

ACTION

Subject: Accessibility Board Position Statement

Prepared by: Nelly Beylouni-Zamat, Manager, Diversity and Accessibility Services

Prepared for: Ottawa Public Library Board

Meeting of: November 19, 2012

Date of preparation: November 2, 2012

RECOMMENDATION

That the revised Accessibility Position Statement be approved.

References

- Doc 3, April 20, 2009, Accessibility Position Statement
- The [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#)
- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, [Integrated Accessibility Standards](#) (includes standards on Information and Communication, Employment and Transportation)
- Doc 2, December 12, 2011, The OPL 2012 – 2015 Strategic Plan

Background

The Ottawa Public Library is committed to accessibility. In support of its core value of access and inclusion, the Board approved an Accessibility Position Statement on April 20, 2009 and reaffirmed its commitment to accessibility in the 2012 – 2015 Strategic Plan.

The Accessibility Position statement currently in effect needs to be updated to ensure it is aligned with Ontario's Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) regulations. Policies and procedures have been developed to guide accessibility, accessible formats, employment policies, communication supports, and disability accommodation requests. The Materials Selection policy has also been revised to clearly indicate OPL's commitment to providing accessible materials where they exist in a variety of accessible formats in accordance to Article 19 of the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11.

The revised Accessibility Position Statement is appended below for consideration. Pending Board approval, it will be posted on the OPL website.

Statement

The OPL commitment to accessibility is framed by its Mission Statement: *To build a strong Ottawa community by supporting life-long learning and 21st century literacies, fostering inspiration and enjoyment and connecting people to each other and the world*, and additionally by the Core Value: **Access and Inclusion**: *We are committed to providing basic services to every person in Ottawa, free of charge, and to providing barrier-free facilities, resources, and services.*

In compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, OPL endeavours to provide barrier-free access to library services and resources for people with disabilities, including employees, volunteers, and contractors, which adhere to the following guiding principles:

1. OPL services, programs, goods, and facilities are available to people with disabilities, in a manner that:
 - Respects individual disability-related needs;
 - Reflects the principles of dignity and independence;
 - Seeks to provide integrated services; and
 - Occurs in a timely fashion.
2. OPL aims to provide customers with:
 - Employees trained to provide customer service to people with disabilities, including how to communicate with a person in a manner that takes into account his or her disability;
 - Programs and services designed and delivered so as to ensure inclusion of people with disabilities in the community life of Ottawa; and
 - Notice of changes to services which impact accessibility.
3. OPL recognizes the right of people with disabilities to access OPL services including: collections, borrowing, digital library services, information services, and children's and teen services.

OPL will provide written documentation of all policies, practices, and procedures for providing accessible customer service and will notify customers that the documents are available upon request. These documents will be available in a format that takes into account the requesting person's disability.

Information related to accessible materials, as well as the availability of accessible formats and communication supports at the Library, will be available in both print in library branches and on the OPL website, www.BiblioOttawaLibrary.ca and will be provided in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, upon request. The OPL website will be developed with accessible features in accordance with the schedule set out in the AODA *Integrated Accessibility Standards*.