



TOWN OF
WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

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REGION OF YORK
CLERK'S OFFICE

FILE No. - P14

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING – MARCH 2, 2010

**TOWN OF WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE 2010 ACCESSIBILITY PLAN
(A09)**

Council in Committee Recommends

- 1) THAT Council approve the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville 2010 Accessibility Plan;
- 2) AND THAT the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville 2010 Accessibility Plan be circulated to the Region of York Accessibility Advisory Committee; the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Accessibility Advisory Committee; the Accessibility Working Group; and posted on the Town Website for public information.





**TOWN OF
WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE
2010 ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

Town Council Approved, March 2, 2010



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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Under the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2001 (ODA), all municipalities have an obligation to prepare an annual accessibility plan. The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville whole-heartedly supports the spirit of the Act, which is to work towards the prevention, identification and removal of barriers that restrict opportunities for people with disabilities. To this end, the Town has prepared seven (7) annual Accessibility Plans and has now prepared the 2010 Annual Accessibility Plan. This Accessibility Plan continues to provide for persons with disabilities and their full participation in the life of the province through the identification, removal and prevention of barriers within Town facilities and services.

One focus of this year's plan is to continue to monitor the development of standards under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA). In 2005, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) was enacted to further qualify the ODA and serve as a framework relating to accessibility standards in several key areas:

- o Customer Service
- o Information and Communication
- o Built Environment
- o Employment
- o Transportation

The goal of these accessibility standards is to ensure all Ontarians with disabilities have full and equal access to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment and building structures by January 1, 2025. The standards are being established in stages by regulation, developed by provincial committees comprised of people with disabilities, representatives of the private, public and not-for-profit sectors and the Government of Ontario.

Ontario Regulation 429/07, the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service, is the first regulation to come into force and took effect for public sector organizations on January 1, 2010. In accordance with the legislation, the Town has ensured compliance in the following areas:

- Policies and procedures on providing goods or services to people with disabilities
- Communication with persons with a disability in a manner that takes into account their disability
- Policies relating to people with disabilities using assistive devices, service animals and support persons to access services
- Staff training in the legislation
- Customer feedback regarding the provision of customer service to persons with disabilities
- Notice of service disruptions when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on are temporarily disrupted

A copy of the Town's Accessible Customer Service Policy and Accessible Customer Service Guidelines are available on the Town's web-site.

2. AIM

The aim of the 2010 Accessibility Plan is to outline measures that the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville will take during 2010 to identify, remove and prevent barriers to all citizens in accessing Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville facilities and services.

3. OBJECTIVES

- To describe the process by which the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville will identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.
- To review 2009 efforts to remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.
- To identify the facilities, policies, programs, practices, and services that the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville will review in the coming year to identify barriers to people with disabilities.
- To describe the measures the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville will take in the coming year to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.
- To outline the process of how the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville will make this Accessibility Plan available to the public.

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE TOWN OF WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville was created in 1971 with the formation of the Region of York. At that time, the Village of Stouffville was incorporated into the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, including surrounding hamlets such as Bethesda, Bloomington, Ballantrae, Ringwood, Vandorf, Gormley, Cedar Valley, Musselman's Lake and Lemonville.

The current population of the Town is 35,000 and is projected to increase to over 50,000 by 2021. A majority of the population growth will be concentrated in the existing urban area of Stouffville.

The Town is responsible for the delivery of municipal services provided by the following departments:

• CAO Office/Human Resources • Clerks • Engineering and Capital Projects • Fire & Emergency Services • Leisure Services/Museum	• Planning and Building Services • Public Works • Treasury • Library
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5. COMMITMENT TO ACCESSIBILITY PLANNING

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) required Council to:

- Establish an Accessibility Advisory Committee

- Adopt an Annual Accessibility Plan based on the recommendation of the Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Ensure implementation of the Plan by staff on an annual basis
- Develop and approve Terms of Reference that clearly outlines the duties of the Accessibility Advisory Committee. In addition, the Accessibility Advisory Committee has been appointed and is functioning and meeting on a regular basis.

The Council of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville is committed to:

- The continual improvement of access to municipal facilities, programs and services for those with disabilities
- The provision of quality services to all members of the community with disabilities.

