

**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 (AODA). 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 with 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")

**“Permanent Disability”** means as a disability that is permanent and long-term, that impacts a person’s ability to engage in routine activities such as participating in Committee meetings, unless accommodations are provided. The disability is often life-long and may be a result of injury, illness, or genetics. The person is not expected to recover and will require accommodations for the duration of their membership.

**“Temporary Disability”** means a disability that affects you for a short period of time. These conditions usually keep you incapacitated for a few days, weeks, months, or years but typically result in the eventual recovery. This type of disability often includes illnesses or injuries that require temporary accommodations in order to participate in Committee meetings.

### **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.

### **Consultation Requirements**

The Committee is expected, per the AODA requirements, to be consulted:

- When establishing, reviewing and updating your multi-year accessibility plans
- When developing accessible design criteria in the construction, renovation or placement of bus stops and shelters

- When determining the proportion of on-demand accessible taxicabs needed in the community
- On the need, location and design of accessible on-street parking spaces when building new or making major changes to existing on-street parking spaces
- Before building new or making major changes to existing recreational trails to help determine particular trail features
- On the needs of children and caregivers with various disabilities in their community when building new or making major changes to existing outdoor play spaces
- On the design and placement of rest areas along the exterior path of travel when building new or making major changes to existing exterior paths of travel

For detailed information on the role of Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committees, please visit: [How to Serve on a Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee: Guide](#)

### **Composition**

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

- Four residents with disabilities, from the County, at large
- OR three residents with disabilities, plus a member of the who is a person interested in issues relating to persons with disabilities (through work, school or caregiver role), or a parent/guardian representing children with disabilities
- 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 Eglin 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.

## **JAAC Chair**

The Chair of the Committee shall be elected at the first meeting of the Committee for the term of Council.

## **Staff Support**

The County's Administrative Services Department will act as the secretary and the **County's Human Resources Department** will act as the facilitator 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 Human Resources Department** 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. If the member's disability is permanent and will require a continuation of the accommodation plan, the accommodations will remain in place for the duration of the JAAC term.

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

## **Meetings**

Meetings will be held at **the County of Elgin Administration Building or virtually**, unless otherwise noted. The Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee will meet **two (2)** times per year. The Committee will meet on a date as 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. The member participating electronically shall be counted in determining whether or not a quorum is present, and can vote per the County of Elgin's Procedural By-Law.

### **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 two (2) weeks in advance of a meeting to allow staff enough time to research and respond accordingly.