



CALEDON
VOTES

Municipal Election 2026

Accessibility Plan

Index

| | |
|--|---|
| Introduction | 2 |
| Purpose and Scope | 2 |
| Legislative Requirements | 2 |
| Definitions | 3 |
| Accessibility Training for Election Officials | 4 |
| Elections Communication and Information | 5 |
| Alternative Formats | 5 |
| Notice of Temporary Disruptions in Goods, Services, and Facilities | 5 |
| Voting Locations | 5 |
| Consultation with Accessibility Advisory Committee | 5 |
| Signage and Mapping..... | 6 |
| Parking | 6 |
| Entrance to Voting Locations..... | 6 |
| Interior Voting Area..... | 6 |
| Accessible Voting Booths | 7 |
| Voting Methods and Assistance | 7 |
| Accessible Voting Technology | 7 |
| Voting by Proxy | 7 |
| Support Persons..... | 7 |
| Service Animals..... | 8 |
| Institutions or Retirement Homes..... | 8 |
| Home Voting Service..... | 8 |
| Post-Election Reporting | 8 |
| Feedback and Inquiries..... | 8 |

Introduction

The Town of Caledon is committed to ensuring the 2026 Municipal Election is accessible to all, including voters, candidates, employees and volunteers who participate in the election. The 2026 Accessible Election Plan supports and strengthens the Town's commitment to addressing accessibility requirements of persons with disabilities.

Purpose and Scope

This plan is intended to highlight measures that the Town will implement to ensure the 2026 Municipal Election is accessible for all. This includes:

1. Identifying and eliminating barriers for persons with disabilities;
2. Ensuring electoral services are accessible to all voters and candidates; and
3. Creating a positive voting experience.

This plan is applicable to all election officials, resources and facilities used by the Town for the municipal election.

Legislative Requirements

The Clerk is responsible for conducting municipal elections and establishing policies and procedures to ensure all voters can fully participate in the 2026 Municipal Election. This plan is based on the accessibility requirements outlined under the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

Municipal Elections Act, 1996, as amended

The Municipal Elections Act states the following with respect to conducting an accessible election:

- 12.1 (1) A clerk who is responsible for conducting an election shall have regard to the needs of electors and candidates with disabilities.
- 12.1 (2) The clerk shall prepare a plan regarding the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and shall make the plan available to the public before voting day in a regular election.
- 12.1 (3) Within 90 days after voting day in a regular election, the clerk shall prepare a report about the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities and shall make the report available to the public.
- 41 (3) The clerk shall 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 the assistance referred to in paragraph 4 of subsection 52 (1).

- 45 (2) In establishing the locations of voting places, the clerk shall ensure that each voting place is accessible to electors with disabilities.
- 45 (9) To allow an elector with a disability to vote, a deputy returning officer shall attend on the elector anywhere within the area designated as the voting place.

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 a practice. (*Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*)

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*. (*Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*)

Guide Dog means a dog trained as a guide for a blind person and having the qualifications prescribed by the regulations. (*Blind Persons' Rights Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. B.7.*)

Service Animal an animal is a service animal for a persons with a disability if,

- (a) the animal can be readily identified as one that is being used by the person for reasons relating to the person's disability, as a result of visual indicators such as the vest or harness worn by the animal; or

- (b) the person provides documentation from one of the following regulated health professionals confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability:
- (i) A member of the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario.
 - (ii) A member of the College of Chiropractors of Ontario.
 - (iii) A member of the College of Nurses of Ontario.
 - (iv) A member of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario.
 - (v) A member of the College of Optometrists of Ontario.
 - (vi) A member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario.
 - (vii) A member of the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario.
 - (viii) A member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario.
 - (ix) A member of the College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario. (*O. Reg. 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards*)

Support Persons means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies the person with a disability in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods, services or facilities. (*O. Reg. 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards*)

Accessibility Training for Election Officials

Accessibility training will be developed and provided to all election officials. All election officials carrying out election related duties will be trained to ensure that persons with disabilities are served in a way that accommodates their needs.

Accessibility training and reference material will include:

- Legislative requirements under the *AODA, 2005* and *Integrated Accessibility Standards*.
- How to interact and communication with persons with various types of disability
- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person.
- How to use voting equipment and assistive devices to deliver election assistance to voters.
- What to do if a person is having difficulty accessing election information/services.

Elections Communication and Information

The 2026 Accessible Election Plan will be made available at Town Hall in-print and digitally on the Town's website.

Alternative formats will be made available upon request.

Alternative Formats

Election officials will provide electors and candidates with disabilities election materials in a timely manner and in a format that takes into account their disability and accessibility needs. Election material provided in an accessible format will be at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons. Election officials will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

Notice of Temporary Disruptions in Goods, Services, and Facilities

Should there be a temporary disruption in the delivery of election information or services, election officials shall provide notice on the Town's election website, at the location of the disruption (i.e. posted on doors and at service counters, etc.) and when possible, in the local media.

The notice shall include the following information:

- Description of the service disruption;
- Reason for the disruption;
- Anticipated duration of the disruption; and
- An alternative means of obtaining the service or information, if available.

Voting Locations

As required by Section 45 (2) of the Municipal Elections Act, in establishing the locations of voting places, the Clerk shall ensure each voting place is accessible to electors with disabilities.

