

Accessibility Advisory Committee Eliminates para Transit on Holidays

In an e-mail response to my inquiry about why those of us with disabilities are no longer able to use Para transit on holidays, it appears that this has been a decision by the Accessibility Advisory Committee for the County of Brant (AAC):

“As determined by the County of Brant Accessibility Advisory Committee, the subsidized transportation program does not run on Statutory Holidays and this was again recently supported by the Committee at a recent meeting.”

Up until September 1, 2013 we were able to travel on holidays and spend holidays such as Christmas, Easter, Victoria Day and Family Day with...well family. We could also choose to participate in religious or social/recreational activities on holidays.

Now we can't.

It is not clear why the Accessibility Advisory Committee would choose to eliminate our ability to be with family on Family Day, Christmas, Easter or other holidays.

It is not clear why the Accessibility Advisory Committee would not have consulted with those of us using the Para transit service. This step would have been done by other AAC's in other municipalities.

It is not clear why the Accessibility Advisory Committee would choose to eliminate our ability to participate in religious or social/recreational activities during holidays.

It is not clear why the accessibility Advisory Committee would choose to put itself and the County at risk of an Ontario Human rights complaint. Potentially there are at least two grounds for a complaint.

It is not clear, given the research and statistics on depression and social isolation among people with disabilities why the Accessibility Advisory Committee would choose to eliminate our ability to travel on holidays.

It is not clear why County Council would not have advised the Accessibility Advisory Committee that this was a huge step backward in moving toward an inclusive community and protected our ability to travel on holidays.

It appears that even through our Accessibility Advisory Committee, which is tasked with working with Council to create an inclusive community, the “community” that is being created is one of isolation and abandonment.

Please contact the Accessibility Advisory Committee for the County of Brant and your County Councilor to advocate for the return of our ability to travel and be with family and friends on holidays. This is an election year and our voices need to be heard.