Innisfil Public Library Board

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2017-2021 (5 Year Plan)
Second Edition

Introduction:

The Innisfil Public Library Board is committed to equity, inclusion and accessibility and in fulfilling all obligations under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2005.

In the development of this Multi-year Plan, the Board commits to the following:

- To post the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan on the Library's website and provide the plan in an accessible format upon request;
- To review and update the Accessibility Plan at least once every five (5) years;
- To review the Multi-Year Plan with persons with disabilities and with the established Innisfil Accessibility Advisory Committee (IAAC);
- To prepare an annual status report on the progress measures taken to implement the strategies referenced;
- To post the annual status report on the Library's website and provide the report in an accessible format upon request.

The Library has successfully met the requirements under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation. Accessibility Training continues to be provided to applicable individuals as required under the legislation.

Definitions:

Accessible Formats: May include, but are not limited to, large print, plain language, recorded audio, or electronic, such as Word, PDF, Rich Text, or HTML formats, Braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

Assistive Device: A technical aid, communication device, or medical aid modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities.

Barrier: As defined in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), a barrier means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, information or communication barrier, an attitudinal barrier, or a policy or practice.

Career Development and Advancement: *Providing additional responsibility within an employee's position, and the movement of an employee from one job to another within the organization that may be higher in pay, provide greater responsibility, or be at a higher level within the organization.*

Communication Supports: *May include, but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language, and other supports that facilitate effective communication.*

Communications: *The interaction between two or more persons or entities, or any combination of them, where information is provided, sent, or received.*

Conversion Ready: *An electronic or digital source document or format that facilitates conversion into an accessible format. For example, a Word or text-based document into large print, plain language, accessible PDF or Braille-ready format.*

Disability:
- *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;*
- *A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;*
- *A learning disability, or 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. – Section 10, Ontario Human Rights Code, 1990.*

Information: *Data, facts, and knowledge that exists in any format, including text, audio, digital, or images, that convey meaning.*

Medical Aid: *An assistive device, which may include, but is not limited to, respirators and portable oxygen supplies.*

Mobility Aid: *A device used to facilitate the transport, in a seated posture, of a person with a disability. Examples include, but are not limited to, wheelchairs, scooters, and walkers.*

Mobility Assistive Aid: *A cane, walker, or similar aid.*

Performance Management: *Assessing and improving employee performance, productivity, and effectiveness with the goal of facilitating employee success.*

Redeployment: *To assign an employee to another job or department, within the organization, as an alternative to layoff, when a particular job or department has been eliminated within the organization.*

Support Person: *Another person, identified by the service provider, who accompanies the person with a disability in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods, services or facilities.*

Timely Manner: *An action or task performed and accomplished in an appropriate time frame, as determined by the staff identified in the corresponding procedure. For example, five business days to transfer a written document into an accessible format.*

Acronyms:
AODA: *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act;*
IASR: *Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation;*
ODA: *Ontarians with Disabilities Act;*
WCAG: *Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.*

Background:
Approximately one in seven people have disabilities in Ontario – a number, which will grow over the next 20 years as the population ages.

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) 2005 was created with the goal of a completely accessible Ontario by 2025 and as such imposes a legal duty on organizations to achieve accessibility. The *Act* provides the framework for the development of provincial regulations in accessibility and accordingly, five accessibility standards were created in the areas of Customer Service, Information and Communication, Employment, Transportation, and the Built Environment.

The *Accessibility Standard for Customer Service* was the first regulation to be released. The Library met the requirements of this standard by December 31, 2009, as required.

On June 3, 2011, the Province of Ontario released the *Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation (IASR),* which combined the accessibility requirements for information and communication, employment, and transportation and included general requirements for policy, planning and training.

Effective July 1, 2016, *Ontario Regulation 429/07 – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and Ontario Regulation 191/11- Integrated Accessibility Standards (Information and Communication, Employment, Transportation and Design of Public Spaces)* were consolidated into a single Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation through amendments contained in *Ontario Regulation 165/16.*

The Innisfil Public Library Board establishes and implements practices and procedures that respect the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. The Board is committed to ensuring that each employee, volunteer and customer receives equitable treatment with respect to employment and services without discrimination, and receives accommodation where required, in a timely manner, *to the point of undue hardship* and in accordance with the *Ontario Human Rights Code* and the *AODA* and its regulations.

