

WELCOMING COMMUNITIES

POLICY STATEMENT

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

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IN REFERENCE TO

*ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE REGULATION 429/07*  
*Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*

ADOPTED BY ST. ANDREWS CHURCH COUNCIL: OCTOBER 25, 2011

**IMPLEMENTATION: JANUARY 1, 2012**



**ST. ANDREW'S  
UNITED CHURCH**

**399 CASSELLS STREET  
NORTH BAY, ON P1B 3Z4**

**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 St. Andrew's United Church to help identify and remove barriers that impede a person's ability to access services. It was adopted by the St. Andrew's Church Council on October 25, 2011 for implementation on January 1, 2012.

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.

## 1. **Our Mission**

The Mission of **St. Andrews United Church**, North Bay is stated as follows:

*St Andrew's is a Christian community of faith worshipping God and serving others. Inspired by Holy Scripture and guided by tradition, reason, and experience, we share the ministry of Jesus Christ by nurturing spiritual growth, caring for creation, and being with those in need.*

## 2. **Our Commitment**

In fulfilling our mission, **St. Andrew's United Church** is committed to include people with disabilities as full and active participants. We will remove barriers and attitudes that exclude people with disabilities from full and active participation. All people are encouraged to practice their faith and use their gifts in worship, service, study and leadership.

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

**St. Andrew's 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:

*Sunday Morning Worship  
Sunday Morning Church School  
Sunday Morning Study Group  
Sunday Linger Lunch  
Wednesday Noon Worship  
Weddings  
Funerals*

### 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 order of service).
- 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 *e-mail* if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs, or is not available.

### **3.3 Assistive Devices**

- We are committed to serving people with disabilities 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 personal assistive devices that may be used by participants with disabilities while accessing our programs, goods and services.
- **St. Andrew's United Church** will provide assistive devices (eg. hearing assistance devices/ elevator) it deems necessary for accessing worship and other applicable programs, goods and services. Staff/ volunteers/ ushers will be trained in the use of the devices. The availability of these devices will be indicated by the appropriate signage/symbols (where possible) on our church website, literature, event advertising (including exterior sign panels).
- 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.
- When 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 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 **St. Andrew's United Church** premises with his or her support person.
- Fees will not be charged for support persons accompanying a participant in regards to any program or service outlined in Section 3.

#### 5. **Notice of Temporary Disruption**

**St. Andrew's 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 clearly posted on the church premises (entrances) in print form.

#### 6. **Training for Staff and Volunteers**

**St. Andrew's 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:

|                                               |                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <i>Minister</i>                               | <i>Sunday Security &amp; lift operator</i> |
| <i>Designated Lay Minister</i>                | <i>Volunteer Linger Lunch Hosts</i>        |
| <i>Office Clerk</i>                           | <i>Sunday Church School Teachers</i>       |
| <i>Volunteer Sunday Greeters &amp; Ushers</i> | <i>Sunday Study Group Facilitators</i>     |

#### 7. **Feedback Process**

The ultimate goal of **St. Andrew's 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. Andrew's United Church** provides programs, goods and services to people with disabilities can be made - *verbally, by email, or by using a feedback form*
- All feedback will be directed to the Accessibility 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 Committee. Complaint procedures will be documented by the Accessibility Committee and made available to the congregation. (Sample feedback forms pages 7 & 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 **St. Andrew's 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 Committee Chair*.

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SEE FOLLOWING PAGES (7&8) FOR FEEDBACK FORM



# ST. ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH

399 CASSELLS STREET, NORTH BAY  
ONTARIO P1B 3Z4 (705) 472-7680  
e-mail: [standrewschurch@cogeco.net](mailto:standrewschurch@cogeco.net)  
website: [www.standrews-northbay.ca](http://www.standrews-northbay.ca)



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## Customer Service Accessibility Feedback Form

Dear Valued Participant,

Thank you for picking up this feedback form.

At St. Andrew's, 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.

Feedback forms are also available at the on our website: <https://standrews-northbay.ca>. (click on the "accessibility at St. Andrew's" tab).

Please complete page 2 of this form and submit it in one of the following ways:

- **by e-mail:** [standrewschurch@cogeco.net](mailto:standrewschurch@cogeco.net)
- **by telephone:** 705-472-7680
- **by Canada Post:** St. Andrew's United Church, 399 Cassells St.  
North Bay, ON P1B 3Z4 Attn: Chair, Accessibility Committee
- **by hand delivery:** to the Church Office
- **or by placing** a feedback form in the "Accessibility Feedback" box located in the narthex

If you would rather not use this form, please feel free to call 705-472- 7680 or e-mail [standrewschurch@cogeco.net](mailto:standrewschurch@cogeco.net) to share your comments or concerns - or to request a copy of the *St. Andrew's Customer Service Accessibility Policy*.

Comments or concerns can also be made verbally to church staff, ushers, or other volunteers at any time.

If you wish to receive a reply, please give some means of contacting you – either a phone number, postal address, or e-mail address.

Thank you for helping us serve you better!

The Accessibility Committee  
St. Andrew's United Church  
North Bay, Ontario.

## **Customer Service Accessibility - Participant Feedback Form**

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

Please submit your completed form by placing it in the ***Accessibility Feedback*** box - or by any of the other means listed on page 1.

Please tell us the date and time of your visit with us:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

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)

In the space below, please provide details of your experience: (use additional pages if necessary)

**Contact information** (this is optional – but at least a postal address, e-mail address or phone number is required if you wish to be contacted by a member of the *Accessibility Committee* within 10 days). **Your feedback comments may remain anonymous if you wish.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Any personal information is collected pursuant to Ontario Regulation 429/07, the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and will be used strictly for the purpose of responding to your feedback.

Thank you!

*The Accessibility Committee*  
*St. Andrew's United Church*

*page 2*



Sample Record of Participant Feedback

Date feedback received:

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Name of participant (optional):

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Contact information (if appropriate)\*:

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Details:

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Follow-up:

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Action to be taken:

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Accessibility Committee Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_