

# Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula



## **Election 2010**

**Policies and Procedures  
Governing the Provision of  
Election Information and Services  
to Persons with Disabilities**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Municipal Clerk is responsible for the proper legislative and administrative conduct of municipal elections in the Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula. In accordance with the Municipal Elections Act, 1996 as amended, the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, the Municipal Clerk is authorized to establish procedures and provide appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities have the opportunity to participate fully in the 2010 Municipal Election. Accordingly, the 2010 Municipal Election will be conducted in such a manner to ensure that:

- 1) Candidates and electors with disabilities have full and equal access to all election information and services.
- 2) Persons with disabilities have full access to the municipal office to vote and/or drop off their mail in ballot.
- 3) Persons with disabilities are able to independently and privately mark their ballot and have access to alternative methods of voting assistance.

Following the election, the Municipal Clerk or Accessibility Coordinator will submit a report to Council concerning the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities.

## **2. STAFF TRAINING AND ELECTION ASSISTANCE**

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:

- 1) how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disability;
- 2) how to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices or require the assistance of a service animal or support person;
- 3) what to do if a person is having difficulty accessing election information;

## **Provision of Election Information**

Candidates and electors with disabilities will be able to receive information and copies of election documents in a format that takes into account their disability. The format may be agreed upon between the client and the Municipal Clerk.

## **Notice of Temporary Service Disruption**

If there is a temporary disruption in the delivery of election information or services, the Municipal Clerk and/or Accessibility Coordinator will place a public notice on the municipal 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.

## **Staff Assistance**

The Clerk's Office is available to assist with any issues that may arise with respect to providing a barrier-free election and can be reached by way of the contact information provided below:

- |              |  |                      |
|--------------|--|----------------------|
| 1) Telephone | 519-793-3522 x229 Clerk  | Mary Lynn Standen    |
|              | 519-793-3522 x236 Deputy Clerk/<br>& Accessibility Coordinator   | Cathy Addison        |
|              | 519-793-3522 x226 Secretary  | Charlotte Martindale |
| 2) In person | Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula<br>#56 Lindsay Rd. #5<br>R.R. #2<br>Lion's Head, Ont. N0H 1W0   |                      |
| 3) Fax       | 519-793-3823   |                      |
| 4) Email     | <a href="mailto:marylynn.nbp@amtelecom.net">marylynn.nbp@amtelecom.net</a> or <a href="mailto:cathya.nbp@amtelecom.net">cathya.nbp@amtelecom.net</a> |                      |
| 5) Mail      | Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula<br>#56 Lindsay Rd. #5<br>R.R. #2<br>Lion's Head, Ont. N0H 1W0   |                      |

### **3. ASSISTANCE TO CANDIDATES**

#### **Service Animals**

Candidates and scrutineers are permitted to be accompanied by a service animal at the designated election location.

Persons with disabilities are permitted to be accompanied by a service animal to drop their ballot off at the municipal office or to obtain a voting package.

#### **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.

### **4. ASSISTANCE TO ELECTORS**

#### **Parking**

Designated or reserved parking for people with disabilities shall be provided close to the entrance of the municipal office where possible. Accessible parking spaces will be clearly posted and visible from the road and marked with the international Symbol of Accessibility.

#### **Service Animals**

Electors requiring service animals are permitted to be accompanied by a service animal municipal office to vote or drop off their ballot.

#### **Entrance to the Municipal Office**

The entrance for people with disabilities will be clearly sign-posted using the International Symbol of Accessibility. Every effort shall be made to ensure that the door into the municipal office is wide enough for a wheelchair or scooter to pass through easily. The door hardware is currently not accessible and where possible, it may have to be propped open in a safe manner for easy access.

#### **Interior Area**

The interior office reception area is to be well lit and seating made available, if required. The accessible customer service kit will be available at the reception counter in the event a magnifying glass or other assistance devices are required.

## **Voting Assistance**

The alternative voting method, Vote by Mail (VBM) ensures that all residents have the opportunity to vote, in particular, those property owners that do not have a permanent residence in the municipality and those persons with disabilities.

The Municipality uses a composite ballot. Voting packages contain a voting instruction sheet, ballot, a secrecy envelope, a return envelope and a voter declaration form.

The Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula has approved By-law Number 2010-25 being a by-law to authorize the use of optical scanning vote tabulators for the 2010 Municipal Election.

On Voting Day, the data is loaded directly into the tabulators to tally the results at the Municipal Office.

**Section 41(2) (7)** of the Municipal Elections Act provides that all ballots for the same office shall be identical or as nearly alike as possible. The Act does permit the Clerk to make such changes to some or all of the ballots as he or she considers necessary or desirable to allow electors with visual impairments to vote without assistance. The use of the electronic vote tabulators does not allow for large print on the ballots as the equipment would not be able to read the ballot if the ovals are marked, and would not line up with those being used on the regular ballot face.

### USING A MAGNIFIER:

#### Voter Requirements:

- two (2) magnifiers will be placed in the front reception area in the event a voter wishes to use the equipment to vote;
- the voter will have to ask to use the magnifier.

#### Staff Requirements:

- ensure that election officials are trained to offer a magnifier, when requested;
- Municipal staff/election officials to double check with those voters that they suspect may be able to benefit from the use of the magnifiers

Persons with disabilities can complete the ballot in the comfort of their home. If the person requires additional assistance, he/she can come to the municipal office to obtain further aid with regards to his or her right to vote.

Secrecy is the important aspect of a municipal election process and compromising that aspect may hinder voter confidence. All efforts will be taken to ensure secrecy when assisting persons with disabilities.

Persons with disabilities may be accompanied by a support person at the municipal office in order to complete their ballot. In addition, the Returning Officer can assist the voter in casting his/her vote. Prior to assisting, the Returning Officer shall, in conjunction with the person with the disability, determine the extent to which he/she need assistance and the best way in which this assistance can be provided. This may include actually marking the ballot as directed by the person with the disability. Where a voting place may be located in an institution or retirement home, the Returning Officer can attend to voters in their specific living areas or at their bedside to assist them to vote. An Assistant Returning Officer, Deputy Returning Officers, or Election Officials are sworn to an oath of secrecy.

## **5. FEEDBACK PROCESS**

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

- 1) Telephone 519-793-3522 x229 Clerk Mary Lynn Standen  
519-793-3522 x236 Deputy Clerk/ Cathy Addison  
& Accessibility Coordinator
- 2) In person Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula  
#56 Lindsay Rd. #5  
R.R. #2  
Lion's Head, Ont. N0H 1W0
- 3) Fax 519-793-3823
- 4) Email [marylynn.nbp@amtelecom.net](mailto:marylynn.nbp@amtelecom.net) or [cathya.nbp@amtelecom.net](mailto:cathya.nbp@amtelecom.net)
- 5) Mail Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula  
#56 Lindsay Rd. #5  
R.R. #2  
Lion's Head, Ont. N0H 1W0

The customer service feedback form is available on the municipal website at [www.northbrucepeninsula.ca](http://www.northbrucepeninsula.ca) or at the municipal office. If you need a copy or want to return a completed form, please call Cathy Addison, Accessibility Coordinator at 519-793-3522 x 236 for further information. Each completed form is reviewed by the Accessibility Coordinator and any anticipated action will be responded to in a timely fashion.

The feedback process provides election officials 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.

## **6. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **Municipality of Northern Bruce Peninsula – Clerks Department**

The Clerk's Department is located at the Municipal Office at 56 Lindsay Road #5, R.R. #2, Lion's Head, Ontario. The Deputy Clerk is also the Accessibility Coordinator and would be happy to assist or answer specific provisions for those persons with disabilities. See Section 2 for additional contract information.

The Municipality's website [www.northbrucepeninsula.ca](http://www.northbrucepeninsula.ca) has a section dedicated for the 2010 elections which will be updated throughout the election year.

### **Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing – Election Website**

This website contains information about municipal elections, The Province of Ontario 2010 Municipal Elections Candidates Guide and the Ministry's commitment to promote greater accessibility for voters and candidates with disabilities at [www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page219.aspx](http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page219.aspx).

## **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/mcscs/programs/accessibility>

## **Service Ontario – e-Laws**

This website contains all current statutes including Municipal Elections Act, 1996, The Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, at [www.e-laws.gov.on.ca](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca)