

Accessibility Policy #12  
Created: December 11, 2023  
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Department: Administration/Accessibility  
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## 1. Statement

Regulation 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 requires organizations to create written accessibility policies.

s and make them publicly available. Accessibility policies are the formal rules an organization puts in place to achieve its accessibility goals to comply with section 3 of the Regulation.

The Municipality is a Designated Public Sector organization.

## 2. Statement of Organizational Commitment

The Municipality is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities. Gillies Township is committed to treating people with disabilities in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. Gillies Township believes in integration, and Gillies Township is committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner. Gillies Township will do so by removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and meeting our accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and Ontario's accessibility laws.

The Municipality is committed to meeting its current and ongoing obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code respecting non-discrimination.

The Municipality understands that obligations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) and its accessibility standards do not substitute or limit its

obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code or obligations to people with disabilities under any other law.

The Municipality is committed to excellence in serving and providing goods, services or facilities to all customers including people with disabilities.

Our accessible customer service policies are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration, and equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

### 3. Training

Gillies Township is committed to training all staff and volunteers in accessible customer service, other Ontario's accessibility standards and aspects of the Ontario Human Rights Code that relate to persons with disabilities.

In addition, Gillies Township will train:

- a) all persons who participate in developing the organization's policies; and
- b) all other persons who provide goods, services, or facilities on behalf of the organization

Training of our employees and volunteers on accessibility relates to their specific roles.

Training includes:

- purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the Customer Service Standards
- our policies related to the Customer Service Standards
- how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- how to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
- how to use the equipment or devices available on-site or otherwise that may help with providing goods, services, or facilities to people with disabilities.

These include:

## List Equipment/Devices

- Accessibility entrance at Municipal Office

what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing our organization's goods, services, or facilities.

Gillies Township trains every person as soon as practicable after being hired and provide training in respect of any changes to the policies.

Gillies Township maintains records of the training provided including the dates on which the training was provided and the number of individuals to whom it was provided.

## 4. Assistive Devices

People with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing our goods, services, or facilities.

In cases where the assistive device presents a significant and unavoidable health or safety concern or may not be permitted for other reasons, other measures will be used to ensure the person with a disability can access our goods, services or facilities.

Other measures would be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

## 5. Communication

Gillies Township communicates with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. This may include the following: List Different Ways to Communicate

Preparing documents for e-readers, individualized communication, written text vs. verbal communication, verbal communication vs. written, teletypewriter via Bell

Gillies Township will work with the person with disabilities to determine what method of communication works for them.

## 6. Service Animals

Gillies Township welcomes people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are permitted on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and third parties.

When Gillies Township cannot easily identify that an animal is a service animal, our staff may ask for documentation (template, letter, or form) from a regulated health professional that confirms the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

A service animal can be easily identified through visual indicators, such as when it has a harness or a vest, or when it helps the person perform certain tasks.

- A regulated health professional is defined as a member of one of the following colleges:
  - College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario
  - College of Chiropractors of Ontario
  - College of Nurses of Ontario
  - College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario
  - College of Optometrists of Ontario
  - College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario
  - College of Physiotherapists of Ontario
  - College of Psychologists of Ontario
  - College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario

If service animals are prohibited by another law, Gillies Township will do the following to ensure people with disabilities can access our goods, services, or facilities:

- explain why the animal is excluded
- discuss with the customer another way of providing goods, services or facilities

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be permitted to have that person accompany them on our premises.

If a fee or fare is normally charged to a customer for accessing your goods, services, or facilities, then the fee/fare will not be charged for support persons.

Municipal Gillies website, signage at office, voice messaging through office phone lines, newsletter if timing is appropriate/ adequate/available prior to publication.

The Municipality notifies the public that documents related to accessible customer service, are available upon request by posting a notice on the Gillies website.

The Municipality will provide these documents in an accessible format or with communication support, on request. Gillies Township will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of the format or communication support. Gillies Township will provide the accessible format in a timely manner and, at no additional cost.

## 7. Self-service Kiosks

Note: Public sector organizations must incorporate accessibility features on self-service kiosks.

Gillies Township will incorporate accessibility features/consider accessibility for people with disabilities when designing, procuring, or acquiring self-service kiosks.

## 8. Procurement

Gillies Township incorporates accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, including self-service kiosks. If it is not possible and practical to do so, Gillies Township will provide an explanation upon request.

## 9. Information and Communications

Gillies Township has a process for receiving and responding to feedback and the process is accessible to persons with disabilities upon request.

- a) Gillies Township communicates with people with disabilities in ways that consider their disability. When asked, Gillies Township will provide information about our organization and its services, including public safety information, in accessible formats or with communication supports:
  - a) in a timely manner, taking into account the person's accessibility needs due to disability; and
  - b) at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

Gillies Township will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support. If the organization determines that information or communications are unconvertible, the organization shall provide the requestor with:

- a) an explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible; and
- b) a summary of the unconvertible information or communications.

