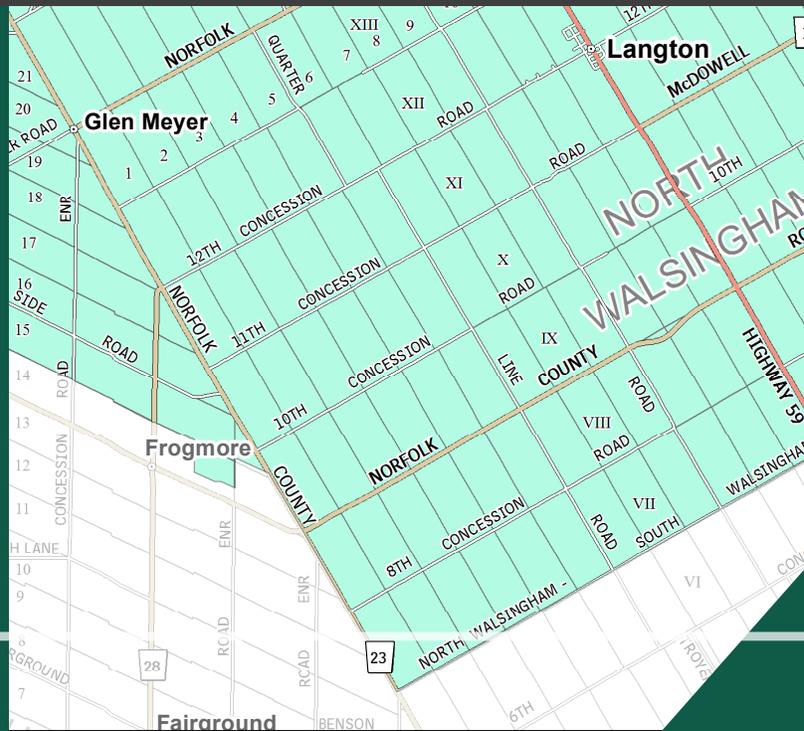


# Accessibility Plan

for Norfolk County's  
2021 Ward 2  
By-Election



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## **Introduction:**

The Clerk is responsible for the proper legislative and administrative conduct of municipal elections in Norfolk County. In accordance with the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA), the Clerk is authorized to establish procedures and implement appropriate measures, within budgetary limits, to provide persons with disabilities the opportunity to participate fully in Municipal Elections. Accordingly, the 2021 Municipal By-Election will be conducted in such a manner to ensure that:

1. Candidates and electors with disabilities have reasonable access to all election information and services.
2. Persons with disabilities have full access to Voting Ballot Return Stations/Replacement Voting Kit Location/Ballot Counting Location.
3. Persons with disabilities have access to alternative methods of voting assistance that will permit them to vote independently and privately, mark their ballot and, in the event their disability cannot be accommodated through such alternative methods as are provided, a person with disabilities will have access to assistance from an Election Official who has received accessible customer service training in accordance with the *AODA*.
4. Feedback regarding the conduct of previous Municipal Elections from persons with disabilities is collected and documented so that in future Municipal Elections, available resources for the accommodation of persons with disabilities can be effectively directed to best satisfy community needs.

In accordance with Subsection 12.1 (2) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, following the election, the Clerk will submit a report to Council concerning the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities. The report will include specific recommendations for further initiatives to ensure that, in future, persons with all types of disability are able to independently and privately mark their ballots.

## **Staff Training and Election Assistance**

### **Staff Training:**

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. How to use voting equipment, and assistive devices to deliver election services.
4. What to do if a person is having difficulty accessing election information or services.

**Provision of Election Information:**

All reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that candidates and electors with disabilities are 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 requester and the Clerk. Notice of this provision is located on [Norfolk County's website](#) and is included in election notices placed in the local newspaper. In addition, candidates with disabilities may access the election information available on the County's Website using personal assistive technology such as screen readers.

**Notice of Temporary Service Disruption:**

If there is a temporary disruption in the delivery of election information or services that could impact a person with a disability, the Office of the Clerk shall provide public notice on the County's 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 as outlined in Norfolk County [Policy EBS-56: Corporate Notice of Service Disruption Process](#) and on [FO-112 Notice of Service Disruption](#). Every effort shall be made to provide alternative methods for the provision of information or service to persons with disabilities.



FO-112  
Updated: Sept 16

**Notice of Service Disruption**

Disruption: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason: \_\_\_\_\_

This service will be unavailable from: \_\_\_\_\_

To: \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate routes, facilities or services:

**Thank you for your understanding**

For more information about this service disruption, please contact:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_



**Staff Assistance:**

Office of the Clerk staff are 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:

Phone 519-426-5870 Ext. 6269  
E-mail [clerks@norfolkcounty.ca](mailto:clerks@norfolkcounty.ca)  
Mail Norfolk County Administration Building  
Clerks Department  
50 Colborne Street South  
Simcoe, ON, N3Y 4H3

**Accessible Formats and Communication Supports:**

Accessible formats and communication supports available upon request.



