessible format requests and if it is not feasible, as confirmed by management, other alternate methods of providing the information shall be explored that will meet the needs of the person with a disability and the City.
- if it is determined that information is unconvertible as confirmed by management, the staff will provide the requestor seeking the information with:
 - i. an explanation as to why the information is unconvertible; and
 - ii. a summary of the unconvertible information or communication.

The Accessibility Policy Advisor is available for consultation to help determine if information can be converted.

6.3 *Timeframe*

The timeframe for the completing the conversion of a document into an accessible format may vary depending on the format requested, the size, complexity, quality of source documents and the quantity of documents to be converted. Accessible formats shall be provided in a timely manner depending on the factors previously mentioned but generally not more than one (1) month.

If the document being requested is the subject of public consultation or has a set timeframe for public comment, the timeframe for document conversion and distribution must be taken into consideration.

6.4 *Cost of Conversion*

When a request for an accessible format is received, the cost of providing this information to the member of the public can be no more than the regular cost charged to other persons. The branch of origin is responsible for the cost of conversion, materials and distribution of the information.