

# WELCOMING COMMUNITIES

## **Fonthill United Church**

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service  
Policy Statement  
January 17, 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**

The mission of Fonthill United Church is to be an inclusive community of hope, offering opportunities for worship, learning and fellowship which inspire its people to follow in the path of Jesus: loving God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and loving our neighbours, as we love ourselves.

## **2. Our Commitment**

In fulfilling our mission, Fonthill 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**

Fonthill 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 print, mail or email, TTY if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs.

### *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 assistive devices that may be used by participants with disabilities while accessing our programs, goods and services.
- Fonthill 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.

- 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 Church Council.

### *3.4 Accessibility Committee/Officer*

- We are committed to designating an Accessibility Officer to oversee all issues relating to accessibility in consultation with the Church Council.
- The Accessibility Officer will have several roles:
  - 1 The officer 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.
  - 2 The officer will monitor our programs, goods and services to ensure that practices and procedures are consistent with our governing policies.
  - 3 The officer will coordinate accessibility training and training materials for all relevant staff and volunteers.
  - 4 The officer 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 Church Council.
  - 5 The officer 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 Fonthill United Church premises with his or her support person.
- Fees will not be charge for support persons accompanying a participant to (Insert applicable service or program).

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

Fonthill 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 (Insert notification procedure)

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

Fonthill United Church's Accessibility Officer/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:

|                      |                 |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| Secretary-bookkeeper | Custodial staff |
| Ordained Staff       | Greeters/Ushers |

## **7. Feedback Process**

The ultimate goal of Fonthill 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 Fonthill United Church provides programs, goods and services to people with disabilities can be made by (Insert the ways feedback can be provided: e.g., email, verbally, suggestion box, feedback card, etc.)
- All feedback will be directed to the Accessibility Officer.
- Participants can expect to hear back in 10 business days
- Confidentiality will be respected.

Complaints will be addressed according to the procedures outlined by the Accessibility Officer. Complaint procedures will be documented by the Accessibility Officer 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 Fonthill 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 Officer.

## Sample 1

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 (Name easily accessible place) or on our website (website address).

Please call (phone number) or e-mail (e-mail address) to share your comments, or request a copy of our accessibility policy. You can also leave your feedback form in the box located (name easily accessible place)

Thank you:

(Name)  
Accessibility Officer/Committee Member

## Participant Feedback Form

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

Please tell us the date and time you attended Fonthill United Church:

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

Were our programs and services accessible to you? (Circle one)

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

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

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

Please add any other comments you may have:

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Contact information (optional)\*:

*(\*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)*

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Thank you

(Name)

Accessibility Officer/Committee Member

## 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)*

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Details:

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Follow-up:

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Action to be taken:

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Accessibility Officer/Committee Member: \_\_\_\_\_

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