On an annual basis, the Accessibility Working Group has been authorized to prepare an Accessibility Plan that will enable the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville to meet these commitments.

The recommended initiatives of the Annual Accessibility Plan will be considered, evaluated, and approved within the context of Town Capital and Operating Budget Approval.

6. THE ACCESSIBILITY WORKING GROUP

Name	Department	Contact Information
Heather Andrews	Accessibility Advisory Committee	905-640-1910 aac@townofws.com
Ruth Armstrong	Treasury	905-640-1910, ext. 238 ruth.armstrong@townofws.com
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Dianne Carnrite	Public Works	905-640-1910, ext. 261 dianne.carnrite@townofws.com
Gioia Garro	Clerks	905-640-1910, ext. 0 gioia.garro@townofws.com
Carolyn Nordheimer-James	Library	905-642-7323, ext. 223 cnordheimerjames@whitchurch-library.on.ca
Rob McKenzie	Fire	905-640-9595 rob.mckenzie@townofws.com
Vacant	Planning & Bldg Services	905-640-1910, ext. @townofws.com
Micole Ongman	Leisure Services	905-640-1910, ext.293 micole.ongman@townofws.com
Gary Sumner	CAO Office/Human Resources	905-640-1910, ext. 267 gary.sumner@townofws.com

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Together, many groups and individuals will provide careful input and review into the continual development of the Annual Accessibility Plan. Each individual plays an important role in assisting the Town in fulfilling its legislated mandate to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with a disability.

The following is a brief description of the roles of individuals and groups involved in this process.

Town Departments

- develop their own section of the Annual Accessibility Plan
- ensure that commitments outlined in their section are implemented
- review their section on an annual basis and continue to address the removal of barriers as they are identified

Accessibility Advisory Committee

- provide feedback to Council regarding the Annual Accessibility Plan including the implementation and effectiveness of the Plan to ensure that its objectives are met
- advise Council on the accessibility of buildings that the Town owns or operates
- advise Council on issues of concern to persons with disabilities and assist with strategies for their elimination

Council

- select and appoint members to the Accessibility Advisory Committee
- provide direction to the Accessibility Advisory Committee and Town staff on the implementation and review of the Annual Accessibility Plan
- as part of the Town Capital and Operating Budget process, annually review and adopt the Accessibility Plan as presented by the Accessibility Working Group

Accessibility Working Group Co-ordinator

- liaise with members of the Accessibility Working Group to consolidate department submissions in the creation of the Annual Accessibility Plan

Accessibility Working Group Members

- contribute to the development and consolidation of the Town Plan through consultation with department staff on recent department initiatives to remove and prevent barriers to the disabled and to identify barriers to be addressed in the forthcoming year and beyond
- list by-laws, policies, services, programs and practices to be reviewed by the Town in the forthcoming year
- determine a department strategy for barrier removal on an annual basis
- ensure that department measures for the removal of barriers are incorporated into the Town's annual budgetary process
- maintain communication with the Region, other municipalities and stakeholders to share information on accessibility planning initiatives

8. BARRIER REMOVALS COMPLETED IN 2009

In 2009, the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville implemented a number of initiatives to make Town facilities, programs and services more accessible. These achievements are listed below by Department:

Barrier Identified	Barrier Type	Disability Type	How the Barrier was Addressed
Department			
CAO OFFICE/HUMAN RESOURCES			
Staff Training	Communication/ Attitudinal	Various	Conducted Accessible Customer Service training for all staff, volunteers and 3rd parties who provide customer service on behalf of the Town, interact with the public or review customer service related policies Provided Accessible Customer Service manual to all above participants
Customer Service Accessibility Standard	Communication/ Attitudinal	Various	Implemented the Town's action plan for ensuring compliance with the Customer Service Accessibility Standard by January 1, 2010. Plans include: - Accessible customer service policy, procedures and practices (covering use of service animals, assistive devices and support persons relating to facility access, etc.) - Staff/volunteer/contractor training re customer service accessibility - System for receiving and responding to feedback about the way services are provided to people with disabilities - Alternate communication methods to facilitate the Town communicating with persons with a disability that takes into account their disability - Notice of temporary service disruptions (planned or unexpected) - Compliance reporting Collaborated with York Region Northern Six municipalities in development of accessible customer service policies and training materials
Staffing Policy	Communication/ Attitudinal	Various	Provided comments to the province relating to the proposed AODA Employment Accessibility Standard
CLERKS			
Visual	Informational/	Sensory	Continue to explore means of enhancing