Since the creation of its original Accessibility Plan in December 2012, the Innisfil Public Library has been actively addressing the requirements of the legislation in partnership with the Town of Innisfil, as a large public sector employer. As per the requirements, the Plan has been updated on an annual basis and this document has been created in 2017 to ensure ongoing compliance.

Section One - Past Achievements to Remove and Prevent Barriers:
The intention of the Multi-Year Plan is to prevent, identify and remove barriers and obstacles that stand in the way of persons with disabilities from being able to access services, facilities and information at the Library. A barrier is defined as anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of a disability. The traditional definition of a barrier used in the context of accessibility has been expanded to include obstacles beyond physical boundaries. There are several other categories of barriers to consider such as:

Attitudinal Barriers: Prejudgements or assumptions that directly or indirectly discriminate, such as assuming that all visually impaired persons can read Braille.

Communication Barriers: Obstacles with processing, transmitting or interpreting information, such as print on a brochure, which is too small to read or documents, which, are not available in alternative formats.

Environmental Barriers: Features, buildings or spaces that restrict or impede physical access, such as a doorway that is too narrow to accommodate entry by a person in a motorized scooter.

Systemic Barriers: Barriers within an organization's policies, practices and procedures that do not consider accessibility, such as listing a driver's licence as an employment qualification for an office position may prohibit person with visual impairments from applying.

Technological Barriers: Barriers, which occur when technology cannot be or is not, modified to support various assistive devices and/or software, such as a website that does not provide for increased text size or contrast options.

The Innisfil Public Library Board is committed to removing and preventing barriers as well as improving the ability of persons with disabilities to access our services.

Following is an overview of the Library's compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act to date:

A. Customer Service

The Innisfil Public Library Board has remained in compliance with the original *Accessible Customer Service Standard*, which is now included as part of the *Integrated Accessibility Standards*.

- Accessible Customer Service training continues to be provided as per legislative requirements.

B. Information and Communications

Our current website is compliant but work has begun to ensure that all Internet sites and content meet WCAG 2.0 – Level AA standards, as at January 1, 2021. An accessible feedback process has been in place since 2009. Feedback may be directed to the Library via mail, email, and phone or in person. Feedback forms are available at the Library and on the website. They can be submitted online, or provided directly to Library Staff. Accessible formats and communication are available and provided upon request.

C. Employment

The Library's commitment to an accessible workplace is identified at all stages of the employment process from recruitment to hiring to individual accommodation plans to career development & advancement.

- Commitment to accessibility is included on job ads, in offer of employment letters, and is noted during orientation training, etc.

D. Self-Service Kiosks

Accessible self-service kiosks have been purchased.
- Self check-out units;
- *Novelbranch* installed at the IRC.

E. Other

Policies are written, reviewed and adapted as the legislation changes, or as part of the Library Board's regular policy review schedule. Training on the requirements of accessibility standards, the purpose of the Act and on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities is provided to all Staff, Board Members and volunteers.

Section Two - Strategies and Actions:

A. Customer Service

The Innisfil Public Library Board is committed to providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities. This means that we will provide goods and services with the same high quality and timeliness to all who visit and use the Library.

Requirement	Compliance Date	Status
Develop and implement Accessible Customer Service Policies, Procedures and Practices.	January 1, 2010	√ **Completed.** *Accessible Customer Service Policy* created in 2009. This policy was merged in 2016 with the *Accessibility – Integrated Accessibility Standards – Regulation 191/11 Policy.*

Provide Accessible Customer Service Training to applicable individuals as per the legislation.	January 1, 2010	√ **Completed** for current personnel. Library continues to provide training to new hires, volunteers etc.
Ensure third parties providing services on behalf of the Library or who are involved in the development of policies or procedures receive Accessible Customer Service training	January 1, 2010	√ **Completed**. Library continues to provide training as required. (Board, Friends of the Library).

B. Information and Communications

The Innisfil Public Library Board is committed to making our information and communications accessible to people with disabilities.

Requirement	Compliance Date	Status
Development of Integrated Accessibility Standard Policies.	January 1, 2013	√ **Completed**. Developed Integrated Accessibility Policy and the Meeting the Requirements of the AODA Regulations Policy, which includes a Statement of Organizational Commitment to meet the Accessibility Needs of Persons with Disabilities. The Library's Integrated Accessibility Policy was re-written in 2016 to include all the components of the Accessible Customer Service Policy, pursuant to the amendments contained in Ontario Regulation 165/16.
Create a Multi – Year Accessibility Plan that outlines strategies to address barriers and meet requirements of the AODA. Post the Plan on the Library's website and review every five years.	January 1, 2013	√ **Completed.** Developed Library Multi-Year Accessibility Plan; posted on Library website; will consult with Innisfil Accessibility Advisory Committee (IAAC) as required. The plan was reviewed and updated in May 2017.

Prepare an Annual Status Report on the progress of the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. Post the status update on the Library's website.	Annually in January	**Ongoing**. Incorporated into annual business reporting processes to the Board. Following the annual status update, the plan is posted on the Library's website.
Emergency Procedures, Plans or Public Safety Information will be provided upon request in an accessible format or with communication support, as soon as is practicable.	January 1, 2012	**Ongoing**. Will be provided as requested in the appropriate format.
New Internet sites and content to meet WCAG 2.0 - Level A standards.	January 1, 2014	**Ongoing**. Website Committee has been established to review and implement required changes. **Current website is compliant.**
All Internet sites and content to meet WCAG 2.0 - Level AA standards.	January 1, 2021	This has begun in *Our Stories*.
Public Libraries are to provide access to or arrange for the provision of access to accessible materials where they exist; & make information about the availability of accessible materials publicly available, in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, upon request.	January 1, 2013	√ **Completed.** Access to accessible materials that exist on the library website and brochures is provided and Staff members are always expected to, upon request, provide information on access to accessible materials that exist in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports. Policies are regularly reviewed and amended as required.
An Accessible Feedback Process is to be developed and implemented and made public.	January 1, 2014	√ **Completed.** Feedback process was implemented with the development of the initial *Accessible Customer Service Policy* in 2009.
Accessible formats and communication supports are to be provided upon request, in a timely manner and at no additional cost above the regular fee charged. Staff is required to consult with the person with a disability to determine the most appropriate format.	January 1, 2015	√ **Completed.** Policies and procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure that accessibility requirements are met.

The Public must be notified of the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.		Staff is aware of this requirement and conducts 'reference interviews' to ensure that all customers' needs are understood. This information is available on the Library website.

C. Employment

The Innisfil Public Library Board is committed to fair and accessible employment practices.

Requirement	Compliance Date	Status
Recruitment General - Notify employees and the public that accessible accommodations are available for applicants with disabilities during the recruitment process upon request.	January 1, 2014	√ **Completed.** The accessibility tagline, used by the Town, is applied to all job advertisements, advising applicants of the availability of accommodations during the recruitment process.
Recruitment (Assessment or Selection Stage) - Notify short-listed applicants, that accommodations related to materials or processes are available upon request. Consult with the applicant to determine the most appropriate accommodation.	January 1, 2014	√ **Completed.** Library Recruitment, Assessment and Selection policies and processes have been updated to ensure compliance with all applicable legislation. Applicants who are selected to proceed to the interview stage are advised of the availability of accommodations during the recruitment process. Applicants must meet the bona fide occupational requirement.
When making offers of employment, the Library must notify the successful applicant of its policies for accommodating employees with disabilities	January 1, 2014	√ **Completed.** Current offer letters to the successful applicant include notification of the Library's policies for accommodating employees with disabilities. Successful applicants are informed during the verbal job offer of the Library's policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

Employers are required to inform all employees of their policies for supporting employees with disabilities. This includes their policies on providing employment-related accommodations that take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities.	January 1, 2014	√ **Completed.** The Library through the Town of Innisfil has a Modified Work Program in place and a well-established practice for the application of that program. An update on the *AODA* and *IASR* will be provided to all current employees using our traditional communications channels. All new employees will receive the information as part of their offer and enrolment process. Managers are informed of the programme and *AODA* components through training.
Upon request, employers are required to consult with employees with disabilities to determine which **accessible formats and/or communications supports** they require. This requirement applies to information that employees with disabilities need to perform their jobs effectively.	January 1, 2014	√ **Completed.** Current practice is to respond to the unique requests for information from individual employees in a way that meets all of their needs, including those for accessible formats. To date all Modified Work Plans and their implementation have been individualized and customized to suit each employee's particular circumstances.
Employers are required to prepare for emergency situations by providing employees with disabilities, with individualized **workplace emergency response information** if the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary and the employer is aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability.	January 1, 2012	√ **Completed.** Initially all employees were advised of this component using the Library's traditional communications channels. Subsequently it became part of orientation process. Employees who have self-identified as requiring emergency response assistance or information are asked to meet with Library Administration to develop an appropriate individualized evacuation and emergency response plan.