Gillies Township notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports by posting on the municipal Gillies website.

Gillies Township will also meet internationally recognized websites Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA website requirements in accordance with Ontario's accessibility laws.

## 10. Employment

Gillies Township notify employees, job applicants and the public that accommodations can be made during recruitment and hiring. Gillies Township notify job applicants when they are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process that accommodations are available upon request. Gillies Township consult with the applicants and provide or arrange for suitable accommodation.

Gillies Township notify successful applicants of policies for accommodating employees with disabilities when making offers of employment.

Gillies Township notify staff that supports are available for those with disabilities as soon as practicable after they begin their employment. Gillies Township provide updated information to employees whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodation that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to a disability.

Gillies Township will consult with employees when arranging for the provision of suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the accessibility needs due to disability. Gillies Township will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication supports specifically for:

- a) information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job; and
- b) information that is generally available to employees in the workplace

Where needed, Gillies Township will also provide customized emergency information to help an employee with a disability during an emergency. With the employee's consent, Gillies Township will provide workplace emergency information to a designated person who is providing assistance to that employee during an emergency.

Gillies Township will provide the information as soon as practicable after Gillies Township become aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability.

Gillies Township will review the individualized workplace emergency response information:

- a) when the employee moves to a different location in the organization;
- b) when the employee's overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed
- c) when the employer reviews its general emergency response policies.

## 11. Design of Public Spaces

Gillies Township will meet accessibility laws when building or making major changes to public spaces. Our public spaces include:

## 12. Recreational

Any future plans for recreation will incorporate and include an Accessibility plan.

## 13. Transportation

The Municipality does not offer public transportation.

## 14. Changes to Existing Policies

Any policies of this organization that do not respect and promote the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

This document is publicly available. Accessible formats are available upon request.

## 15. Multi-Year Plan

The Municipality maintains a Multi-Year Plan attached as Schedule "A"



# The Corporation of the Township of Gillies



Multi-year Accessibility Plan – Schedule to Policy #12

Created: December 11, 2023

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## Municipal Accessibility Plan 2023-2028

### 1. Statement:

The Township of Gillies is committed to promoting a barrier-free municipality for employees, citizens and all who live, work, visit and invest in the municipality.

### 2. Introduction:

People with disabilities represent a significant and growing part of our population.

According to Statistics Canada, in 2017 6.2 million (22%) of Canadians aged 15 and older had a disability and 71% of those individuals experience two or more types of disabilities. This number does not include figures for prevalence of disabilities among children and youth under 15 years old which means that the number of Canadians who are living with disabilities is even higher and will continue to grow. In recognizing the history of discrimination against persons with disabilities in Ontario, the purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (“The AODA”) is to benefit all Ontarians by,

Developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025; and

Providing for the involvement of persons with disabilities, of the Government of Ontario and of representatives of industries and of various sectors of the economy in the development of the accessibility standards

This report describes the measures that the Township of Gillies has taken and will take to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.

### 3. Municipal Highlights:

Gillies Township is a rural municipality located approximately 30 kilometres southwest of the City of Thunder Bay. It consists of two small settlement areas – South Gillies and Hymers – and is primarily comprised of agricultural and forested areas. There are a few small commercial businesses and many home based businesses. It has one public school under the jurisdiction of the Lakehead Board of Education. The population of the Township is 438 (2031 census).

Services provided to the residents directly by the municipality include:

- road maintenance;
- fire and first response protection;
- solid waste disposal and blue box depot;
- cemetery administration;
- by-law enforcement;
- building permits and inspections; and
- administrative services including council representation and property tax collection.

Public infrastructure in the municipality includes:

- a municipal garage;
- a municipal fire hall;
- a waste disposal site that includes a recycling program; and

- Municipal office space leased from the community school.

Services provided by other organizations and agencies include:

- social services provided by the Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board;
- policing services provided by the Ontario Provincial Police;
- administration of *Provincial Offences Act*, including court administration, court support functions and municipal by-law prosecution and fine collection provided by the Provincial Offences Office are administered by the City of Thunder Bay;
- library services provided by the Oliver-Paipoonge Library; and
- Conservation efforts through the Lakehead Regional Conservation Authority.
- Various health related support programs through the Thunder Bay District Health Unit.

#### 4. Target Groups:

The target group included in this Municipal Accessibility Plan is any person defined under the *Ontario Human Rights Code* as living with a disability.

#### 5. Operational Review and Methodologies:

*The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation* (“the IASR”) under the AODA directs that municipalities must:

- establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organization’s strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the Regulation.
- post the accessibility plan on their website, and provide the plan in an accessible format upon request; and

- review and update the accessibility plan at least once every 5 years
- And that an annual status report on the progress of measures taken to implement the strategy and post the status report, in accessible format, on the website.

