

ACCESSIBILITY

Policies and Multi-Year Accessibility Plan



January 2014 – 2019

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This 2014-2019 Accessibility Plan outlines the policies and actions that Caledon Community Services will put in place to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.

1. Introduction

Statistics Canada, Participation and Activity Limitation Survey, 2006 the population reporting a disability had increased from 12.4% in 2001 to 14.3% in 2006. Population aging is one of the factors that have contributed to the increase in the disability rate since 2001, but it does not explain the entire gain. The report suggests that the increased social acceptance of the reporting of disabilities may have played a significant role.

Caledon, as per 2011 Census data, reported a population of 59,460 and of that 14.3% may have a disability which equates to 8,502 residents. According to Caledon's Official Plan which was approved by the Ontario Municipal Board the population of Caledon in the year 2031 is expected to be 84,444 therefore it is estimated that in the year 2021 Caledon will have just over 12,000 residents reporting a visible or non visible disability. Of the total population of Caledon, 20% or 11,892 residents are 55 years and older. The Region of Peel, of which Caledon along with the Cities of Mississauga and Brampton belong, has estimated an increase to 33% of older adults by the year 2031.

As a result, community agencies like Caledon Community Services (CCS) must adapt to accommodate those disabilities, whether they occur in staff, volunteers, customers, or clients. All CCS programs must make efforts to ensure that they are as accessible as possible to people living with many different disabilities.

The programs offered by Caledon Community Services will become ever more important to the health of our community when **all** people can easily:

- receive relevant support and resources through the Care and Co-ordination team;
- be employment ready;
- attend medical appointments and run errands;
- obtain in-home respite or supportive living assistance;
- learn English;
- find information regarding small businesses;
- obtain access to Health Specialists;
- and shop at the CCS Green stores.

2. Statement of Commitment

Caledon Community Services is committed to treating all people in ways that allow them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe that this is best accomplished through an integration of our programs and services and of course, through equal opportunity to use these programs and services. We are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner and will do so wherever possible by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarian with Disabilities Act. In addition, CCS is committed to:

- The continual improvement of access to CCS premises, facilities and services for clients, volunteers, customers and employees with disabilities;
- The provision of quality services to all clients, employees and members of the community with disabilities;
- In particular, the provision of accessible transportation, in co-operation with other providers both within and outside Caledon, to all eligible residents of Caledon

Establishment of an Internal Accessibility Planning Coordinator and Working Group

Caledon Community Services has appointed Maureen Tymkow, Employment and Small Business Specialist, who is Chair of the Caledon Accessibility Advisory Committee and Citizen member of the Peel Accessibility Advisory Committee, as its Accessibility Plan Coordinator. In this capacity, it is her responsibility to pursue development opportunities for CCS' improved accessibility and work in collaboration with Human Resources and Health and Safety to help ensure that CCS maintain the commitments within its Accessibility Plan.

Caledon Community Services has established an Accessibility Planning Working Group which includes:

- Members of the Operational Coordination Team (OCT)
- Members of the Health & Safety Committee

These people should be used as resources for the Accessibility Plan to succeed in its objectives.

3. Accessible Emergency Information

Caledon Community Services is committed to providing the customers and clients with publicly available emergency information in an accessible way upon request. We will also provide employees with disabilities with individualized emergency response information when necessary.

4. Training

Caledon Community Services will provide training to employees, volunteers and other staff members on Ontario's accessibility laws and on the Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities. Training will be provided in a way that best suits the duties of employees, volunteers and other staff members.

CCS will take the following steps to ensure employees are provided with the training needed to meet Ontario's accessible laws by January 1, 2015:

- Review training material available through the Province and any other sources to determine if suitable for Caledon Community Services
- Build training program and provide training
- Train new staff through orientation and those employees that experience a change in their responsibilities

5. Kiosks

Caledon Community Services will take the necessary steps to ensure employees consider the needs of people with disabilities if and when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks by January 1, 2014.