Consultation with Accessibility Advisory Committee

Election officials will partner with the Town's Accessibility Advisory Committee on the review and selection of voting locations to ensure they are selected with consideration from those with lived experiences. Both staff and members of the committee will conduct in person reviews of all potential voting locations to identify and remove barriers. A checklist will be developed to assess whether potential voting locations meet key accessibility criteria and assist in determining optimal locations for voting places.

Signage and Mapping

Signage will be placed on exterior doors to indicate the entrance to voting locations. Internal directional signage will be used as necessary to direct individuals to the voting location within a building. All election related signage used at voting locations will be high contrast and placed at a low height to ensure visibility for individuals in wheelchairs.

A site map of all advance voting and Election Day locations will be available on the Town's election website. Site maps will clearly identify accessible parking spaces and entrances to the voting location.

Parking

Designated parking for individuals with disabilities will be provided in close proximity to the entrance of voting locations where possible. Accessible parking spaces will be clearly marked, located on firm and level ground and compliant with the Town's Traffic By-law.

Entrance to Voting Locations

All entrances to voting locations will be accessible and barrier free. Entrances will be accessible by use of power door operator or automatic sliding door. Where applicable, the hardware is to be accessible and operable by a person using a closed fist.

If these conditions cannot be met, doors will be propped open in a safe manner, or an alternative entrance will be provided.

A greeter will be available to assist with opening doors for electors and directing them to a voting place as necessary.

Routine checks will be made to ensure all entrances remain barrier free throughout each voting day.

Curbside voting will be provided at an elector's vehicle should they be unable to enter a voting location due to disability in accordance with Section 45 (9) of the *Municipal Elections Act*.

Interior Voting Area

Access to the interior voting area and voting booth shall be level and easily traversed. Voting shall take place on one level of a building, where possible, with no stairs or similar obstructions creating a barrier to access.

Any doormats or carpeting shall be level with the floor to prevent potential tripping hazards. All voting areas are to be well lit and have seating available where possible.

When determining the set-up of voting locations, consideration will be given to ensure that appropriate clearance is provided for electors to maneuver as easily as possible.

Accessible Voting Booths

Accessible voting booths will be available at each voting place. Voting booths will be low in height and have a wide area to allow for individuals who use a wheelchair or scooter to vote independently and secretively.

A large print Notice of Ballot shall be displayed in close proximity to the voting booth. Magnifying sheets will be made available to assist an individual with low vision and pads of paper will be provided to assist in communicating with electors who have hearing impairments.

Voting Methods and Assistance

Accessible Voting Technology

Each polling station will have a minimum one polling station containing enhanced accessible voting technology at the highest available levels, where secrecy of the ballot is maintained for electors with visual or mobility accessibility considerations.

Voting by Proxy

Eligible electors may appoint another individual to act as a voting proxy to cast a ballot on his or her behalf in accordance with Section 44 of the *Municipal Elections Act*. The appointment must be made on the prescribed form available at the Office of the Clerk and on the Town's website. The person being appointed as a proxy is required to take a statutory declaration before a Commissioner of Oaths. Staff in the Office of the Clerk can administer this Oath (Town Hall, 6311 Old Church Road, Caledon ON L7C 1J6) during office hours.

Voting Proxy forms can be submitted after nominations have been certified by the Clerk on Monday, August 24, 2026 at 4:00 pm., unless additional nominations are required under Section 33(5) of the *Municipal Elections Act*.

Once complete, the voting proxy may be exercised on any advance voting day or on election day. An appointment as a proxy does not remain in effect after voting day of the election.

Support Persons

Persons with disabilities may be accompanied by a support person within all voting locations and a person with a disability will not be prevented from having access to the support person while on the premises.

In addition, the Deputy Returning Officer in each voting place can assist the voter in casting their vote while maintaining its secrecy. Prior to entering the voting booth, the Deputy Returning Officer shall, in conjunction with the person with the disability, determine the extent to which they need assistance and the best way in which this assistance can

be provided. This may include marking the ballot as directed by the person with the disability.

Service Animals

Electors requiring service animals or guide dogs are permitted to be accompanied by those animals at all voting locations. Candidates and scrutineers are permitted to be accompanied by a service animal or guide dog at all voting locations and other designated election locations.

Institutions or Retirement Homes

Where a voting place is located in an institution or retirement home, the Deputy Returning Officer can attend on voters in their specific living areas or at their bedside to assist them to vote. All Deputy Returning Officers are sworn to an Oath of Secrecy.

Home Voting Service

Home voting service will be available in limited quantities to eligible electors unable to leave their home to cast their ballot in person. Individuals can make a request for home voting service with the Office of the Clerk.

Election officials will attend the elector's home at a schedule time to administer the voting process. Marked ballots will be sealed by the elector and returned to Town Hall by election officials and placed in a secured ballot bag until voting day.

Post-Election Reporting

In accordance with section 12.1(3) of the Municipal Elections Act, the Clerk make a report publicly available, within 90 days after voting day in a regular election, about the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities. The report will be made available to the public through the Town's website.

Feedback and Inquiries

Feedback and inquiries about the manner in which election services are provided to persons with disabilities may be submitted to the Office of the Clerk at the Town of Caledon:

Telephone: 905-584-2272

E-mail: elections@caledon.ca

In Person or Mail:

Town Hall

Attn: Municipal Clerk

6311 Old Church Road

Caledon, ON L7E 1J6