Employers shall develop and have in place a written process for the development of **documented individual accommodation plans** for employees with disabilities.	January 1, 2014	√ **Completed.** Library Modified Work Plans are established in conjunction with the Town as required. The processes include detailed documentation for all individual accommodation plans and a Library *Early & Safe Return to Work* program, which includes written details and descriptions of the individual accommodation. All information gathered and used in this process is protected in accordance with *MFIPPA* and other applicable legislation.
Employers are required to develop **Return-to-Work Processes** that document the steps they will take to help employees to return to work when they have been absent because of a disability and who will need some form of disability-related accommodation to return to work.	January 1, 2014	√ **Completed.** Library Modified Work Plans are established in conjunction with the Town as required. The processes include detailed documentation for all individual accommodation plans and a Library *Early & Safe & Return to Work* program, which includes written details and descriptions of the individual accommodation, as per a recently created *Accommodation & Return to Work Policy*. All information gathered and used in this process is protected in accordance with *MFIPPA* and other applicable legislation.
Employers that have **performance management processes** in place are required to consider the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities in these processes.	January 1, 2014	**Ongoing.** Employees whose performance may potentially be affected by a disability will be referred to Library Administration who can assist in arranging an assessment and the development of an action plan if appropriate to do so. Information will be included in Manager Training.

		The *EMPLOYMENT – Accommodation and Return to Work Policy* has been in place, since January 2014.
When employers provide **career development and advancement** opportunities to their employees, they must take into account the individual accommodation plans that are in place for their employees with disabilities.	January 1, 2014	**Ongoing.** Ensure through policy and procedure that individual accommodation plans are taken into account when career development and advancement opportunities are provided to employees. Policy in place.
Employers that use **redeployment** are required to take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities. This includes reviewing individual accommodation plans when moving employees with disabilities to other jobs within their organizations.	January 1, 2014.	**Ongoing.** Ensure the Modified Work Plan and *Early & Safe Return to Work Program* meet this requirement. Policy in place.

D. Procurement

The Innisfil Public Library Board is committed to accessible procurement processes.

Requirement	Compliance Date	Status
Incorporate accessibility criteria and features into the Purchasing or Acquiring of goods, services and facilities where practicable.	January 1, 2013	√ **Completed.** Accessibility requirements included in the 'Purchasing Policy' (in both the 2011 and 2014 versions). Accessibility Compliance Certificate required for proponent's submissions.

E. Self-Service Kiosks

The Innisfil Public Library Board is committed to incorporating accessibility features / considering accessibility for people with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.

Requirement	Compliance Date	Status
The Library shall have regard to the accessibility for persons with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.	January 1, 2014	**Ongoing.** Past purchases of self-service kiosks have required the inclusion of accessibility features, which will continue to be a determining factor in future purchases.

F. Training

The Innisfil Public Library Board is committed to providing training in the requirements of Ontario's accessibility laws and the Ontario Human Rights Code as it applies to people with disabilities.

Requirement	Compliance Date	Status
Training on the requirements of the *Integrated Accessibility Standards* and the *Ontario Human Rights Code,* to be provided to Staff, Volunteers and other third parties, if they provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the Library or are involved in the development of corporate policies.	January 1, 2014	√ **Completed.** Training on the specific elements of the IASR, which are applicable to the Library and the Ontario Human Rights Legislation has been provided as required and will continue to be provided to all new hires.

G. Design of Public Spaces

Requirement	Compliance Date	Status
The Innisfil Public Library Board will meet accessibility laws when building or making major changes to public spaces.	January 1, 2014	**Ongoing.** The Cookstown and Lakeshore Branches were built according to accessibility requirements and reviewed by the Innisfil Accessible Advisory Committee.

		Three of our four branches are accessible and the fourth branch has been fitted with a ramp to the front door. In the Fall of 2016, accessible door operators were added to three doors in the Lakeshore and Cookstown branches. All future renovations or building projects will be guided by accessibility standards.

For more information on this accessibility plan, please contact Susan Downs at 705-431-7410, ext. 101, or sdowns@innifilidealab.ca.

Website and social media addresses:
- Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/InnisfilideaLABLibrary/
- Instagram - https://www.instagram.com/innisfilidealab/
- Pinterest - https://www.pinterest.com/innisfilidealab/
- Twitter - https://twitter.com/InnisfilIdealab
- YouTube - https://www.youtube.com/user/InnsfilLibrary

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