accessibility of Town web site	Technological/ Communication		visual accessibility; e.g., ensure the font enlargement function readily works in all web site sections Completed
Accessibility – municipal election	All types	Various	Budget submission in late 2009 will be prepared to reflect the costs involved pertaining to accessibility requirements during the 2010 municipal election Completed
Communication and Format of documents	Informational/ Technological/ Communication	Sensory	Develop/implement action plans for complying with the communication and format of documents elements of the Customer Service Accessibility Standard by January 1, 2010, specifically relating to Clerk's Department communications. The Town's Accessible Customer Service Policy and Guidelines include communication and format of documents components and employees have been trained in these areas, e.g., communicating with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account their disability. Completed
Telecommunication	Informational/ Technological/ Communication	Sensory	Review Bell Relay system for communicating via telephone with a person who has a hearing disability and uses this service Bell Relay system in place for any incoming callers who require it.
ENGINEERING AND CAPITAL PROJECTS			
Interrupted Access Network of Sidewalks between New and Existing Roads	Physical	Physical	Continue to co-ordinate with subdivision developers and site plan applicants to complete sidewalk networks, e.g., Hoover Park Drive and Main Street; Weldon Road. Also of note is the Town's Service Request Manager module implemented under the Information Technology Strategy; the module enhances the ability to respond to resident maintenance concerns in an efficient manner. Ongoing
Town Engineering & Design Standards	All Types	Physical	Ongoing review and updates of Town Standards to ensure consistency and compliance with the Town's Accessibility Plan Ongoing
Town New Capital & Infrastructure Projects	All Types	Various	Review consultant produced and internal designs to ensure consistency and compliance with the Town's Accessibility Plan Ongoing

FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES			
Staff Training	Communication/ Attitudinal	Various	Ensure employees participate in Customer Service Accessibility Training. Full-time employees have received training; training of Volunteers is under way.
Headquarters 100 Weldon Road	Physical/ Architectural	Physical	Ensure new Fire Station/Headquarters is compatible with and maintained to Accessibility Standards - Completed
LEISURE SERVICES			
<u>New Facilities:</u> Arena/Fire Hall; 19 On the Park; Bethesda Park; Operations Centre	Architectural	Physical	Accessible elements installed in all new facilities. Park Picnic tables are wheelchair accessible. Accessible hardware (levered doors) being used wherever possible, e.g., new Arena. Completed
Service and program delivery to staff	Policy and practices/ informational, attitudinal	Various	• Training for all Leisure Services staff in relevant policies/ procedures • Created special needs component to mandatory part time staff training package for which all staff get training • Partnership with Reach for the Rainbow for summer staff special needs training – also extended to aquatic staff • Requirement for summer camp staff to attend Region of York Recreationists summer camp special needs training session • Partnership with York Support Services Network/Children's Treatment Network (YSSN/CTN), for staff support/training on working with special needs and obtaining support on associated issues • Expansion of successful adapted aquatics program formalizing program policies/procedures in program handbook for staff for resource and training purposes Completed
Service and program delivery to public	Informational/ policies and practices, attitudinal, communication	Various	All promotion includes accessibility information first so that it is not lost among the other information • Formal policy developed for free mediator access to drop in programs, including fitness, group fitness, aquafit, recreational

			swims and public skating • Launch of the “VIP” access card for those identified as requiring mediator support, to ease the process for free mediator entry to programs • Expansion of successful adapted aquatics program formalizing program policies/procedures in program handbook with intent to share model with other providers to encourage implementation • Created PLAY Buddies program to recruit and train volunteers for integration support of those with special needs into our programs • Manager Recreation participation on YSSN/CTN integration recreation resource service advisory committee which identifies barriers and determines solutions for issues both local and across the region • Increase in number of accessible parking spots at Lebovic Leisure Centre, now located closer to the building • Completed
Customer service for persons with disabilities	Informational, policy/ practices	Various	• Partnership with YSSN/CTN recreation integration coordinators to accept referrals to discuss program options • Informal intake process to determine options available and possible supports for program integration • Separate “integration” page included in Leisure Guide • Adoption of Department mandate “Everyone is encouraged to participate in our regular programs and every effort will be made to integrate individuals with special needs” Completed
Town Office Washrooms – strobe lights	Physical	Physical	Memo to be sent to building owner requesting the installation of strobe lights in public washrooms to modify fire alarm system for persons who are deaf or deafened Completed
Museum: Access to the Temporary Exhibition Gallery and Washrooms	Architectural/ Physical	Physical	On November 17, 2009 Council approved the schematic design for the Museum Visitor/ Community Centre and authorized staff to initiate the project tender phase for the construction of this barrier-free 9,000 sq. ft. facility. The new structure provides barrier-

