

# WOODSTOCK PUBLIC LIBRARY

## Policy Manual

<b>Section:</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Personnel</b>
<b>Subsection</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>General</b>
<b>Paragraph</b>	<b>4.5.7</b>	<b>Accessibility</b>

### **Policy Statement**

The Woodstock Public Library is committed to providing equal treatment to people with disabilities with respect to the use and benefit of Library services, programs, goods and facilities in a manner that respects their dignity and that is equitable in relation to the broader public. This commitment extends to visitors and employees with visible or non-visible disabilities.

The Chief Executive Officer for the Woodstock Public Library shall provide, or arrange for the provision of access to, accessible materials where they exist. Further to which, library staff shall inform the public of the availability of accessible materials, and provide these materials in an accessible format or appropriate communication support upon request.

### **Purpose**

This policy is intended to provide the overarching framework to guide the review and development of other Woodstock Public Library policies, standards, procedures, By-laws and guidelines to comply with the standards developed under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005*, S.O. 2005, c. 11. (AODA).

### **Application**

This Policy applies to all Library employees, volunteers and to any individual or organization that provides goods, services or facilities to the public or other third parties on behalf of the Library, in accordance with the legislation.

### **Principles**

Library services, programs, goods and facilities are to be available to people with disabilities in a manner that:

- Is free from discrimination;
- Reflects the principles of dignity and independence;
- Seeks to provide integrated services;
- Provides an opportunity equitable to others to obtain, use and benefit from the goods or services; and
- Takes into consideration a person's disability.

### **Responsibilities**

The CEO is responsible for reviewing this Policy annually and recommending amendments to ensure on-going compliance with regulated accessibility standards and legislated obligations. The CEO or designate shall provide advice and direction on the

implementation of this Policy. Supervisors and Managers shall ensure that they and their staff are familiar with and comply with this Policy.

**Accessibility Office (Chief Executive Officer) is responsible for:**

- Collecting information about requests and feedback from departments;
- Monitoring compliance with this procedure on an annual basis; and
- Providing a summary of the requests and feedback to the Library Board at their regular meetings.

**The CEO and Managers are responsible for:**

- Creating and maintaining service free from discrimination toward persons with disabilities;
- Budgeting for the costs associated with accessible formats and communication supports of materials originating from their departments; and
- Monitoring situations where requests for accessible formats and communication supports have not been provided and determine ways to make the information more convertible in the future.

**Managers and Supervisors are responsible for:**

- Creating and maintaining service free from discrimination toward persons with disabilities;
- Ensuring employees are aware of this procedure and are logging requests and feedback that are received by their departments with the CEO's Office;
- Tracking costs associated with requests;
- Ensuring employees are providing customers with the requested accessible format and communication support;
- Ensuring that staff provide residents with an explanation as to why information or communications are unconvertible; and
- Overseeing the provision of a summary of the unconvertible information or communication support to the resident.

**Monitoring/Contraventions**

Failure to comply with the AODA regulations can result in administrative penalties. Supervisors and Managers shall monitor current practices to ensure compliance. Failure to comply with this Policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

**Accessible Formats and Communication Supports**

The Library will notify customers that accessible formats will be provided.

Except as otherwise provided by AODA, the Woodstock Public Library shall, upon request, and in consultation with the person making the request, provide or make arrangements to provide accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities. Accessible formats and communication supports shall be provided in a timely manner, taking into account the person's accessibility needs, and at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons, in accordance with the Accessible Formats and Communication Supports Procedures (see appendix A).

This does not apply to products and product labels, unconvertible information or communications and information that the Library does not control directly or indirectly through a contractual relationship. If it is determined that information or communications are unconvertible, the department shall provide the person requesting the information or communication with:

- (a) an explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible;
- (b) a summary of the unconvertible information or communications.

When asked, the Library will provide or arrange for customers to get accessible formats of library materials, where they exist. Materials may include literary, musical, artistic and dramatic works.

Accessible formats are alternatives to standard print. Accessible formats will include large print, electronic formats, video, DVDS, CDs, audio and Braille.

When the Library acquires new materials, the accessibility needs of customers will be considered. The Library will ensure that as many customers as possible can access the new collections. The Library will use the inter-library loan system to provide users with accessible materials to suit varying needs and disabilities.

The Library's special collections contain a variety of rare and archival materials that require special handling and treatment. In order to preserve these materials, the Library will not provide these types of materials in any additional formats.

#### **Procurement of Goods, Services, Facilities and Kiosks**

When procuring goods, services, self-service kiosks or facilities, the Library shall incorporate accessibility criteria and features, unless it is not feasible (practicable). If not practicable, the Library shall provide an explanation, upon request.

