

WELCOMING COMMUNITIES

Aurora United Church
Accessibility Standards for Customer Service
Policy Statement
January 1, 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

Aurora United Church Policy

1. Our Mission

The Mission of Aurora United Church is:

Uniting hearts and hands on the journey.

2. Our Commitment

In fulfilling our mission, Aurora 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

Aurora 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:

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. 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 and relay services 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. Aurora 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: hearing assists, elevator, wheelchair, walker and cane. 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

We are committed to designating an Accessibility Committee to oversee all issues relating to accessibility in consultation with the Board/Council. 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 Committee will have several roles:

The 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 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 Board/Council. 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 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 Aurora United Church premises with his or her support person. A support person will be permitted to attend without charge where attendance or program fees exist.

5. Notice of Temporary Disruption

Aurora United Church will provide participants with notice in the event of a planned 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 email, bulletin, telephone, notice on doors and website. Aurora United Church will provide participants with notice in the event of a 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 notice on doors and email notice if time permits.

6. Training for Staff and Volunteers

Aurora 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: Staff, Council, Committee chairs, Children and Youth leaders, Adult program leaders, UCW Executive and Ushers.

7. Feedback Process

The ultimate goal of Aurora 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 Aurora United Church provides programs, goods and services to people with disabilities can be made by in writing including email, verbally, and feedback card. All feedback will be directed to the Accessibility Committee. Participants can expect to hear back in 60 days. Confidentiality will be respected. Complaints 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. 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 Aurora 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 Accessibility Committee Chair.

DOCUMENTS FOR OBTAINING FEEDBACK

Notice of the Feedback Process

Dear Valued Participant,

We strive to improve accessibility for our participants with disabilities. We would like your comments, questions and suggestions about the provision of our programs, goods and services to people with disabilities. Participant feedback forms are available from the church office, the chair of the Accessibility Committee or on our website www.auroraunitedchurch.ca. Please call 905-727-1935 x.21 or e-mail info@auroraunitedchurch.ca to share your comments, or request a copy of our accessibility policy. You can also leave your feedback form, in the church office (lower level, Trinity Anglican Church, Aurora) or with an usher.

Thank you,

Accessibility Committee
Aurora United Church

Participant Feedback Form

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

Please tell us the date and time you attend Aurora United Church

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

Yes No

Comments:

Was our church accessible for you (Circle one)?

Yes No

Comments:

Please add any other comments you may have:

Contact information:

Please provide your contact information if you would like a personal response to your feedback:

Thank you,

Nancy Kerswill
Accessibility Committee Member
Aurora United Church

Record of Participant Feedback

Date feedback received:

Name of participant (optional):

Details:

.

Follow up:

.

Action to be taken:

.

Accessibility Committee Member:

Date: _____

