

Corporate Policy

If this information is required in an alternate format, please contact the Accessibility Coordinator at 905-623-3379, ext. 2131

POLICY TYPE:	Operational
SUBSECTION:	Communication/Customer Service
POLICY TITLE:	Accessible Information and Communications
POLICY #:	F12
POLICY APPROVED BY:	CAO
EFFECTIVE DATE:	September 19, 2017
REVISED:	September 19, 2017
APPLICABLE TO:	All Employees

1. Purpose

This policy addresses the Information and Communications Standards requirements of Ontario Regulation 191/11 for the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA).

2. Scope

This policy applies to municipal information and communications provided by the Municipality of Clarington, its employees, as well as volunteers, agents, contractors or any individual presenting or performing any function on behalf of the Municipality.

The requirements set out in this policy are being implemented by the Municipality of Clarington in accordance with the Standards and timelines established in the AODA.

3. Definitions

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;

Communications means the interaction between two or more persons or entities, or any combination of them, where information is provided, sent or received;

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 communications;

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

Corporate Policy

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Unconvertible information means information that is not technically feasible to convert; or the technology to convert the information or communications is not readily available.

4. Policies

4.1 Feedback

The Municipality will ensure that people with disabilities can receive and respond to feedback in ways that are accessible to them by providing or arranging accessible formats and communications supports, upon request.

Example 1: The Municipality has asked members of the public to give their feedback on Municipal programs and services. The survey is available through hard copy at municipal facilities. If an individual cannot provide feedback in this format, he or she can request that the Municipality provide them with the survey in an alternative format and accept their feedback in an alternative format.

Example 2: The Municipality is holding a public meeting on a proposed redevelopment. A resident is unable to attend to provide their feedback on the proposed redevelopment due to a disability. He or she can request that the Municipality provide them the necessary information and give them the opportunity to share their feedback in a way that works for them.

Requests for receiving and responding to feedback in an alternative format can be forwarded to the Accessibility Coordinator.

4.2 Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

Communications that the Municipality produces, directly or indirectly through contractual relationships, are available in accessible formats upon request unless providing this would cause undue hardship to the Municipality.

When an accessible format or communication support is requested, the Municipality will consult with the requesting person to determine which format or support is required. The Municipality will provide the material in a reasonable amount of time and at no additional cost.

This section does not apply to products, product labels, or unconvertible information.

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If information or communications are determined to be unconvertible, the Municipality will provide the person making the request with the reason why the material is unconvertible and a summary of the unconvertible material in an accessible format.

4.3 Notice of Availability of Documents

Notice of the availability of documents in alternative formats and communication supports will be posted on the Municipality's website and by other methods as is reasonable in the circumstance.

Public-facing documents such as, but not limited to agendas, minutes, brochures, meeting notices, recreation guides, and letters must include a statement notifying the public about the availability of alternative formats. As a best practice, internal documents should also include this statement.

4.4 Emergency Procedures, Plans and Public Safety Information

When requested, the Municipality will provide publically available emergency procedures, plans and public safety information in an accessible format or with appropriate communication support as soon as possible.

4.5 Accessible Websites and Web Content

The Municipality will ensure its websites and the content on those sites, conform to the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA, or prevailing requirements, in accordance with Ontario Regulation 191/11.

Legacy, third party and unconvertible information may not be posted in an accessible format. Persons who require this information in an accessible format may request it in accordance with section 4.2 of this Policy.

5. General Exceptions

Information or communications may be considered unconvertible if,

- a. It is not technically feasible to convert the information or communications, or
- b. If the technology to convert the information or communications is not readily available.

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In situations where information or communications are deemed unconvertible, the Municipality of Clarington will provide the person requesting the information or communication with,

- a. An explanation as to why the information or communication is unconvertible; and
- b. A summary of the unconvertible information or communication.

6. Style and Accessible Document Guidelines

In support of this policy, the Municipality of Clarington has developed its own Style and Accessible Document Guidelines. This document explains what makes a document accessible and provides detailed information on how to make a Word document accessible. Additionally, staff who are required to produce documents will be given in-person accessible document training and support from the Accessibility Coordinator.

It also covers basic corporate style guidelines that all municipal employees should be adhering to.