#### **Training**

All Library employees, volunteers and third parties providing goods and services on the Library's behalf shall be required to undergo training on the requirements of AODA accessibility standards and on the *Human Rights Code* as it pertains to persons with disabilities. The training provided shall be appropriate to the duties of the employee, volunteer or third party. Training shall take place as soon as is practicable and upon completion, the Library shall keep a record of the training provided including the dates on which accessibility training took place.

#### **Feedback**

Feedback on how services were delivered to people with disabilities shall be invited, forwarded to the appropriate personnel, responded to, documented and tracked. Feedback shall be collected by phone at 519-539-4801 by e-mail to [info@woodstock.library.on.ca](mailto:info@woodstock.library.on.ca) and in-person at any of the Library's service desks. Feedback shall be accepted in accessible formats and with other communication supports as required. Feedback given to any library service desk, person or department shall be forwarded to the CEO's office which shall investigate the feedback with the

appropriate Department Head and ensure that the person who provided the feedback receives a response within seven days.

#### **Documentation**

Documentation that describes this Policy and each of its requirements shall be maintained on the Library's website at [www.woodstock.library.on.ca](http://www.woodstock.library.on.ca) and provided to individuals, upon request, in the appropriate format or communication support.

### **Information and Communication Support Standards**

#### **Communication**

When communicating with a person with a disability, Library employees, volunteers and third party contractors shall do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability. Guidelines for communicating with people who have various types of disabilities are provided in Appendix B of the Accessible Formats and Communication Supports Procedures.

#### **Terminology**

When referring to people with disabilities, Library employees, volunteers and third party contractors shall use terminology that adheres to guidelines provided in the City of Woodstock's Accessibility Training for Customer Service.

#### **Accessible Websites and Web Content**

Internet websites and web content controlled directly by the Library or through a contractual relationship that allows for modification of the product shall conform to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, at Level A and AA where possible.

#### **Emergency Procedures, Plans and Information**

The Library shall provide all existing public emergency procedures, plans and public safety information, upon request in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports in a timely manner.

### **Employment Standards**

#### **Recruitment**

The Woodstock Public Library shall post information about the availability of accommodations for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment process. Job applicants who are individually selected for an interview and/or testing shall be notified that accommodations for material to be used in the process are available, upon request. The Library shall consult with any applicant who requests an accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's disability. Successful applicants shall be notified about the Library's policies for accommodating employees with disabilities as part of their offer of employment.

#### **Employee Supports**

The Library will inform employees of the policies used to support employees with disabilities, including policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability. The Library will provide this

information to new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment. The City will also provide updated information to all employees whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability.

#### **Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employee**

Upon an employee's request, the Library shall consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for:

- a) information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job; and
- b) information that is generally available to employees in the workplace.

The Library will consult with the employee making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

#### **Workplace Emergency Response Information**

If an employee's disability is such that workplace emergency response information is necessary, and the Library is aware of the need for accommodation, this information shall be provided to employees. In addition, this information shall be provided, with the employee's consent, to the person designated to provide assistance. The information shall undergo review when the employee moves to a different location, when the employee's overall accommodation needs or plans are reviewed and when the Library reviews its general emergency response plan.

#### **Documented Individual Accommodation Plans**

A written process for the development and maintenance of documented individual accommodation plans shall be developed for employees with disabilities, if requested. These plans shall include information regarding accessible formats and communications supports. If requested, the plans shall include individualized workplace emergency response information.

#### **Return to Work Process**

The Library shall have in place a documented return to work process for employees returning due to disability and requiring disability-related accommodations. This return to work process will outline the steps that the Library may take to facilitate the return to work.

#### **Performance Management and Career Development and Redeployment**

The Library shall take into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities as well as any individual accommodation plans when providing career development, performance management and when considering redeployment.

All of the aforementioned employee standards shall be in place by no later than January 1<sup>st</sup> 2014.

## Schedule A Definitions

**Accessible Formats** - may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio, video, DVDs, CDs and electronic formats, Braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

**Communications** - means the interaction between two or more persons or entities, or any combination of them, where information is provided, sent or received.

**Communication Supports** - may include, but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communications.

**Conversion ready**-an electronic or digital format that facilitates conversion into an accessible format.

**Disability** - is defined, per Section 2 of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, S.O. 2005, c. 11 and the Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19, as follows:

- 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.”

**Electronic Text** - presentation of information in order to enable various computer programs to convert the information into a “readable” format. All illustrations or graphical information is explained fully in text.

**Information** - includes data, facts and knowledge that exists in any format, including text, audio, digital or images, and that conveys meaning. The information and communications standards do not apply to the following:

1. Products and product labels.
2. Unconvertible information or communications.
3. Information that the Library does not control directly or indirectly through a contractual relationship.

**Kiosk** – an interactive electronic terminal, including a point-of-sale device, intended for public use that allows users to access one or more services or products or both.

**Service Animals** - are defined, per Section 4(9) of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, O. Reg. 429/07, as follows:

“an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability:

- a. if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
- b. if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.”

**Support Person** - is defined, per Section 4(8) Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, O. Reg. 429/07, as follows:

“a support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.”

**Unconvertible** - information or communications are unconvertible if it is not technically feasible to convert the information or communications or the technology to convert the information or communications is not readily available.

## **Schedule B**

### **Accessible Formats and Communication Supports procedures**

#### **Application**

This procedure applies to Library employees, volunteers and other persons or organizations that provide goods, services or facilities to the public or other third parties on behalf of the Library, in accordance with the Integrated Accessibility Regulation developed under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005, S.O.2005, c.11.* and in support of the Woodstock Public Library Accessibility Policy.

The procedures apply to all materials and communications produced by the Woodstock Public Library for release to the public whether produced in house or on behalf of the Library (i.e. consultant reports). It does not apply to unconvertible information and information that the Library does not control directly or indirectly through a contractual relationship.

Each publication should be produced in such a way as to reduce or eliminate barriers in the original document. Adaptation to another format can be accommodated easily and quickly when accessibility is considered during the development.

#### **Procedure Description**

##### **Notification**

The Library will advise the public of the availability of accessible formats and communications supports by means of the following:

- A link on the Library’s website to the Accessible Formats information;
- Signage at every public service counter advising of the availability of Accessible formats and Communication Supports, if requested;

##### **Processing Requests**

Requests for an accessible format or communication support can be received by staff in person, by phone or by electronic formats such as emails or service requests. Upon receipt of a request, staff will complete the Accessible Format Request Form which is

forwarded to the CEO's office for record keeping purposes. The request is to be responded to by the appropriate operational staff

All Library staff shall, upon request, and in consultation with the person making the request, provide or make arrangements to provide accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities. Accessible formats and communication supports shall be provided in a timely manner, taking into account the person's accessibility needs and at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons.

### **Timeframe**

The timeframe for the conversion process of a document into an accessible format, or the provision of a communication support, can vary depending on the media chosen, the size, complexity, quality of source documents, and the number of documents to be converted. Documents shall be returned in a timely manner depending on the factors previously noted.

If the document being requested is the subject of a public consultation or has a set timeframe for public comment, the timeframe for document conversion and distribution must be taken into consideration.

### **Cost of Conversion**

When a member of the public requests a Library document in an accessible format or information with a communication support, the Library is responsible for the cost of conversion, materials and distribution of information.

Once the appropriate format or support is determined with the requestor, staff shall provide or arrange for the provision of the accessible formats and/or communication support for persons with disabilities.

If a staff member determines that information is unconvertible, they shall, in consultation with their manager, provide the person requesting the information or communication with:

- (a) a written explanation as to why the information or communications are unconvertible; and,
- (b) a summary of the unconvertible information or communication.

### **Common accessible formats**

Some of the most common accessible formats are (but not limited to):

- HTML or electronic text version on line that meet the WCAG 2.0 level A or AA;
- Text saved as a Word document;
- Large Text;
- Plain language versions; and
- Braille.

### **Common communication supports are (but not limited to):**

- Screen Reader software (eg: BrouseAloud on the Library's website);
- Verbal explanation of a written document;
- Video Captioning, transcripts;
- Sign language interpretation.



The Library also offers the following communication supports

- Kurzweil 1000 text-to speech software
- ZoomText Magnifier/Reader with Large Print Keyboard
- JAWS Professional Screen Reader
- Plustek OpticBook Scanner
- LifeStyle HD CCTV magnifying reader with 22 inch LCD screen.

See attached Guidelines for Communicating with People who have Disabilities (Appendix B) for more information.

**Enquiries**

For further information regarding this procedure, contact:  
The CEO's office.

**Appendices**

Appendix A- Accessible Formats Request Form

Appendix B- Guidelines for Communicating with People who have Disabilities

## Appendix A

### Request for Woodstock Public Library Documentation in an Accessible Format or with Communication Support

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*Required fields are marked with an asterisk ( \* )*

#### Personal Information

\* First Name:

\* Last Name:

#### Address

Street Number:

Street Name:

Unit/Apt./Suite:

City:

Postal Code:

\* Home Phone:

E-mail address:

#### Document Information

Name of Document:

Name and Date of Event:

#### Language Requested

\* Please select one

English

French Accessible format or communication support requested\* e.g. Braille, html, text etc. Please indicate any specific technical needs.