is Not Barrier-free			free access to all public washrooms, programming areas, exhibition galleries and circulation areas. It includes an elevator to the new basement level and also provides interior barrier-free access to the existing Vandorf Public School and Bogarttown Schoolhouse buildings on site so the exterior ramps can be removed. Ongoing
PLANNING AND BUILDING SERVICES			
Planning/By-law info in connection with Specific Properties is in Various Locations and Time Consuming to Access	Informational/ Physical/ Technological/ Communication	Various	Implemented Direct IT Property Management System, including system roll-out and staff training. In the near term, the public will have more ready access to property information by contacting staff via phone. In the longer term, a web portal is anticipated.
PUBLIC WORKS			
Spot Interlocking Repair to Main Street (Business Improvement Area)	Physical	Physical	Continue with repairs to interlocking brick in Downtown Stouffville Ongoing
No Sidewalk	Physical	Physical	New sidewalk installation on Tenth Line west side between North St and Hemlock Completed. Also, Public Works conducted a sidewalk condition survey in 2009. This will allow for future communication to residents of the results of the sidewalk condition review and proposed rehabilitation plans to residents.
TREASURY			
Communication and Format of documents	Informational/ Technological/ Communication	Sensory	Develop/implement action plans for complying with the communication and format of documents elements of the Customer Service Accessibility Standard by January 1, 2010, specifically relating to Treasury Department communications. Update: The Town's Accessible Customer Service Policy and Guidelines include communication and format of documents components and employees have been trained in these areas, e.g., communicating with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account their disability.

LIBRARY			
Programming Enhancement	Communication	Sensory	Story-time programs to include stories addressing children with disabilities - ongoing
Communication	Communication	Sensory	Coordinator, Children and Youth Services took advanced training in American Sign Language
Re-design of Library Website	Communication	Sensory	Library Website redesigned featuring large print and Zoom text features
Paws to Read Program Initiative	Communication	Sensory	Children with social issues reading stories to dogs - ongoing
Partnership with Leisure Services Dept. (Programming)	Policy/Communication	Various	Further existing partnership with Leisure Services Programming staff through offering shared Aquatic and Library programs to children with disabilities - ongoing
Public Internet Station	Physical	Sensory	Adaptation of one Internet Station to be fully accessible – moved to 2010
Staff Training	Communication/Attitudinal	Various	Customer service accessibility training provided for all staff and Library Board members. Training for volunteers is ongoing .
Customer Service Accessibility Standard	Communication/Attitudinal	Various	The Library's action plan for ensuring compliance with the Customer Service Accessibility Standard by January 1, 2010, including the adoption of an accessible customer service policy and procedures and practices covering use of service animals, assistive devices and support persons relating to facility access has been implemented .

9. NEXT STEP: IDENTIFYING BARRIERS

Barrier Identification

The Accessibility Working Group utilized the following approach to identifying barriers:

- researched previously identified barriers
- brain stormed / solicited staff contributions in all service areas of known and suspected barriers

In the Barrier Identification Process, the Accessibility Working Group focussed on the following areas to determine which barriers it will work to remove or prevent each year.

