

## **Leeds and the Thousand Islands Public Library**

### **ACCESSIBILITY POLICY – Operational**

#### **ACC - 15**

#### **General Policy**

Leeds and the Thousand Islands Public Library is committed to providing equal access for everyone to our facilities and to reading, information, lifelong learning, literacy, and technology.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Library is compliant with the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and that library service provided to persons with disabilities will be accessible, equitable, and delivered in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of the individual.

#### **Guidelines**

##### **1. Services**

Leeds and the Thousand Islands Public Library provides information services for individuals with disabilities by telephone, fax, email and remote access to the library catalogue including electronic databases and resources.

Leeds and the Thousand Islands Public Library provides a Home Outreach Library Service to persons with disabilities who are homebound and have no alternative means of obtaining library materials. This service is offered to residents of Leeds and the Thousand Islands through an application process and is subject to the availability of staff and/or volunteers. See CIR – 18.

##### **2. Facilities**

All branches of Leeds and the Thousand Islands Public Library are fully wheelchair accessible with clear paths of travel to and throughout the facility. Each branch has automatic entrance doors, front entrance ramps, and accessible restrooms. The Library is continually improving the accessibility features of internal signage and furnishings as budget allows and as required by the AODA.

### 3. Collections

Leeds and the Thousand Islands Public Library develops and maintains accessible collections in a variety of formats including large print books, audiobooks, music CDs, DVDs, and literacy materials. Resources may also be accessed through the Southern Ontario Interlibrary Loan Service. See INF – 5. The collections and community information displays include materials with information on a range of disabilities, disability issues, and services for people with disabilities.

### 4. Adaptive Technologies

Leeds and the Thousand Islands Public Library is committed to gradually adding adaptive technologies for persons with disabilities as available technologies and budgets allow. General assistance in using adaptive technologies is provided by Library staff. In-depth instruction may be provided by reserving instruction time and/or when trained grant students are available.

### 5. Customer Service Training

Training in customer service delivery to people with disabilities is provided to all library staff including those who participate in facility planning and developing policies and procedures on the provision of service to the public, every person who deals with the public on behalf of the Library, and new workers as part of the orientation and training programme. Training will be compliant with the requirements of the AODA's Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.

### 6. Programmes and Meetings

Leeds and the Thousand Islands Public Library considers the needs of people with disabilities in the planning and content of public programming. The Library will make every reasonable effort to ensure that programmes and meetings are accessible and compliant with the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service. Advance notice of personal requirements is appreciated.

### 7. Service Animals

A person with a disability is welcome to visit the Library accompanied by a service animal. People training service animals are also welcome in the facilities. Library staff may ask the person for confirmation of the animal's status. It is the responsibility of the person with the service animal to ensure that it is kept in control at all times. See also FAC – 1, Rules of Conduct.

## 8. Assistance Devices

A person with a disability is welcome to use personal assistance devices for the purpose of accessing Library services. It is the responsibility of the person using the assistive devices to ensure that they are operated in a safe manner.

## 9. Support People

A person with a disability may require an accompanying support person to facilitate use of the Library's facilities, collections, programmes, and services. The Library will waive fees for support people assisting customers or provide advance notification when fees are required.

## 10. Information and Communication

Print and website communications will be compliant with the requirements of the AODA's Accessibility Standards for Information and Communications. The Accessible Customer Service Policy will be displayed in-branch and on the Library's website. Each Library branch has posted floor plans and copies of the Library's Emergency Plan and Policy Manual. All plans and policies may be made available in alternative formats as requested and as available.

## 11. Temporary Service Interruptions

Leeds and the Thousand Islands Public Library makes all reasonable efforts to provide notice of planned or unplanned interruptions of Library services through signage at each facility and on the Library's website.

## 12. Feedback on Library Facilities, Resources, Services and Programmes

Leeds and the Thousand Islands Public Library welcomes customer input and provides a feedback, review, and response process. Feedback may be given by telephone, in person, in writing, by e-mail, use of the branch suggestion boxes or electronically through the website. Comments are received and responded to by the Library CEO.

## 13. Responsibilities

The Library Board will be responsible for ensuring AODA compliance through the annual planning and budgeting process.  
See BOA – ACC – 12.

The Library CEO will be responsible for:

- a) arranging customer service training as required by the Ontarians with Disabilities Act Customer Service Standards
- b) maintaining records of Library staff trained under the AODA Customer Service Standards
- c) developing informational brochures and website links on the availability and provision of accessible Library facilities, customer service, resources and programmes
- d) implementing the annual accessibility plans and financial expenditures approved by the Library Board

*Sources: Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, Barrie Public Library, Southern Ontario Library Clearinghouse: Sample Policies*

Board Motion Number: 2009-20

Date: August 27, 2009

Signature of Chairperson \_\_\_\_\_