



Rural Municipality of Portage la Prairie 2017-2019 Accessibility Plan

Statement of Commitment

The Rural Municipality of Portage la Prairie is committed to providing equal service to all citizens and visitors regardless of their abilities. We strive to remove and prevent barriers to accessibility and to meet the requirements of the “Accessibility for Manitobans Act”.

Accessibility Legislation

The Accessibility of Manitobans Act, 2013 (AMA) is a provincial law with the purpose to develop, implement and enforce accessibility standards in order to achieve the goal of a barrier free Manitoba by 2023. Municipalities with populations less than 10,000 must have an accessibility plan in place in 2017. The legislation requires accessibility standards to be developed over the next several years. The standards will address barriers and set out requirements in five key areas of daily living. These standards are:

1. Customer service
2. Information and communication
3. Employment
4. Built environment
5. Transportation

The Customer Service Standard was the first standard developed and enacted under the legislation. Adopted in 2015, the Rural Municipality of Portage la Prairie is required to be compliant in 2017. The standard requires organizations to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to customer service. Where this is not possible they must provide equivalent customer service. To provide accessible customer service, organizations need to:

- review physical barriers that prevent customers receiving service
- consider the communication needs of clients
- allow service animals
- allow assistive devices such as wheelchairs, walkers and oxygen tanks
- let customers know your accessibility policies and procedures
- let customers know when accessible services aren't available
- Invite customers to provide feedback
- Understand The Human Rights Code (Manitoba) and provide reasonable accommodations
- train staff on accessible customer service

Multi-Year Action Plan

This section outlines the policies and actions the Rural Municipality of Portage la Prairie will put in place over the next two (2) years to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities, in compliance with the AMA accessibility standards. Our goal is to remove accessibility barriers and prevent further barriers.

Planned Accessibility Action Items:

General Requirements of the Accessibility for Manitobans Act (C.C.S.M. c A1.7)				
Action	Working Timeline			Responsibility
	2017	2018	2019	
Create/Update Accessibility Plan	x		x	Accessibility Coordinator
Post the Plan on the RM Website, update at least every 2 years	x		x	Accessibility Coordinator
Develop Accessibility Policies, starting with customer service	x	x	x	Accessibility Coordinator

Customer Service Standard Regulation 171/2015				
Action	Working Timeline			Responsibility
	2017	2018	2019	
Create accessibility customer feedback process and invite users to provide feedback	x			Administration, Accessibility Coordinator
Identify and compile a list of all RM publications and ensure that they can be converted to an accessible format in a timely manner		x	x	All Departments
Include an "active offer" on all RM documents informing that they are available in an accessible format on request	x	x	x	All Departments
Develop a training plan to ensure all employees and volunteers who deal with the public are trained in accessible customer service.		x		Accessibility Coordinator
Explore alternate methods of providing customer service where physical barriers exist. Determine costs and feasibility and find an alternate method of service delivery if required.		x		All Departments
Ensure that public events are accessible. Develop an accessible events checklist.		x	x	All Departments/Accessibility
Create a web page on the RM's web site dedicated to accessibility. Update regularly.		x	x	Accessibility Coordinator

Approach

1. Review of Current Activities to Identify Barriers

The Rural Municipality will review current activities to identify barriers on an ongoing basis with the goal of creating policies and procedures to prevent barriers from being created and viewing the identified barriers as opportunities for improvement

2. Monitoring Progress and Audit Function

A status report of this Plan is required every two years. In an effort to evaluate whether or not targets are being met and to adopt a plan to meet current expectations, the Accessibility Coordinator will review the Plan prior to budget preparations on an annual basis. The Rural Municipality will source funding through Federal and Provincial grants for capital costs associated with implementing barrier-free services and facilities.

3. Communication of Plan

The Multi-Year Municipal Accessibility Plan, annual status reports, and any technical guidelines that are developed will be posted on the municipal website.

Conclusion

The Rural Municipality of Portage la Prairie is committed to continuously addressing past and present accessibility barriers and to being progressive in developing innovative solutions to accessibility matters. We believe in integration and equal opportunity and are committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence.

Further Information

For more information on the Multi-Year Municipal Accessibility Plan for Rural Municipality of Portage la Prairie, please contact:

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