Date

\* What date do you require this information by?

Day  Month  Year

Personal information on this form is collected under the authority of section 367(1) of the Municipal Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.45. It will be used to provide a document or information produced by the Woodstock Public Library, as requested. Questions about this collection may be directed by mail to the CEO, Woodstock Public Library, 445 Hunter Street, Woodstock ON N4S 4G7.

## Appendix B

### **Guidelines for Communicating with People who have Disabilities**

*The following information is provided by the Ministry of Community and Social Services  
(Province of Ontario)*

#### **Deaf, oral deaf, deafened and hard hearing**

People who experience hearing loss may be Deaf, oral deaf, deafened or hard of hearing. People experiencing hearing loss may use assistive devices, like hearing aids, special telephones, sign language interpreters, various amplifiers or a pen and paper. They may also read lips or prefer to communicate through email, texting or a TTY.

TTY stands for Teletypewriter, a type of telephone that allows callers to send typed messages to each other across phone lines. TTY users can directly call other TTY numbers or they can connect with a Relay Service. A standard phone user can also place a call to a TTY user through the Relay Operator. You give the operator your name, the name of the person you are calling, and the number you wish to reach. Using the Relay Service locally is free. For long distance, standard long distance charges would apply. Here are suggested ways to best communicate with a person who has hearing loss:

- Attract the customer's attention before speaking. For example, try a gentle touch on the shoulder or wave of your hand;
- Don't shout;
- Make sure you are in a well lit area where your customer can see your face; and
- If the person uses a hearing aid, reduce background noise or move to a quieter area.

#### **Vision loss**

Did you know that few people who are blind have no vision? According to Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB), nine out of ten people who use their services have some degree of vision. Three million Canadians have difficulty reading conventional text. Vision loss can restrict someone's ability to read signs, locate landmarks, or see hazards. Some customers may use a guide dog or a white cane; others may not. Some customers simply need to view written materials-like documents, receipts, menus, brochures, instructions or labels-in large print, or with the help of a magnifier. Many also use readers which read information to them from an accessible document or an accessible website.

- Don't assume the individual can't see you;
- Identify yourself when you approach your customer and speak directly to him or her;
- Offer your elbow to guide the person. If they accept, walk slowly but wait for permission before doing so;
- Identify landmarks or other details to orient your customer to the environment around them;
- If you're giving directions or providing any information, be precise and descriptive. For example, if you're approaching a door stairs or an obstacle say so;
- Don't leave your customer in the middle of a room. Guide them to a chair or comfortable location. Don't walk away without saying goodbye and let them know what to expect next; and
- Offer to communicate pertinent information through email or links to websites where they can find more information.

## **Deafblind**

A person who is deafblind cannot see or hear to some degree. Many people who are deafblind will be accompanied by an intervenor, a professional who helps with communicating. Intervenors are trained in special sign language that involves touching the hands of the client in a two hand, manual alphabet or finger spelling. Keep these suggestions in mind when you serve a customer who is deafblind:

- Speak directly to your customer, not the intervenor;
- Identify yourself to the intervenor when you approach your customer who is deafblind; and
- A customer who is deafblind is likely to explain to you how to communicate with them or give you an assistance card or a note explaining how to communicate with them.

## **Learning Disabilities**

A learning disability refers to a variety of disorders that affect how a person acquires, retains, or takes information. People with learning disabilities just learn differently. Learning disabilities affect people from all backgrounds and are not caused by culture, language or a lack of motivation. Learning disabilities are specific impairments that can result in problems with reading and language based learning (dyslexia), problems with mathematics (dysgraphia). The disability may become apparent in your customer service interaction when the person has difficulty reading material or taking in and processing the information you are providing. Some tips:

- Take some time-people with some learning disabilities may take a little longer to process, understand and respond;
- Provide information in a way that works for your customer. For example, keep a pen and paper handy. That way, you can explain, and then review and repeat the information using your notes;
- If you're discussing confidential information, consider giving the notes to your customer or offering to destroy them; and
- Be prepared to explain any materials you provide for your customers.

## **Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities**

Developmental or intellectual disabilities can mildly or profoundly limit a person's ability to learn, communicate, do everyday physical activities and live independently. You may not be able to know that someone has this disability unless you are told, or you notice the way the person acts, asks questions or uses body language. However, they may understand you more than you realize. An example of a developmental disability would be Down's Syndrome. Here's some guidance:

- Don't assume what a person can or cannot do;
- Use plain language;
- Make sure your customer understands what you've said. You can be direct and ask: "Do you understand this";
- Provide one piece of information at a time. You can break down the information into simpler concepts, without exaggerating speech or gestures or being patronizing; and
- You may want to ask if the information needs to be repeated.

