



Addison United Pastoral Charge

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

Policy Statement – April 2015

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.

Our Commitment

The congregation of Addison United Pastoral Charge will endeavour at all times to provide its programs, goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of our congregants and visitors with disabilities. We believe that people with disabilities should be given the same opportunity to access our programs, meetings, worship and social events in the same setting, and in a similar way, as other participants. Addison United congregants and volunteers/staff encourage the development and maintenance of an inclusive, understanding, and welcoming atmosphere for all of those in our midst.

Accessibility Committee

Addison United Pastoral Charge's Church Council will serve as the Accessibility Committee to oversee all issues relating to accessibility and in terms of accessibility will have several roles:

1. The Admin Chair will establish a draft policy to be submitted to the Church Council for its recommendations and/or approval on providing accessible programs, goods and services to participants with disabilities. The approved policy will be in compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07.
2. The Council will monitor the programs, goods and services of Addison United Pastoral Charge to ensure that practices and procedures are consistent with our policies.
3. The Admin Chair will coordinate accessibility training and training materials for all relevant staff and volunteers.
4. The Council in conjunction with the Worship Team 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 Council will be responsible for developing feedback procedures, reviewing feedback on accessibility and responding to any complaints or concerns

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6. The Admin Chair will review policies, practices and procedures annually to ensure that they are consistent with the core principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity and Council will approve them.

The Use of Assistive Devices

Participants attending worship, events and/or programs in Addison United Church or our Fellowship Hall will be supported in the use of their own personal assistive devices to access available goods and services.

Participants may submit a request to the Church Council for a specific assistive device and/or service. We will make every effort to provide the requested assistive device, and to cover relevant financial expenses upon review and approval.

The Worship Team will attempt to provide assistive devices deemed necessary for accessing programs goods and services by the Church Council when funds are available.

Ushers, greeters, volunteers and staff will become familiar with the assistive devices that may be used by participants with disabilities while accessing our programs, goods and services. They will also have knowledge of the assistive devices already available on the premises: power point projector and sound system.

The Church Council will be responsible for ensuring that: assistive devices that we provide are in good working order; that relevant congregants and personnel are trained on how to operate these devices; and that requests for assistive devices are met as per approval.

Communication

Congregants and personnel of Addison United Church will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. We will provide publications in a format that are accessible to them. We will continue with the use of visual aids (for eg., point presentations and charts) in our sermons and discussions to help with understanding. We will continue employing our microphones, sound systems and the use of language that is clear, concise and meets the needs of the audience. We will train volunteers and staff on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

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

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clear and plain language, and to enunciate clearly and slowly. Our preferred alternative to telephone communication would be through the use of e-mail. We would explore the possibility of using relay services if telephone communication or e-mail were not suitable to the participant's communication needs.

Use of Service Animals and Support Persons

People accompanied by a service animal will be welcome on any part of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties, with the exception of food preparation areas. We will educate the staff and congregation about the different types and functions of service animals, if and when, this need arises.

We are committed to making a support person or persons accompanying a person with a disability feel welcome in our midst. We would encourage their active participation. If necessary, education will be provided: to the congregation about the different types and routines of support persons; and/or to the support person about rituals and practices in our church. An announcement will be made if a participant with a disability, who is not usually accompanied by a support person, may require one due to health and safety concerns generated by a unique event or service. We would be willing to collaborate on behavioural plans with support persons, in relevant situations, that would allow for the successful integration of their support recipients into our services and events. Fees will not be charged by us for trained support persons accompanying a participant to special events that are sponsored by Addison United Church on our premises.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

A database of congregants who require facilities or services for accessibility will be created so they may be notified in the event of a disruption of services. This information will be in the Special Needs folder found in the first drawer of the filing cabinet in the office/storage room.

Addison United Church will provide these known participants with disabilities with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by them. 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 the recorded method of communication agreed upon by themselves and the Church Council

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Training for Staff and Volunteers

The Admin Chair 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 approval of accessibility practices and procedures

Individuals holding the following positions will be trained: Church Council, Ministry personnel, Greeters and other front-line volunteers and staff.

Feedback Process

The Church Council welcomes feedback from participants with disabilities, their family and/ or a support person who routinely accompanies them to services and/or events. Feedback regarding the way in which Addison United Church Council provides programs, goods and services to them may be made via e-mail or verbally to the Admin Chair. The confidentiality of any respondent will be respected. Participants can expect to hear back from the Admin Chair within two weeks. We will make an attempt to address the issues raised by congregants with disabilities in consultation with them

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. Therefore, no changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities or their families. Any policy of Addison United Pastoral Charge that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

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 Robin Hoy, Admin Chair.

Approved at _____ADDISON_____ this ___6TH___ day of
____MARCH_____, 2015

_____original signed _____

Alex Whitehorne
Chair , Church Council
Addison United Pastoral Charge