- Physical Facilities
- Site Planning
- Service and Program Delivery to Staff
- Service and Program Delivery to the Public
- Procurement Policies and Practices
- Interviewing, Hiring, Promotion, and Other Human Resources Policies and Practices
- Technologies
- Information and Communication Infrastructures
- Customer Service for People with Disabilities

9.1 BARRIER IDENTIFICATION IN 2010

Barrier	Type of Barrier	Strategy for Removal	Timing
Department			
CAO OFFICE/HUMAN RESOURCES			
Customer Service Accessibility Standard Training	Communication/ Attitudinal	Continue to ensure new staff, volunteers and contractors have received training in the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, and maintain a training record	2010
Town web site section on Accessibility	Communication	Maintain the Accessibility section on the Town web-site, which includes Accessible Customer Service Policies and Procedures, Annual Accessibility Plan, Accessibility Advisory Committee information, Customer Feedback form and more	2010
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) regulations	Various	As additional Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act standards (Information and Communication; Employment; Transportation; Built Environment) come into force, Human Resources will work with Town departments to ensure the Town complies with the regulations within the given timeframes.	Ongoing
CLERK'S			
Accessibility - Municipal election	All types	Ensuring that all persons working at the Municipal election polling stations are trained regarding Accessible Customer Service	Late Summer 2010
Accessibility - Municipal election	All types	Alternative voting methods will be provided for all electors; ensuring special initiatives are provided for persons with disabilities. The Clerk will report back to Council within 90 days after the election evaluating all the	Fall 2010

		things that were done taking into consideration electors with disabilities	
ENGINEERING AND CAPITAL PROJECTS			
Interrupted Access Network of Sidewalks between New and Existing Roads	Physical	Continue to co-ordinate with subdivision developers and site plan applicants to complete sidewalk networks, e.g., Hoover Park Drive and Main Street; Weldon Road. Town has introduced a Service Request Manager module	Ongoing
Town Engineering & Design Standards	All Types	Ongoing review and updates of Town Standards to ensure consistency and compliance with the Town's Accessibility Plan. Consideration of wheelchair access made in design standards.	Ongoing
Town New Capital & Infrastructure Projects	All Types	Review consultant produced and internal designs to ensure consistency and compliance with the Town's Accessibility Plan	Ongoing
FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES			
Customer Service Accessibility Standard Training	Policy and practices/ informational, attitudinal	Training being rolled out to volunteers.	March, 2010
Training	Attitudinal	Company Officers to participate in work groups with Autistic children for life safety skills.	2010
Public Education / Smoke and CO Alarms	Informational	Fire Prevention Division to promote strobe type smoke and CO alarms for persons with hearing disabilities.	Ongoing
Emergency Preparedness	Informational	Emergency Preparedness for persons with disabilities will be included in Emergency Preparedness Week program.	Spring 2010
LEISURE SERVICES			
Service and Program Delivery to the Public	Policy and practices/ informational, attitudinal	- Launch of Adapted Gentle Fit program designed for wheelchair users/ developmentally delayed participants – training component developed for recruiting staff to teach program as well - Continue to Investigate partnership with Community Living York South and YSSN for daytime programming with a focus on adults and youth recently finishing high school (age 21) for continuity of	2010

		involvement in some sort of recreational / social service • Aquawheelchairs loan out program for participation at local waterparks • Public Meeting to develop new/specialized accessible recreation opportunities. • Working with Region, YSSN, on consistent practices for all municipalities in York Region	
Facilities	Physical	• Ramp approved for access to rear entrance of 19 On the Park • 19 on the Park special section for wheelchair seating	2010
Museum: Access to the Temporary Exhibition Gallery and Washrooms is Not Barrier-free	Architectural/ Physical	Construction of the new Visitor/ Community Centre to begin in Spring 2010	2010/11
PLANNING AND BUILDING SERVICES			
Planning/By-law Information in Connection with Specific Properties is in Various Locations and Time Consuming to Access	Informational/ Physical/ Technological/ Communication	Implement Direct IT Property Management System, including system roll-out and staff training. Finalize implementation of a web portal.	2010
Site Plans	Physical	Circulate site plans to the Accessibility Advisory Committee	2010
PUBLIC WORKS			
No Sidewalk	Physical	New sidewalk installation on Tenth Line east side between Main St. and Norm Faulkner Dr.	2010
Spot Repairs	Physical	Spot repairs to various sidewalks in town	2010
Spot Interlocking Repair to Main Street (Business Improvement)	Physical	Continue with repairs to interlocking brick in Downtown Stouffville	On going

