



THE CORPORATION OF THE  
*Township Of Pelee*

**ELECTION ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

**THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF PELEE**

**2022 MUNICIPAL ELECTION**

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## **Introduction**

The Township of Pelee is committed to making the 2022 Municipal Election accessible by working to accommodate the needs of electors by removing barriers to vote for persons with disabilities. The 2022 Election Accessibility Plan supports and strengthens the Township's commitment and efforts to respond to the needs of persons with disabilities. The focus of this Plan is to ensure that the election is accessible to all electors and candidates, to identify and eliminate barriers for persons with accessibility needs and to create a positive voting experience.

## **Legislative Requirements**

The Clerk is responsible for the proper legislative and administrative conduct of municipal elections in the Township of Pelee. In accordance with the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, the Clerk is required to establish procedures and provide appropriate measures to ensure that persons with accessibility needs have the opportunity to participate fully in the 2022 Municipal Election.

The Municipal Elections Act, 1996 S.O. 1996, Chapter 32, section 12 states: 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.

## **Development of the Election Accessibility Plan**

This plan will address the specific requirements pertaining to accessibility in relation to the 2022 Municipal Election in the Township of Pelee. This Plan is a "living" document which will be improved and updated as best practices are identified and new opportunities of improvement arise. During the development process of the initial Election Accessibility Plan, the following steps will be implemented:

1. Establish staff training standards and practices directly related to the Election to ensure that people with disabilities are able to vote in a positive environment, and ensure that all Election Officials recognize that in every way possible a voter's needs are to be accommodated whenever possible.
2. Following the Election, submit a report to Council about the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with disabilities.

## **Voting Method – Vote by Mail**

The Township of Pelee has chosen the Vote by Mail method of voting to facilitate the opportunity for electors to cast their vote from anywhere and at any time, and to ensure inclusion of seasonal residents. The Municipal Office is accessible and barrier free if the elector wishes to drop their Election Return Envelope in person. *Due to needed structural repairs, the accessibility ramp is out of order at the Municipal Office until further notice as of September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022. As such, Municipal Staff will accommodate persons with disabilities that may be affected by assisting outside upon request by phone, email or verbally until such time as the ramp is accessible again.*

## Mail-in-Ballots:

The Township of Pelee will be conducting the 2022 municipal election through the mail-in ballot process. Candidate's campaign election material and campaigning is prohibited on any property under control or ownership of the Township, including parks and ballot return stations.

Electors can either return the Vote by Mail kit by mail using Canada Post mail, or they can return their envelope to the Municipal Office, 1045 West Shore Road, Pelee Island.

On Election Day, **October 24, 2022**, electors can drop off their return envelopes at the Ballot Return Station location:

- Municipal Office, 1045 West Shore Road, Pelee Island from 8:30 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

## Ballot Return Station

The Office of the Township Clerk will undertake the following actions to ensure that the Ballot Return Station location is accessible and barrier free for all electors as required by the Municipal Elections Act, 1996:

- Conduct a site inspect of the Municipal Office ensuring that the facility has:
  - Barrier free path of travel from the parking lot/sidewalk into the main entrance of the voting location;
  - Adequate lighting.
- Provisions of adequate and appropriate signage to direct voters;
- Meet with Council to receive feedback on this Plan;
- Ensure disruption of service or last minute changes to Ballot Return Station location are posted in real time on:
  - The Town's website and social media; and
  - At the site of disruption, if applicable.

## Voting Assistance

In addition to the Mail-in Ballot, persons with disabilities may attend the Municipal Office where accessible marking equipment will be provided. Additionally, electors attending the Municipal Office on Voting Day will have access to assistive devices and may request the assistance of a designated election official to mark their ballot.

### Assistive Devices

Election staff will make available assistive devices that will aid those with disabilities in marking their ballot. The following aids will be made available to electors:

- Enlarged ballots for people with low vision
- Pads of paper and pens for people with impaired hearing
- Easy grip pens

### Support persons and Service Animals

Persons with accessibility needs may be accompanied by a support person and/or service animal within the Ballot Return Station location. Support persons may mark the ballot for them, or read the ballot aloud subject to taking the prescribed oath administered by an election official. Support persons must take the oath before marking the ballot. If necessary, the support person may also assist the elector in delivering the ballot, in the secrecy folder, to election staff.

#### Assistance to Candidates

All candidates will be provided with a copy of the Candidate's Guide to Accessible Elections produced by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs in partnership with the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO).

#### Information – Alternative Formats

Election information will be made available through a range of mediums and in diverse formats, including:

- Information available on the Township's website, pelee.org;
- Large print documents (upon request);
- Material in plain/clear language for electors, service providers, candidates and others who may provide assistance to an elector; and,
- Notices posted on community bulletin boards in municipal and private facilities for public awareness.

#### Accessibility Training for Election Staff

Accessibility training will be developed and provided to all election staff. All staff carrying out election duties will be trained to recognize and ensure that persons with accessibility needs are served in a way that accommodates their needs. Training shall include:

- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of accessibility needs;
- How to interact with persons with accessibility needs who use assistive devices or require assistance of a service animal or support person;
- How to use voting equipment and supplies in an accessible manner to deliver election services; and,
- Steps to take if a person is having difficulty accessing election information or services.

#### Post-election Reporting

In accordance with section 12.1 (3) of the Municipal Elections Act, 1996, the Clerk shall submit a report to Council, within 90 days after voting day in a regular election, about the identification, removal and prevention of barriers that affect electors and candidates with accessibility needs. The report will be posted on the Township's website in an accessible format.

#### Customer Service Feedback

Public feedback about the manner in which election services are provided to persons with accessible needs may be submitted to the Township Clerk through a variety of methods:

- Telephone: 519-724-2931

- E-mail: [info@pelee.ca](mailto:info@pelee.ca)
- Mail or in person: 1045 West Shore Rd, Pelee Island, ON N0R 1M0

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.

### **Additional Information**

The Township of Pelee's website is continuously updated to reflect the most recent election developments and information. Visit the site for an Official List of Candidates and other important messages or events throughout the election year at [pelee.org](http://pelee.org). Please note that the Clerk, at any time, has the right to amend this Plan to facilitate the vote, and security of the vote. The Clerk's ruling on any interpretation of this document is final.