



Township of Otonabee South Monaghan

Election Accessibility Plan

2022 Municipal Election

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1. Purpose

The Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan is committed to ensuring that persons with disabilities have an opportunity to fully participate in the Municipal Elections with dignity and in a consistent manner with all Otonabee-South Monaghan electors. This procedure shall set forth the process for ensuring this commitment is successfully achieved.

2. Introduction

The Municipal Clerk is responsible for the proper legislative and administrative conduct of municipal elections in the Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan. In accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, the Municipal Clerk is required to establish procedures and provide appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities have the opportunity to participate fully in the 2022 Municipal Elections. Specifically, the principles of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* include:

- a) the secrecy and confidentiality of the individual votes is paramount;
- b) the election should be fair and non-biased;
- c) the election should be accessible to the voters;
- d) the integrity of the process should be maintained throughout the election;
- e) there be certainty that the results of the election reflect the votes cast; and
- f) voters and candidates should be treated fairly and consistently within a municipality.
- g) a proper majority vote decides the election by ensuring, so far as reasonably possible, that valid votes be counted and invalid votes be rejected.

Accordingly, the 2022 Municipal Elections will be conducted in such a manner to ensure that:

- a) Candidates and electors with disabilities have full and equal access to all election information and services.
- b) Persons with disabilities have full access to Voter Information Centre.

In accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended*, following the election, the Municipal Clerk will submit a report to Council concerning the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities.

3. **Staff Training and Election Assistance**

Staff Training

All staff carrying out election duties will be trained to recognize and ensure that persons with disabilities are served in a way that accommodates their needs.

Training will include:

- a) How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities;
- b) How to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices or require the assistance of a service animal or support person.
- c) How to clearly explain internet and telephone voting;
- d) What to do if a person is having difficulty accessing election information or services, and
- e) How to provide voter assistance if requested.

Provision of Election Information

Candidates and electors with disabilities may request to receive information and election documents in a format that takes into account their accessibility needs due to a disability. The Municipal Clerk, or designate, shall consult with the requester and shall provide or arrange for the provision of a suitable format. In addition, candidates with disabilities may access the election information on the Municipality's election website using technologies such as screen readers.

Notice of Temporary Service Disruption

If there is a temporary disruption in the delivery of election information or services, the Clerk shall provide public notice on the Township's election website, at the physical site of the disruption and when possible in the local media. The notice shall include the reason for the disruption, anticipated duration and a description of alternative methods of delivering the information or service. Every effort shall be made to provide alternative methods of providing the information or service to persons with disabilities. Notice and updates shall be made regularly throughout the service interruption.

Staff Assistance

Election staff are available throughout the election to assist with any issues that may arise with respect to providing a barrier-free election.

We can be reached using the contact information provided below:

Telephone: (705) 295-6852 or 1-800-999-4861

Email: hscott@osmtownship.ca or jackief@osmtownship.ca

In Person (pending COVID-19 restrictions): Municipal Office, 20 Third Street, Keene, ON K0L 2G0

Mail: Clerk, Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan, P.O. Box 70, 20 Third Street, Keene, ON K0L 2G0

As well, the Clerk/Returning Officer or the Deputy-Returning Officer can be contacted directly for assistance:

Heather Scott, Clerk/Returning Officer
(705) 295-6852, E-mail: hscott@osmtownship.ca

Jackie Fitzgerald, Deputy-Returning Officer
(705) 295-6852, E-mail: jackief@osmtownship.ca

4. Assistance to Candidates

Service Animals

Candidates and scrutineers are permitted to be accompanied by a service animal at the Voter Help Centre.

Guide dogs and service animals may be used in Voter Help Centre, unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law.

If a service animal is excluded from the premises by law, staff will inform the individual of the reasons why and discuss alternative methods for the person to access Municipal goods, services and facilities.

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

Note, it may not always be apparent whether an animal is in service. When Municipal staff cannot easily identify that an animal is a service animal, they may ask the person to provide documentation (template, letter or form) from a regulated health professional that confirms the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

Staff must never interact with a Service Animal. Staff must not touch or distract a service animal. It is not a pet, it is a working animal.

Campaign Expenses

Expenses that are incurred by a candidate with a disability that are directly related to the disability, and would not have been incurred but for the election to which the expenses relate are excluded from the permitted spending limit for the candidate.

6. Assistance to Electors

Voting Location

The Township Office will be the venue utilized as the “*Help Centre*” It will also be the only voting location on Election Day.

Entrance to the Voting Place

The Voting place entrance is equipped with a ramp and handrail to assist people using mobility aids or who have mobility impairments and door openers. This will be the main entrance to be used for everyone.

If the doors are heavy, awkward to open or have handles that are out of reach, where possible they will be propped open in a safe manner.

Interior Voting Area

Access to the interior voting area and voting booth shall be level and easily traversed. Any doormats or carpeting shall be level with the floor to prevent potential tripping hazards. All voting areas are to be well lit and seating made available.

Parking

Designated or reserved parking for people with disabilities and seniors is being provided close to the entrance of the Voting Place where possible. Accessible parking spaces are clearly posted and easy to see from the road and marked with the International Symbol of Accessibility. Routine checks of routes to the entrance of the Voting Place will be made throughout the day.

Voting Assistance

Persons with disabilities may be accompanied by a support person within the Voter Help Centre.

Service Animals

Electors requiring service animals are permitted to be accompanied by a service animal at the voting location.

Internet Voting

Internet voting allows voters to vote through secured internet services. This method provides easy voting for persons with a variety of disabilities to cast

their vote with independence and privacy as voters have the option of using the assistive tools they have on their own electronic devices.