Area)			
Operations Centre accessibility	Physical	The Accessibility Advisory Committee will be provided the opportunity to review proposed site plans for the new Operations Centre	Early 2010
TREASURY			
Format of Documents	Informational/ Technological/ Communication	Continue to explore ways of enhancing visual accessibility. Put notice on the Town website to inform public that electronic tax bills are available upon request for those with visual disabilities only.	2010
LIBRARY			
Programming Enhancement	Attitudinal/ Communication	Story-time programs to include stories addressing children with disabilities	2010
Communication	Physical	One staff member to take advanced training in American Sign Language	2010
Paws to Read Program Initiative	Attitudinal/ Communication	Children with social issues to read stories to dogs	2010
Partnership with Leisure Services Dept.- Programming	Communication/ Policy	Further existing partnership with Leisure Services Programming staff through offering shared Aquatic and Library programs to children with disabilities	2010
Public Internet Station	Physical	Adaptation of one Internet Station to be fully accessible.	2010

10. REVIEW AND MONITORING PROCESS

The Working Group will meet twice annually to review the progress of barrier removal initiatives and to update the Accessibility Plan relative to Departmental operations and annual budget deliberations.

11. COMMUNICATION OF THE PLAN

Copies of this plan are available at the Municipal Offices and on the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Website.

12. GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Barrier

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 a practice (obstacle).

Barrier Identification Process

Any process or methodology used to determine what barriers exist, where barriers exist and other information. Examples of a barrier identification process may include surveys, audits or customer feedback.

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 development 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)

Types of Disability and Functional Limitations

A person's disability may make it physically or cognitively hard to perform everyday tasks. Listed below are different kinds of disabilities and the effects of these limitations on an individual's ability to perform everyday tasks.

1. Physical

Physical disabilities include minor difficulties moving or co-ordinating a part of the body, muscle weakness, tremors and in extreme cases, paralysis in one or more parts of the body. Physical disabilities can be congenital, such as Muscular Dystrophy; or acquired, such as tendinitis.

Physical disabilities affect an individual's ability to

- Perform manual tasks, such as hold a pen, grip and turn a key, type on a keyboard, click a mouse button, and twist a doorknob
- Control the speed of one's movements
- Co-ordinate one's movements
- Move rapidly

- Experience balance and orientation
- Move one's arms or legs fully, e.g., climb stairs
- Move around independently, e.g., walk any distance, easily get into or out of a car, stand for an extended period
- Reach, pull, push or manipulate objects
- Have strength or endurance

2. Sensory

Hearing

Hearing loss includes problems distinguishing certain frequencies, sounds or words, ringing in the ears and total (profound) deafness. A person who is deaf, deafened or hard-of-hearing may be unable to use a public telephone, understand speech in noisy environments, or pronounce words clearly enough to be understood by strangers.

Speech

Speech disability is a partial or total loss of the ability to speak. Typical voice disorders include problems with

- Pronunciation
- Pitch and loudness
- Hoarseness or breathiness
- Stuttering or slurring

Vision

Vision disabilities range from slightly reduced visual acuity to total blindness.

A person with reduced visual acuity may have trouble reading street signs, recognizing faces, or judging distances. They might find it difficult to manoeuvre, especially in an unfamiliar place. He or she may have a very narrow field of vision, be unable to differentiate colours, have difficulties navigating or seeing at night, or require bright lights to read. Most people who are legally blind have some vision.

Deaf-blind

Deaf-blindness is a combination of hearing and vision loss. It results in significant difficulties accessing information and performing activities of daily living. Deaf-blind disabilities interfere with communication, learning, orientation and mobility.

Smell

Smell disability is the inability to sense, or a hypersensitivity to, odours and smells.

A person with a smelling disability may have allergies to certain odours, scents or chemicals or may be unable to identify dangerous gases, smoke, fumes and spoiled food.

Taste

Taste disability limits the ability to experience the four primary taste sensations: sweetness, bitterness, saltiness and sourness. A person with a taste disability may be unable to identify ingredients in food, spoiled food, or noxious substances.

Touch

Touch disability alters the ability to sense surfaces and their texture or quality, including temperature, vibration and pressure. Touching sensations may be heightened, limited, absent (numbness), or may cause pain or burning. A person with a touch disability may be unable to detect (or be insensitive to) heat, cold or changing temperatures. Alternatively, a person with a touch disability may be hypersensitive to sounds, physical vibrations, or heated surfaces or air.