For more information contact:  
Phone 519-426-5870 Ext. 6269  
E-mail [accessibility@norfolkcounty.ca](mailto:accessibility@norfolkcounty.ca)  
Mail Norfolk County – Accessibility  
50 Colborne Street South  
Simcoe, ON, N3Y 4H3

**Assistance to Candidates and/or Scrutineers**

**Service Animals:**

Candidates and scrutineers are permitted to be accompanied by a service animal at all Voting Places/Replacement Voting Kit Location/Ballot Return Station/Ballot Counting Location and other designated election locations.

**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.

**Assistance to Electors**

Vote by Mail has been authorized for the Ward 2 Councillor By-Election to be held in 2021. Any elector who requires an accessible accommodation to complete the vote-by-mail process shall contact the Norfolk County Clerk to make arrangements for an appropriate accommodation which will be completed by appointment only at the Norfolk County Administration Office.

A Vote by Mail Kit will be provided to every person who qualifies to be an elector. The Kit will either be mailed or directly provided to each qualified elector.

The Vote by Mail Kit will consist of:

- A voting instruction sheet
- A composite ballot
- An inner ballot envelope
- A security slip
- An outer return envelope
- Such other necessary material as the Municipal Clerk determines

### **Ballot Return Station /Ballot Counting Location**

For the purpose of this plan, Ballot Return Station/Ballot Counting Location includes the exterior parking and walkways associated with the location, including the dropbox and/or interior of facility where applicable. Ballot return stations will conform to the barrier-free design requirements of [Norfolk County's Accessibility Design Guidelines](#).

### **Accessible Route**

An easily navigable route will be marked for entry into the Replacement Voting Kit Location/Ballot Return Station and within the Replacement Voting Kit Location.

### **Parking**

Designated parking for voters with disabilities is to be provided in close proximity to the entrance of the Replacement Voting Kit Location/Ballot Return Stations, where possible. Accessible parking spaces will be clearly marked and will be on firm and level ground. Routine checks will be made to ensure all entrances remain barrier free through the course of the day.

### **Entrance/Exit to the Ballot Return Station**

All access to the Ballot Return Station will be easy to access and barrier-free. Every effort will be made to ensure that the pathway to the Ballot Return Station is wide enough for a wheelchair, scooter, other assistive device or service animal to navigate safely and easily.

### **Support Persons**

Voters with disabilities may be accompanied by a support person within the Replacement Voting Kit Location and to the Ballot Return Station. In addition, an Election Official at the Replacement Voting Location can assist the voter in completing the Replacement Voting Kit.

### **Assistive Personal Equipment**

Voters with disabilities may use assistive personal devices including wheelchairs, walkers, white canes, walking canes, note taking devices, portable magnifiers,

recording machines, assistive listening devices, personal oxygen tanks and devices for grasping.

### **Service Animals**

Service Animals will be permitted at the Ballot Return Stations and in the Replacement Voting Kit Location/Ballot Counting Location.

### **Feedback Process**

Feedback about the manner in which election services are provided to persons with disabilities may be submitted to the Office of the Clerk through a variety of methods including:

Phone	519-426-5870 Ext. 6269
E-mail	<a href="mailto:clerks@norfolkcounty.ca">clerks@norfolkcounty.ca</a> or <a href="mailto:accessibility@norfolkcounty.ca">accessibility@norfolkcounty.ca</a>
Online	<a href="#">Norfolk County Feedback Form</a>
Mail	Norfolk County Administration Building 50 Colborne Street South Simcoe, ON, N3Y 4H3

The feedback process provides election staff 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.

Feedback from our customers gives us the opportunity to learn and improve. Feedback may be provided by an individual with a disability in a format that is most convenient for them such as by telephone, in person, in writing, by e-mail or other alternative method. All feedback will be kept in strict confidence and used to improve the delivery of accessible customer service. A response to the feedback will be provided in the manner in which it was received.

### **Additional Information**

#### **On April 6, 2021, the Acting Clerk declared an Emergency under the Municipal Elections Act, s. 53(1)**

At any time during the election period if the Clerk determines a postponement or delay in the delivery of election information or services, the Office of the Clerk shall provide public notice on the County's website, at the physical site of the disruption and when possible in the local media. The notice shall include the reason for the emergency, anticipated duration and a description of alternative methods of delivering the information or service as outlined in Norfolk County's Service Disruption Policy. Every effort shall be made to provide alternative methods for the provision of information or service to persons with disabilities.

**Norfolk County – Office of the Clerk:**

The Office of the Clerk is located at Norfolk County’s Administration Building in Simcoe. The Clerk’s office staff can answer any questions you may have about running for office, the election in general or specific provisions for persons with disabilities.

Phone	519-426-5870 Ext. 6269
E-mail	<a href="mailto:clerks@norfolkcounty.ca">clerks@norfolkcounty.ca</a>
Mail	Norfolk County Administration Building Clerks Department 50 Colborne Street South Simcoe, ON, N3Y 4H3

**Norfolk County 2021 By-Election Ward 2 – Website:**

The [County’s 2021 by-election Ward 2 information website](#) is continuously updated to reflect the most recent developments and information. You are invited to visit the website for an up-to-date list of candidates and other important messages or events throughout the election.

**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 [www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page219.aspx](http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page219.aspx).

**Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility:**

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: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/accessibility-in-ontario>

**Service Ontario – e-Laws:**

This website contains all current statues including the Municipal Elections Act, 1996; the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation O.Reg. 191/11 [www.e-laws.gov.on.ca](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca).