

WELCOMING COMMUNITIES

Trinity United Church
Accessibility Standards for Customer Service
Policy Statement
March 2012



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**

We believe God is calling Trinity United Church to: reach out and serve the wider community and the world; to nurture spirituality in people of all ages; and to be a safe, open, welcoming and inclusive community of faith.

2. **Our Commitment**

In fulfilling our mission, *Trinity 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**

Trinity 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
- Sunday School and Nursery
- Social Events
- Clubs and Groups meeting in our space
- Meals
- Funerals and Weddings

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 such as large print bulletins or other items by request.
- 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.
- We will offer to communicate with participants by; email, TTY (Teletype), relay services or other means which would accommodate the individual, 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 staff/volunteers with the various assistive devices that may be used by participants with disabilities while accessing our programs, goods and services.
- Trinity United Church will provide assistive devices it deems necessary for accessing worship and other applicable programs, goods and services. The availability of these devices will be indicated by the appropriate signage/symbols (where possible) on our church website, literature and event advertising.
 - Ushers and other staff/volunteers will be trained on how to use the assistive devices available on our premises, including:
 - *Large print Bulletins*
 - *FM system for enhanced listening*
 - *Access to our Lift to ensure ease of access to our various floors*
- 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 Board/Council.

3.4 Accessibility Committee/Liaison

- We are committed to designating an Accessibility Liaison and establishing an Accessibility Committee to oversee all issues relating to accessibility in consultation with the Board/Council. The Accessibility Committee will report to the Ministry and Personal Committee.
- Upon establishing an Accessibility Committee, committee membership 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 Board/Council, and members of the staff (including maintenance staff).
- The Accessibility Liaison/Committee will have several roles:
 - The liaison/committee will establish policies 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 liaison/committee will monitor our programs, goods and services to ensure that practices and procedures are consistent with our governing policies.
 - The liaison/committee will coordinate accessibility training and training materials for all relevant staff and volunteers.
 - The liaison/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 Board/Council.
 - The liaison/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 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 will communicate directly with the participant when possible rather than their support person.
- 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 Trinity United Church premises with his or her support person.
- Fees will not be charged for support persons accompanying a participant to an event of activity. Participants will be informed of any fees, which are unavoidable by a notice that will be posted in *Trinity United Church* premises and made available through our Church Bulletin and Sunday announcements.

5. Notice of Temporary Disruption

Trinity 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. The notice will be delivered to participants by means of our Sunday Bulletin, our Sunday announcements and if possible phones call or email.

6. Training for Staff and Volunteers

Trinity United Church's Accessibility Liaison/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:

- Minister
- Lay Minister
- Minister of Music
- Office Administrator
- Night Reception
- Custodian
- Sunday Custodians-----reminder placed with Sunday Duties
- Ushers and Greeters
- User Groups – Day and Night

7. Feedback Process

The ultimate goal of *Trinity 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 *Trinity United Church* provides programs, goods and services to people with disabilities can be made by pointing out the location of our Suggestion Box and feedback cards, email, phone call, verbally.
- All feedback will be directed to the Accessibility Liaison/Committee.
- Participants can expect to hear back in 5 working days.
- Confidentiality will be respected

Complaints will be addressed according to the procedures outlined by the Accessibility Liaison/Committee. Complaint procedures will be documented by the Accessibility Liaison/Committee and made available to the congregation. (Sample feedback forms can be found on pages 6,7 and 8)

8. Modifications to this or Other Policies

We are committed to 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 *Trinity United Church* that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.
- The Accessibility Committee will undertake an annual review of existing policies to incorporate any legislated changes that have been made.

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 Accessibility Liaison/Committee Chair.



111 McIntyre St. E. North Bay, Ontario P1B 1C5
Phone (705)474-3310 Fax (705)474-3311
Email: trinityunited@cogeco.net Webpage: www.trinitynorthbay.ca

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 from Wanda in the Office or the table outside Wanda's Office, or on our website: www.trinitynorthbay.ca

Please call 705-474-3310 or e-mail trinityunited@cogeco.net to share your comments, or request a copy of our accessibility policy. You can also leave your feedback form in the box located in the Narthex.

Thank you:

Accessibility Liaison/Committee Member



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Participant Feedback Form

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

Please tell us the date and time you attend *Trinity United Church*: _____

Did we respond to your needs today (Circle one)? Yes No

Were our programs/service provided to you in an accessible manner (Circle one)?

Yes Somewhat (please explain below) NO (please explain below)

Was our church accessible for you (Circle one)?

Yes (please explain below) Somewhat (please explain below) No

Please add any other comments you may have:

Contact information (option)*:

(*Please note: There may be privacy implications for organizations collecting personal information. Places of worship should seek their own legal advice regarding the privacy implications of collecting personal information in this manner)

Thank you

Accessibility Committee



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Record of Participant Feedback

Date feedback received: _____

Name of participant (optional): _____

Contact information (if appropriate)*: _____

(*Please note: There may be privacy implications for organizations collecting personal information. Places of worship should seek their own legal advice regarding the privacy implications of collecting personal information in this manner)

Details:

Follow-up:

Action to be taken:

Accessibility Liaison/Committee Member: _____

Date: _____

Note: This policy document is patterned after a template provided by the **London Conference, The United Church of Canada**, 111 – 747 Hyde Park Road, London, Ontario N6H 3S3 -

PURPOSE: This policy is designed to outline practices and procedures in place at *Trinity United Church* to help identify and remove barriers that impede a person's ability to access services. It was adopted by the Trinity United Church Council on (date)

This policy contains statements that meet the requirements of the Customer Service Standard of the AODA (*Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*), and other items that are good practices. This policy will be revised as other standards are introduced under the AODA.

AODA web reference:

<http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/en/mcsc/programs/accessibility/index.aspx>

Throughout this document:

Disability (as defined in the AODA) means:

- 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;

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. The support person can be a paid personal support worker, volunteer, a friend or a family member. He or she does not necessarily need to have special training or qualifications.

Service animals An animal is a service animal if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability, or if the person has a letter from a physician or nurse verifying that the animal is required for reasons relating to his or her disability. Service animals are used by people with many different kinds of disabilities. Examples of service animals include dogs used by people who are blind, hearing alert animals for people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing, and animals trained to alert an individual to an oncoming seizure and lead them to safety

Assistive devices are tools, technologies or other mechanisms that enable a person with a disability to do everyday tasks and activities such as moving, communicating or lifting. They help the person to maintain their independence at home, at work and in the community. There are a variety of assistive devices that some people may use, depending on their disability. *Personal assistive devices*, refer to those that are owned and brought along by the individual (such as a walker or a personal oxygen tank), while others may be provided by the Church.