3. Cognitive

Intellectual

An intellectual disability affects an individual's ability to think and reason. The disability may be caused by genetic factors (e.g., Downs Syndrome), exposure to environmental toxins (as in Fetal Alcohol Syndrome), brain trauma and psychiatric conditions.

A person with an intellectual disability may have difficulty with

- Language: understanding and using spoken or written information
- Concepts: understanding cause and effect
- Perception: taking in and responding to sensory information
- Memory: retrieving and recognizing information from short or long-term memory
- Recognizing problems, problem solving and reasoning

Mental Health

There are three main kinds of mental health disabilities:

- Anxiety: a state of heightened nervousness or fear related to stress
- Mood: sadness or depression
- Behavioural: being disorganized; making false statements or inappropriate comments; telling distorted or exaggerated stories

People with mental health disabilities may seem edgy or irritated; act aggressively; exhibit blunt behaviour; be perceived as being pushy or abrupt; start laughing or get angry for no apparent reason.

Learning

Learning disabilities are disorders that affect verbal and non-verbal information acquisition, retention, understanding, processing, organization and use. People with learning disabilities have average or above-average intelligence, but take in information, retain it, and express knowledge in different ways. Learning disabilities affect reading comprehension and speed; spelling; the mechanics of writing; manual dexterity; math computation; problem solving; processing speed; the ability to organize space and manage time; and orientation and way finding.

4. Other

Disabilities result from other conditions, accidents, illnesses and diseases, including ALS (Lou Gehrig disease), asthma, diabetes, cancer, HIV/AIDS, environmental sensitivities, seizure disorders, heart disease, stroke, and joint replacement.

5. Barrier Types

An example of each of the different kinds of barriers is shown below:

BARRIER TYPE	EXAMPLE
Physical	A door knob that cannot be operated by a person with limited upper-body mobility and strength
Architectural	A hallway or door that is too narrow for a wheelchair or scooter
Informational	Typefaces that are too small to be read by a person with low-vision
Communicational	A professor who talks loudly when addressing a deaf student
Attitudinal	A receptionist who ignores a customer in a wheelchair
Technological	A paper tray on a laser printer that requires two strong hands to open
Policy/Practice	A practice of announcing important messages over an intercom that people with hearing impairments cannot hear clearly

6. Where to look for barriers for people with disabilities?

The Built Environment

• Exterior to a building	• Cubicles
• Interior of a building	• Washrooms
• Parking areas	• Cafeterias
• Drop-off zones	• Elevators
• Hallways	• Escalators
• Floors	• Stairs
• Carpets	• Stairwell
• Lobbies	• Closets
• Reception areas	• Storage closets
• Offices	• Lighting

Physical

• Furniture	• Windows
• Work stations	• Planters
• Chairs	• Bathroom hardware
• Doors	• Locks
• Door knobs	• Security systems

Information

• Books	• Forms
• Printed information / Brochures	• Manuals
• Web-based resources	• Fax transmissions
• Signage	• Equipment labels
• Bulletin boards	• Computer screens

Policies and Practices

• Procurement and purchasing	• Promotion
• Job Postings	• By-laws

• Hiring	• Regulations
• Interviewing	• Rules
• Testing	• Protocols
• Meetings	• Safety and evacuation

Technological

• Computers	• Fax machine
• Operating systems	• Telephones
• Standard software	• TTYs
• Proprietary software	• Photocopiers
• Web sites	• Appliances
• Keyboards	• Control panels
• Mice	• Switches
• Printers	

Recreational Facilities

• Playgrounds	• Picnic areas.
• Gymnasiums	• Tracks (indoors and outdoors)
• Swimming pools	• Playing fields
• Change rooms	• Climbing bars
• Theatres	• Gymnasium equipment
• Auditoria - audience	• Toys
• Auditoria - stage	• Library

Communication

• Training	• Public announcements
• Receptionists	• Security staff

Tools

• Hand tools, manual	• Machinery
• Hand tools, electrical	• Carts and dollies

Service Delivery

• In person	• By e-mail
• By telephone	• Via the Web
• By Mail	

Transportation

• Buses	• Water craft (e.g., ferries)
• Trains	• Cars
• Aircraft	• Van

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