

Welcoming Communities

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY STATEMENT

St. James United Church
December 20, 2011



This policy contains statements that meet the requirements of the Customer Service Standard and other items that are good practices.

This policy will be revised as other standards are introduced under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

1. **Our Mission**

The Mission of St. James United Church is to worship, serve, share, love, and care in the name of Jesus Christ.

2. **Our Commitment**

In fulfilling our mission, St. James United Church strives at all times to provide its programs, goods, and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are also committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our programs, goods, and services and allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place, and in a similar way as other participants.

3. **Providing Programs, Goods, and Services to People with Disabilities**

St. James United Church is committed to excellence in serving all participants, including people with disabilities, and we will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following areas: worship, social events, fundraising events, etc.

3.1 **Communication**

- We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.
- We will provide publications in formats that are accessible for people with disabilities (e.g. large print bulletins on Sundays).
- We will train staff and volunteers on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

3.2 **Telephone Services**

- We are committed to providing accessible telephone services to our participants.
- We will train office staff/volunteers to communicate with participants over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly when necessary.
- We will offer to communicate with participants by email/personal visits/etc. if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs, or is not available.

3.3 **Assistive Devices**

- We are committed to serving people who use assistive devices to participate in and benefit from our programs, goods, and services.
- We will ensure that people are permitted to use their own personal assistive devices to access the sanctuary for worship and other applicable programs, goods, and services.
- We will familiarize ushers and other staff/volunteers with the various assistive devices that may be used by participants with disabilities while accessing our programs, goods, and services.
- St. James United Church will provide assistive devices it deems necessary for accessing worship and other applicable programs, goods, and services.
 - . Ushers and other staff/volunteers will be trained on how to use the assistive devices available on our premises, including: wheelchair, elevator, hearing devices, walker, and hearing system in the sanctuary.

- Upon a participant's request, we will make every effort to provide the requested assistive device and/or service and to cover relevant financial expenses, upon approval from the Official Board.

3.4 **Accessibility Committee/Liaison**

- We are committed to designating an Accessibility Committee (Board of Stewards, Property, and Finance) to oversee all issues relating to accessibility in consultation with the Official Board.
- If establishing an Accessibility Committee, committee membership, when possible, will be comprised of champions of accessibility for people with disabilities, including congregants with disabilities or family members, congregants professionally or personally interested in accessibility, members of the Official Board, and members of the staff.
- The Accessibility Committee will have several roles:
 - . The committee will establish priorities on providing accessible programs, goods, and services to participants with disabilities that are in compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07.
 - . The committee will monitor our programs, goods, and services to ensure that practices and procedures are consistent with our governing policies.
 - . The committee will coordinate accessibility training and training materials for all relevant staff and volunteers.
 - . The committee will ensure that assistive devices provided by our church are in good working order and that requests for assistive devices are met, as per approval from the Official Board.
 - . The committee will be responsible for developing feedback procedures, reviewing feedback on accessibility, and responding to any complaints or concerns.

4. **Use of Service Animals and Support Persons**

- We are committed to welcoming people who are accompanied by a service animal on the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties.
- We will ensure that all staff, volunteers, and others dealing with participants are trained on how to interact with people who are accompanied by a service animal.
- We are committed to welcoming people who are accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter St. James United Church premises with his or her support person.
- Fees will be charged for support persons accompanying a participant to any of our programs, goods, and services. Fees will be charged to the support person at the rate of 50% for any program, goods, or services; the person with the disability will pay 100% of the usual fee.
- Participants will be notified of these fees by a notice that will be posted on St. James United Church premises and in any advertising material related to that specific program, goods, or services, as well as on our web site.

5. **Notice of Temporary Disruption**

St. James United Church will provide participants with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, the anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. This notice will be delivered to participants by means of (including but not limited to): telephone, email, written notice on the church premises, our web site, and/or Canada Post regular mail.

6. **Training for Staff and Volunteers**

St. James United Church's Accessibility Committee will be responsible for coordinating training for all employees, volunteers, and others who deal with participants or other third parties on our behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of accessibility policies, practices, and procedures. Individuals holding the following positions will be trained: all staff, elevator operators, ushers, greeters, Men's Club, United Church Women, and St. James' Players.

7. **Feedback Process**

The ultimate goal of St. James United Church is to meet and surpass expectations while serving participants with disabilities.

Comments on our programs, goods, and services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

. Feedback regarding the way St. James United Church provides programs, goods, and services to people with disabilities can be made by: mail, email, our web site, verbally, or feedback form/card.

. All feedback will be directed to the Accessibility Committee.

. Participants can expect to hear back within 30 days.

. Confidentiality will be respected.

Complaints and comments will be addressed according to the procedures outlined by the Accessibility Committee. Complaint procedures will be documented by the Accessibility Committee and made available to the congregation.

8. **Modification to this or Other Policies**

We are committed developing accessibility policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

. No changes, therefore, will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities or their families.

. Any policy of St. James United Church that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

9. **Questions about this Policy**

This policy seeks to achieve service excellence to participants with disabilities. If anyone has a question about the policy, or its purpose, an explanation or reply will be provided by the Chair of the Accessibility Committee or his/her designate.

NOTICE OF FEEDBACK PROCESS

Dear valued participant:

We strive to improve accessibility for our participants with disabilities. We would like to hear your comments, questions, and suggestions about the provision of our programs, goods, and services to people with disabilities. Participant feedback forms are available at the Church office during office hours or from our website.

Please call (705-742-2222) or email (info@stjamesunitedchurch.ca) to share your comments or to request a copy of our accessibility policy. You may also read the policy on our website (www.stjamesunitedchurch.ca). You can mail the feedback form to us (221 Romaine St., Peterborough, On K9J 2C3), or drop it off in the mailbox located beside the parking lot entrance to the church.

Thank you.

St. James United Church Accessibility Committee

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK FORM

Thank you for attending St. James United Church. We value all people and strive to meet everyone's needs.

Please tell us when you attended St. James United Church:

date: _____ time: _____

Did we respond to your needs today? Yes ___ No ___

Were our programs/service provided to you in an accessible manner?
Yes ____ Somewhat (explain below) ____ No (explain below) ____

Any other comments?

Contact information (optional – required if you are requesting a response):

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email address: _____

Mailing address: _____

Postal code: _____

Thank you.

St. James United Church Accessibility Committee (Board of Stewards, Property,
and Finance)

RECORD OF PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

Date feedback received: _____

Name of participant: (optional) _____

Contact information: (optional) _____

Details of feedback:

Follow-up:

Action to be taken:

Accessibility Committee Member: _____

Date Closed: _____