6. Information and Communications

Caledon Community Services is committed to meeting the communication needs of people with disabilities. We will consult with people with disabilities to determine their information and communications needs when requested.

Caledon Community Services will take the steps to make all new websites and content on those sites conform to WCAG 2.0, Level A by January 1, 2014.

CCS will ensure existing feedback processes are accessible to people with disabilities upon request, in a timely manner and notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communications supports on our website and news letter by January 1, 2015.

Caledon Community Services will take the necessary steps to ensure all publicly available information is made accessible upon request by January 1, 2016.

Caledon Community Services will take the following steps to make all websites and content conform to WCAG 2.0 Level AA by January 1, 2021:

- Incorporate Level AA requirements
- Maintain ongoing compliance

7. Employment

Caledon Community Services is committed to fair and accessible employment practices. We will take the following steps to notify the public and staff that, when required CCS will accommodate people with disabilities during the recruitment and assessment processes and when people are hired by:

- Updating all employment templates to include an accessibility statement
- All job postings advertised will have an accessibility statement

Caledon Community Services will take the following steps to develop and put in place a process for developing individual accommodation plans and return to work policies for employees that have been absent due to a disability:

- Will review with employee the existing Attendance Management Policy and accommodate when necessary
- Develop a return to work and work place accommodation policy and procedure to guide CCS management in providing accommodations for employees with disabilities as the need arises

CCS will consider accessibility needs of employees with disabilities and individual accommodation plans during the performance management process and when providing career development and advancement.

Caledon Community Services will take the following steps to prevent and remove other accessibility barriers identified:

- Meet every second month with the Accessibility Advisory Committee (also known as Health and Safety Committee) to identify any barriers which may be in existence within all of our buildings, offices and stores.
- Review barriers and set actions forward to reduce them.

8. Design of Public Spaces

Caledon Community Services will meet the Accessibility Standards for the Design of Public Spaces when building or making major modifications to public spaces. Public spaces include:

- Recreational trails or beach access routes
- Outdoor public eating areas like rest stops or picnic areas
- Outdoor play spaces, like playgrounds in provincial parks and local communalities
- Outdoor paths of travel, like sidewalks, ramps, stairs, curb ramps, rest areas and accessible pedestrian signals
- Accessible off street parking
- Service related elements like service counters, fixed queuing lines and waiting areas.

In the event of a service disruption, CCS will notify the public of the service disruption in the following manner:

Notify in advance if possible

- Post notifications in visible locations
 - Why the service isn't available
 - Anticipated duration
 - Alternate facilities or services available
 - A map with directions to another way into the building, accessible washroom, or to the nearest alternate locations
- Post notices:
 - In advance on a website, in a window or at a door
 - Pre-recorded information on telephone systems
 - Inserts sent in the mail with regular correspondence

9. HUMAN RESOURCE AND POLICY BARRIERS

CCS adheres to employment equity, which requires it to make accommodations for the specific needs of employees with disabilities. In 2005, the CCS Board passed an Accessibility Policy, which follows:

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

CCS is committed to eliminating physical, policy, and psychological barriers for people with disabilities. This ensures that CCS premises, facilities and services are accessible to clients, volunteers, and employees with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations will be made for the specific needs of employees, volunteers and clients with disabilities. In accordance with our statutory duty to accommodate, CCS endeavours, in good faith, to take appropriate measures to accommodate all persons (above) with special needs due to disability. However, it is recognized that we may sometimes be faced with a situation of undue hardship that restricts our ability to do so.

CCS endeavours to ensure that every location and every event operated by the agency is accessible to the whole community.

PURPOSE

To establish clear, inclusive principles for all CCS activities.

SCOPE

This policy is applicable to all activities, events and correspondence conducted by CCS. Examples include:

- Staff retreats
- Fundraising events
- Annual General Meeting
- Day to day service provision
- Employee recruitment and hiring practices

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