

County of Elgin/Central Elgin
Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee
Terms of Reference

Preamble

These Terms of Reference are developed under the provisions of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. The purpose of the aforementioned legislation is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers.

The Committee shall be known as the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee.

In conjunction the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee shall provide advice to participating municipal councils in relation to accessibility planning and legislated standards

Participating Municipalities

- Central Elgin
- County of Elgin

Definitions

"Barrier" means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or practice.

"Disability" means,

- 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; ("handicap")

Legislated Duties

- Advise Councils, regarding the preparation, implementation and effectiveness of the multi-year accessibility plans of the participating municipalities.
- Advise participating municipalities on the accessibility of buildings, structures or premises that the municipalities lease, purchase, construct or significantly renovate.
- Review and advise municipalities on the accessibility of site plans and drawings described in Section 41 of the Planning Act that the committee selects.
- Advise councils about the requirements and implementation of accessibility standards and the preparation of accessibility reports and such other matters for which the councils may seek its advice.
- Perform all other functions specified in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Composition

The Committee shall consist of five (5) members and shall be comprised of:

- Three residents with disabilities, from the County, at large
- OR two residents with disabilities, plus a member of the community who is actively involved in a disability related profession, or caregiver for a person with a disability.
- Mayor or Deputy Mayor from Central Elgin

A majority of members must have a disability as defined by the Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Appointments

Committee members shall serve a four (4) year term. No member shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms unless no candidates come forward.

Staff members from Central Elgin and Elgin County will undertake a bias-free recruitment and selection process. A recommendation will be sent to participating Councils regarding the selected candidates.

Committee members will be chosen for their life experience with a disability and their knowledge of such and/or expertise in barrier-free initiatives or disability issues. Each member of the Committee shall serve as an independent representative to the Committee and shall not represent concerns of only one disability or group.

Staff Support

The County's Accessibility Coordinator will act as secretary and liaison to the Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee.

A representative from each participating municipality will attend meetings and provide support.

Accommodations

Should a member of the committee be unable to attend meetings, they may request an accommodation. Accommodations will be decided upon by: the JAAC Chairperson, Central Elgin Deputy Clerk, or designate and the County's Accessibility Coordinator, or designate.

If an accommodation is granted, an accommodation plan will be developed for a three month period. At that time, the individual may request to have the accommodation extended or terminated. If an extension is granted, the extension will be taken to the JAAC for approval.

Accommodations might include, but are not limited to: accessible formats, communication supports or electronic participation in a meeting.

Meetings

Meetings will be held in the Central Elgin Boardroom, unless otherwise noted. The Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee will meet four (4) times per year. The Committee will meet on a date specified by the Committee. Additional meetings will be held as needed.

Meetings will conform to appropriate requirements of the Municipal Act, 2001.

A quorum shall consist of a majority of voting members.

Electronic Participation

Members may participate electronically in a meeting in the event of an accommodation. The member participating electronically shall not be counted in determining whether or not a quorum is present, and cannot vote.

Absences

If a Committee member is absent for three (3) consecutive meetings without notice or justifiable reason, their membership will be reviewed by staff support followed by a recommendation to Council regarding their membership.

Agendas

Members must submit agenda items at least three (3) weeks in advance of a meeting to allow staff enough time to research and respond accordingly.