

# Accessibility

Effective: June 27, 2018  
Next Review: June 2020

POLICY 07.LGA.2018

## Applies To

LGA board members, senior managers, managers, supervisors and staff. For simplicity, the term “employee” is used in this document to include everyone to whom this policy applies.

## Authorization

*The Accessibility for Manitobans Act* mandates that all government agencies develop an accessibility plan to address accessibility barriers in policies, procedures and practices. The LGA is authorized to develop and implement operational management policies in its capacity as employer, including policies that outline requirements to comply with provincial legislation or policy.

Authorized by board chair:



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Authorized by executive director:



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## Purpose

This policy provides guidance to employees regarding the LGA’s role in complying with the requirements established under the *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act* and associated standards.

## Definitions

### “access”

Persons have barrier-free access to places, events and other functions that are generally available in the community. This includes barrier-free access to services and information delivered by the LGA.

### “accessibility”

The ability to access and benefit from a system, service, product or environment.

### “accommodations”

Arrangements made to allow persons disabled by barriers to participate or benefit equally. There is no set formula for accommodating people disabled by barriers; the person involved must be consulted.

**This document is available in alternate formats upon request**

### **“active offer”**

Offering the public the opportunity to request accessible services. Examples include inviting requests for accommodations in public-facing communication materials (i.e. this information is available in alternate formats on request.) or advertising disability accommodations, for instance with a wheelchair access icon.

### **“barrier”**

For a person who has a physical, mental, intellectual or sensory disability, a barrier is anything that interacts with that disability in a way that may hinder the person's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis. A barrier may include a physical barrier; an architectural barrier; an information or communications barrier; an attitudinal barrier; a technological barrier; or a barrier established or perpetuated by an enactment, a policy, a procedure or a practice.

## **Policy**

### **Statement of Commitment**

The LGA is committed to providing all people equal access to our services and premises. We are committed to identifying, removing and preventing barriers to access and meeting the requirements of *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act*.

We seek to provide a barrier-free environment for all people with whom we interact in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence.

Providing an accessible and barrier-free environment is a shared effort of all LGA employees. We all play a part in creating an equitable and inclusive environment to ensure a safe, dignified, and welcoming environment for our colleagues and those we serve.

### **Development of LGA Accessibility Plan**

The LGA will develop a multi-year accessibility plan in accordance with any requirements established under *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act* or required by the Disabilities Issues Office. The plan must address each of the five standards under *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act* as they are each released. The LGA will make its accessibility plan and this policy available to the public on its corporate website and will make an active offer to provide it in an accessible format.

Every two years, or following the release of a new or revised standard, the LGA will evaluate its multi-year accessibility plan to determine if it is meeting its objectives and goals.

The LGA will continually review and develop its corporate policies to ensure they promote the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for people disabled by barriers, and comply with *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act* and corresponding standards.

### **Service to Clients and the Public**

The LGA will provide service to clients and the public who are disabled by barriers in ways that take into account the nature of the barrier. If a person requests a service or information in an alternate format, the LGA will consult with the person making the request to ensure services and information are provided in a way that takes into consideration the nature of the barrier faced by the individual.

All services and information provided in an alternate format must be made available to the person requesting this service or information within a reasonable timeframe. The LGA must notify the individual within three working days (e.g. Monday through Friday) of receiving a request the anticipated timeline to be able to provide services and information in an alternate format. If the requested service or information cannot be provided in the alternate format requested, the LGA must notify the individual to provide them with an explanation why their request cannot be accommodated (within three working days).

The LGA must ensure all publicly available documents include an active offer for alternate formats. The notice must state: "This document is available in alternate formats upon request". The notice must be in black text and no smaller than 14 point font.

In the event that the LGA hosts a public event (e.g. safe grad presentation, public consultation), reasonable measures must be taken to ensure that:

- notice of the event must include an active offer for alternate formats and that persons disabled by barriers can request supports; and
- meeting places for events are as accessible as possible.

### **Training for LGA Employees**

The LGA will provide training to all employees (within three months of starting employment with the LGA) on accessibility requirements under *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act* and corresponding standards. Following the release of additional standards or every two years, the LGA will provide training to ensure all employees are up-to-date and familiar with new standards or changes.

Employees must also be trained on this policy and specific LGA processes and procedures that serve to improve the accessibility of the LGA. If this policy or associated procedures change, employees must be trained on those changes.

### **Appointment of LGA Accessibility Coordinator**

The executive director will appoint an existing LGA employee to work as the LGA's accessibility coordinator. The LGA accessibility coordinator is responsible for coordinating the administration of the accessibility plan, this policy, and providing advice to other employees to improve the accessibility of LGA services.

### **Feedback Process**

Clients and members of the public may provide feedback on how the LGA provides accessible services. All feedback will be forwarded to the LGA accessibility coordinator and the process for submitting feedback will be made available to the public with an active offer to provide the information in an accessible format. Procedures on the feedback process are outlined in Appendix A.

### **Exceptions**

The LGA is required to comply with the *Accessibility for Manitobans Act* and corresponding standards. Therefore, exceptions will only be approved by the executive director or board chair in exceptional circumstances, and only following consultation with the Disability Issues Office.

## Violations

Violations of this policy may lead to the LGA being in violation of *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act* and corresponding standards.

## Related Documents

- **Policy:** Harassment Prevention and Respectful Workplace
- **Training Program:** Accessibility for Manitobans Act Training – Organizational and Staff Development
- *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act*
- *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act* – Customer Service Accessibility Standard

## Contact

Contact the LGA's accessibility coordinator with questions about this policy.

## APPENDIX A: Procedures

### Service and Communication

If an individual requests a service or information in an alternate format, the employee will consult with the individual making the request to ensure services and information are provided in a way that takes into consideration the nature of the barrier faced by the individual.

Upon identifying what barriers to accessibility exists, the employee will then determine if an appropriate method of service and communication is readily available or if further accommodation is required. If further accommodation is required, the employee will contact the accessibility coordinator to identify alternate service options.

The accessibility coordinator will work with the appropriate service provider, either internally or externally, to develop a service option acceptable to the individual requiring an accommodation. During this process, the accessibility coordinator must notify the individual of the anticipated timelines for the development of an alternate service option within three working days. If the development of an alternate service option is delayed, or is unfeasible, the accessibility coordinator must notify the individual and provide them with an explanation within three working days.

### Creating Alternate Formats of LGA Documents

If an individual requires a document or form in an alternate format, the accessibility coordinator will work in consultation with the Communications, Policy and Research Department to create the document in an alternate format or provide the information verbally.

### Signage

The LGA will post signage at each service access point (i.e. front entry at each office, homepages of corporate websites and service portals) indicating the LGA is committed to reducing barriers to access. Signs will also indicate active offer to ensure persons disabled by barriers can request supports, and that support persons and service animals are welcome.

### Notice of Temporary Disruption of Service or Facilities

In the event there is a disruption to LGA services or facilities (e.g. accessible washrooms, elevators, automatic doors), the accessibility coordinator must be notified as soon as possible. The accessibility coordinator will work in consultation with the Communications, Policy and Research Department to have a notice of the disruption posted on the LGA's corporate website. The accessibility coordinator will inform employees working at service intake points (e.g. front desk, telephone service) of the disruption, and these employees must then verbally notify individuals and clients of the disruption.

These notices must include information about the reason for the disruption, the disruption's anticipated length of time, and a description of available alternative services or facilities.

### Feedback Process

The accessibility coordinator is responsible for reviewing feedback from clients and the public regarding the accessibility of the LGA's services, and incorporating that feedback into the LGA's accessibility planning process. As well, when receiving feedback, the accessibility coordinator must acknowledge receipt of the client/public feedback within three working days.

The accessibility coordinator will work with the Communications, Policy and Research Department to ensure contact information (e.g. email, phone) and the process for providing feedback is made publicly available on the corporate website and at each office location.

### **Maintain Barrier-Free Access in Physical Premises**

In order to maintain barrier-free access in physical premises, all employees are responsible for keeping the workplace clear of clutter and other obstacles that may cause a barrier to accessibility.

### **Assistive Devices**

People disabled by barriers may use their personal assistive devices when accessing LGA services and premises.

### **Support Persons**

The LGA always welcomes persons disabled by barriers and their accompanying support person.

### **Service Animals**

Service animals are welcome. However, if necessary, LGA employees may only ask the following questions:

1. Is the dog or other animal assisting the person with a disability?
2. What assistance has the dog or other animal been trained to provide related to the disability?

It is the responsibility of the customer with a service animal to have care and control of the animal at all times, or they may be deemed not to be trained and be then removed

### **Training**

The human resources department will identify employee training programs that address the following topics:

- Background and purpose of *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act* and *The Human Rights Code* (Manitoba);
- Requirements of the Accessible Customer Service Standard and explanation of all policies relating to the Accessible Customer Service Standard;
- How to interact and communicate with customers disabled by barriers;
- How to interact with customers disabled by barriers who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person; and
- How to help a customer disabled by barriers if they are having difficulty accessing LGA's goods, services or facilities.

The Human Resources Department will notify employees when they are required to attend training as each standard comes into force.