

County AAC Eliminates Para transit on holidays

The County of Brant Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC), mandated to advise the County on implementing the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and its subsequent standards including the Transportation Standards, arbitrarily decided that those of us with disabilities should not be “allowed” to use Para transit on holidays anymore.

We’d been able to use Para transit on holidays up until September 1, 2013.

For anyone who wants to use the rebranded “Subsidized Transportation Program” on holidays in the County, the County has, under the Ontario Human Rights Code, a Duty to Accommodate. Accommodation can be requested in writing.

The burden is on the County to prove undue hardship to the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal and the standards are quite high. There are three standards: financial cost to the entire organization (not the allotted budget for Para transit), health and safety concerns, and due diligence in seeking alternate funding. Even with these standards, there is a “duty” to accommodate in a timely manner.

Under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations, article 7, Council and the AAC are to receive ongoing training on both the Ontario Human Rights Code and the AODA and its standards.

It is not clear why County Council approved the elimination of holiday service given that it appears to violate the Ontario Human Rights Code, it does violate the AODA and the goal of an inclusive Ontario.

OHRC Duty to accommodate eLearning modules:

<http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/learning/human-rights-and-duty-accommodate>