The formal plan will be updated every five years. Rationales and methodologies for the review include:

- conducting visual inspections and gather information on barriers that would affect everyday activities for those individuals that have disabilities;
- working towards eliminating those barriers over time;
- having high regard to barriers when constructing new facilities and making renovations to existing facilities;
- in addition to physical modifications, regard must be had to programs, processes and policies that are reviewed and/or created;
- all new programs and services offered shall be reviewed with consideration given to accessibility and that the programs are as inclusive as possible;
- use the Government of Ontario barrier-free design guidelines that promote accessibility for people with disabilities to buildings that the Township buys, leases, builds or significantly renovates. The barrier-free design guidelines used will ensure the level of accessibility for government buildings is at least as good as or better than the level of accessibility required by the most recent version of the *Building Code Act*;
- accommodate the employment-related accessibility needs of people with disabilities who apply for jobs with the municipal government, as required by the *Human Rights Code*;
- seek public input through the publication of the Municipal Accessibility Plan through the gathering of comments and suggestions from the target groups
- ensure that managers and supervisors have access to the information necessary to meet the government's duties to employees with disabilities.

## 6. Communication of the Annual Accessibility Plan:

Copies of the Municipal Accessibility Plan for the Corporation of the Township of Gillies are available at the Municipal Office, 1092 Highway 595, Kakabeka Falls ON, as well as posted in an accessible format on the Township's website at [www.gilliestownship.com](http://www.gilliestownship.com).

## 7. Key Contact:

Clerk-Treasurer

Township of Gillies

1092 Hwy 595

Kakabeka Falls ON P0T 1W0

Phone: (807) 475-3185

Fax: (807) 473-0767

Email: [gillies@gilliestownship.com](mailto:gillies@gilliestownship.com)

Website: [www.gilliestownship.com](http://www.gilliestownship.com)

## Appendix A

### Past Initiatives to Remove Barriers to People with Disabilities.

#### 2004

- employees respond to telephone inquiries;
- e-mail service made available;
- voting site has wheelchair access;
- Pee Dee Park has a level area allowing access to those with mobility disabilities;
- upon request information contained in written material distributed to the public is provided verbally;
- telephone service is available to those with visual impairments;
- reviewed by-laws from 2000-2001 to identify barriers to persons with disabilities

#### 2005

- reviewed by-laws from 1998-1999 to identify barriers to persons with disabilities;
- reviewed by-laws from 1996-1997 to identify barriers to persons with disabilities;
- signs for wheelchair access have been installed and the area in front of the Township office and is kept plowed in the winter;
- township website [www.gilliestownship.com](http://www.gilliestownship.com) is now available to allow those with hearing impairments to access municipal information;
- waste disposal site attendants to assist those that need help

#### 2006

- reviewed remaining by-laws to identify barriers to persons with disabilities;

#### 2007

- examined the new municipal office located at the school for accessibility and made arrangements with the school to allow access to the Municipal Office via the school's main entrance;
- examined municipal services for barriers.

## 2008

- ensured that outside organizations and agencies that provide services to the Township of Gillies have updated Accessibility Plans;
- all existing by-laws and polices have been reviewed to identify barriers; and
- it has been determined that all barriers within the community have been identified and remedied.

## 2014

- Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation Training purchased and used for training purposes.

## 2017

- Updates were undertaken in the Municipal Office to include an accessible entry, washroom, and counter for service.

## 2021

- A brand-new website was created for the sole purpose of providing an accessible website.

## 2022

- Began staff training for updating all members with AODA training
- Researched method to create AODA documents for the website and identified barriers related to the education of staff.

## 2023

- Updated the Municipal Accessibility Plan from the 2015 version to provide for the inclusion of initiatives since 2015.
- Reviewed all documentation related to AODA compliance.

- Will arrange for Accessible formats or communication upon request, where there is no possible way to provide alternate request, the information will be provided to the individual with a reason.

## Appendix B Continuing Implementation of Plan

The annual review of the shall continue to be implemented with the following focus:

1. To continue to educate employees on accessibility awareness and provide opportunities for staff to continue to be engaged in eliminating barriers.
2. Train emergency fire and first response teams on emergency preparedness and providing aid for people with disabilities and special needs.
3. To continue to ensure that the community remains barrier free with all future by-laws, practices and policies.



## Appendix C

### Disability: the AODA Definition

The AODA draws on the broad definition for disability that appears in the *Ontario Human Rights Code*. "Disability" is:

- a. 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,
- b. a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- c. a learning disability or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- d. a mental disorder, or
- e. an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

## Appendix E

### Types of Barriers

Physical means a doorknob that cannot be operated by an elderly person with limited upper-body mobility and strength

Architectural means a hallway or door that is too narrow for a wheelchair or scooter

Informational means typefaces that are too small to be read by a person with low vision

Communicational means a professor who talks loudly when addressing a deaf student

Attitudinal means a recreational swimming program which discourages people with developmental disabilities from participating.

Technological means information on a municipal website, which cannot be accessed by a person who is blind who has reading software for a computer.

Policy/Practice means practice of announcing important messages over an intercom that people with hearing impairments cannot hear clearly