Telephone Voting

Telephone Voting allows voters to vote through secured telephone services which provides for easy voting for persons with a variety of disabilities to cast their vote with independence and privacy. Land lines or electronic cellular devices can be used to vote, the method is compatible with assistive devices.

7. Accessible Service Disruptions

From time to time and/or for unforeseen circumstances beyond the Township's control, temporary service disruptions may be experienced. In the event of a temporary accessible service disruption, Election Officials will commit to making reasonable efforts to ensure that services are reinstated as quickly as possible and that alternative services are provided where feasible.

In these instances of service disruptions, the Township shall provide reasonable notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by persons with disabilities.

Notice of these temporary disruptions shall be provided in a conspicuous place and manner at the respective locations and information shall also be posted on the Township website.

The notice shall include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

Accessible services in relation to this plan including voting places, election materials and/or voting provisions for Electors with disabilities at the voting place.

8. Feedback Process

Feedback about the manner in which election services are provided to persons with disabilities may be submitted to the Clerk through a variety of methods including:

1. Telephone (705) 295-6852
1-800-999-4861
2. In Person 20 Third Street, Keene
3. Fax (705) 295-6405
4. Email hscott@osmtownship.ca
5. Mail P.O. Box 70, 20 Third Street
Keene, ON K0L 2G0
6. Website www.osmtownship.ca

The Feedback form located on the Township's website in the election selection can be completed by persons with disabilities and/or their representative. This form will be forwarded to the Clerk for action. In addition, staff working in the Township's facilities can complete the feedback form and submit the feedback on behalf of the persons with a

disability. Alternatively the form may be printed and provided to the person for manual completion. Manually completed forms are dated stamped and forwarded to the Clerk. Each completed form is reviewed by the Clerk or designate who will respond to the candidate or elector directly within two business days providing an anticipated action and timeframe for a full response where appropriate.

The feedback process provides election staff with an opportunity to take corrective measures to prevent similar recurrences, address training needs, enhance service delivery and provide alternative methods of providing election services.

9. **Reporting**

Pursuant to Section 12.1 of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, within 90 days after voting day, the Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan Clerk shall submit a report to Council about the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities.

10. **Additional Information**

Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan - Office

Located at 20 Third Street, Keene. The Clerk , Deputy-Clerk and Deputy-Returning Officer can answer any questions you may have about running for office, the election in general or specific provisions for those persons with disabilities. See Section 2 for additional contact information.

Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan – Election Website

The Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan’s Election website is updated regularly to reflect any new developments and information. Visit the site

for an up-to-date list of candidates and other important messages or events throughout the election year at www.osmtownship.ca

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing - Election Website

This website contains information about municipal elections, the Province of Ontario 2014 Municipal Elections Candidates Guide and the Ministry's commitment to promote greater accessibility for voters and candidates with disabilities www.mah.gov.on.ca

Ministry of Community and Social Services

The Ministry of Community and Social Services has developed several quick reference guides with respect to the overall management of an accessible election campaign. For more information candidates can visit: <http://www.mcscs.gov.on.ca/en/mcss/programs/accessibility>

Service Ontario – e-Laws

This website contains all current statutes including the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, www.e-laws.gov.on.ca



Customer Feedback Form Election 2018

Thank you for visiting the Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan. We value all of our customers and strive to meet everyone's needs.

Please tell us the date and time of your visit: _____

Did we respond to your customer service needs today?

Yes No

Was our customer service provided to you in an accessible manner?

Yes Somewhat No (Please Explain)

Did you have any problems accessing our goods and services?

Yes (Please Explain) Somewhat (Please Explain) No

Please add any other comments you may have:

Contact information (optional)*:

Thank you.

* Information collected is subject to the Municipal Freedom of Information & Privacy Act.

Please submit this form to:
The Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan
ATTENTION: Clerk
P.O. Box 70
Keene, ON K0L 2G0
(705) 295-6852
Fax (705) 295-6405
hscott@osmtownship.ca

Municipal Election 2018

Accessible Information Request Form

Thank you for visiting the Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan. We value all of our customers and strive to meet everyone's needs.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact Number: _____

Email: _____

Please state the name of the document(s) that you wish to be made accessible and the format: (if possible attach the document to the form).

Name of Document(s)

Format Requested

Please note that the turnover time varies depending on the format requested.

Submit Form to:

Heather Scott, Clerk/Returning Officer
The Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan
P.O. box 70, 20 Third Street
Keene, Ontario K0L 2G0
(705) 295-6852
(705) 295-6405
hscott@osmtownship.ca
www.osmtownship.ca

Notice Scheduled Service Disruption

The following service will be temporarily unavailable:

This service will be unavailable

From _____

Until _____

The reason for the disruption includes:

- _____ (repairs to doors)
- _____ (repairs to Tecnology)

Alternative services if available may be accessed at:

On behalf of the Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan thank you for your patience in this matter.

For further information, please contact
The Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan
P.O. Box 70, 20 Third Street
Keene, Ontario K0L 2G0
(705) 295-6852
www.osmtownship.ca

Notice Unexpected Service Disruption

There is currently an unexpected service disruption at this location.

The estimated time of the service disruption will be

From _____

Until _____

The reason for the disruption includes:

- _____ (repairs to doors)
- _____ (repairs to technology)

Alternative Services if available may be accessed at:

On behalf of the Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan thank you for your patience in this matter.

For further information, please contact
The Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan
P.O. Box 70, 20 Third Street
Keene, Ontario K0L 2G0
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