## **Mental Health Disabilities**

The important thing to remember when communicating with a person who has a mental health disability is to focus on completing the transaction in a calm, patient way and meeting the customer's needs. Mental health issues can affect a person's ability to think

clearly, concentrate or remember. Mental health disability is a broad classification for many disorders that can range in severity. Customers may experience anxiety due to phobias or panic disorders. Hallucinations, mood swings, and a deep lack of motivation may be signs of a mental health disability. A person may have a clinical depression or bipolar disorder. The major barrier for people with mental health disabilities is the stigma associated with it and the lack of understanding. Here are some suggestions:

- Be confident and reassuring. As with all customers, listen carefully and focus on meeting the customer needs;
- If the person appears to be in a crisis, ask them the best way to help them;
- If a customer appears to show signs of a mental health disability, it may be helpful to keep in mind that the customer's reactions are not connected to you personally, as a service provider. The customer may simply be showing symptoms of mental illness.

Did you know that one in five people in Ontario will experience a mental health issue at some point in their lives?

### **Speech or Language Disabilities**

Some customers may have problems communicating because of their disability. Cerebral palsy, stuttering, hearing loss or other conditions may make it difficult for the person to pronounce words or may cause slurring or stuttering. A person with the type of disability may use a communication board or other assistive devices. A few pointers:

- Don't assume that just because a person has this disability they also have another;
- Give your customer whatever time they need to get their point across. If appropriate, offer to move to a more comfortable location;
- Ask questions that can be answered "yes" or "no", if possible; and
- Don't interrupt or finish your customer's sentences. Give them time to finish.

### **Physical Disabilities**

Physical disabilities can result from many different situations, for example: Cerebral palsy, Multiple Sclerosis, Arthritis, heart or lung conditions or amputations. Here are some tips:

- A person with a physical disability may not need assistance to verbally communicate, but may need other types of assistance to be served;
- Ask before you help. People with physical disabilities often have their own way of doing things;
- They may ask you to assist with reaching items for them or securing paperwork in a bag for them;
- Inform your customer of the accessible features in the immediate environment (automatic doors, lowered counters, accessible washrooms, elevators, ramps, etc.);
- Respect your customer's personal space. Don't lean over them or their assistive device;
- Don't move items or equipment, such as canes or walkers, out of the person's reach; and
- If you have permission to move a person in a wheelchair remember to make sure your customer is ready to be moved and that you describe what you are going to do beforehand. Don't leave the individual in an awkward, dangerous or undignified position such as facing a wall or in the path of opening doors.

## **Ways to make information accessible**

### **Use of plain language**

Keeping your text as clear and easy to read as possible is not only beneficial for clients with learning disabilities and low literacy skills; it improves comprehension for all clients and will make adaptation to other formats easier. All technical terms and acronyms should be fully explained.

### **American Sign Language (ASL)**

ASL uses hand shapes, positions, facial expressions and body movements to convey meaning to people who are Deaf or hard of hearing

### **Large Print**

The minimum suggest font size is point size 12, however, someone with low vision may request up to 48 point font in order to read the information.

### **Braille**

Braille is a tactile system of raised dots representing letters or a combination of letters. It is used by people who are blind or deafblind and is produced using Braille transcription software

### **Transcriptions**

The conversion of speech into written or electronic text document

### **Verbal or Written Descriptions**

Verbal or written explanation of a document or picture

### **Reading Software for websites (eg BrouseAloud)**

BrouseAloud is a free software available on the Library's website that reads web pages out loud. It can help anyone who has difficulty reading online, including people with mild visual impairments, literacy problems such as English as a second language or learning disabilities such as dyslexia.

### **Captioning**

Captioning is the provision of words, in a written format that accompanies spoken words in a video. They usually appear on the bottom of the screen.

### **Structured Electronic Files**

A structured electronic file includes information about how elements of the document are formatted, like titles, section headings, etc. They can be created using "styles" in most standard word processing programs. Documents created as structured electronic files are easier to convert to accessible formats (including Braille, Daisy and web pages) and allow screen readers to navigate the information effectively.

### **Tactile Signage**

Tactile means "understood through sense of touch". Characters and pictograms are raised to 0.8 to 1.5 mm above the surface and have Grade 1 Braille located directly below the associated pictograph or large text.

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Amended Date:  
Responsibility: Chief Executive Officer/Board