

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

Approved April 2012

1. PURPOSE AND POLICY STATEMENT

The goal of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (the “Act”) is to create a more accessible Ontario, by identifying, and to the extent possible, preventing, and eliminating barriers experienced by persons with a disability.

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (“the Standard”) has been established under the Act to ensure goods and services are, where at all possible, equally accessible to every member of the public.

We at the University of Guelph Faculty Association (UGFA) strive to make our goods and services accessible to persons with disabilities. The objective of this policy (the “Policy”) is to ensure we meet the requirements of the Standard and promote its underlying core principles, described below.

2. APPLICATION

The Policy applies to all persons who, on behalf of UGFA, deal with members of the public or other third parties. This includes our employees, volunteers, agents and contractors.

The Policy also applies to all persons responsible for the development, implementation or oversight of UGFA policies, practices and procedures.

3. DEFINITIONS

- i. ***Assistive Device*** - Any device used to assist a person with a disability in performing a particular task or tasks or to aid that person in activities of daily living.
- ii. ***Disability*** – Has the same definition as is provided under the Act and *Human Rights Code*, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19.
- iii. ***Service Animal*** - An animal is a service animal for a person with a disability,
 - (a) if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
 - (b) if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

- iv. **Support Person** – A person who accompanies a person with a disability to assist with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to goods or services.
- v. **“We”, “Our” and “Staff”** means UGFA and its employees, volunteers, agents and contractors.

4. CORE PRINCIPLES OF THE POLICY

We endeavor to ensure that the Policy and related practices, policies and procedures are consistent with the following four (4) core principles:

- i. **Dignity** - Persons with a disability should be treated as valued customers as deserving of service as any other customer. Services will be provided to persons with a disability in a manner that respects their dignity.
- ii. **Equality of Opportunity** - Persons with a disability should be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from our goods and services.
- iii. **Integration** - Wherever possible, persons with a disability should benefit from our goods and services in the same place and in the same or similar manner as any other customer. In circumstances where integration does not serve the needs of the person with a disability, goods and services will, to the extent possible, be provided in another way that takes into account the person’s individual needs.
- iv. **Independence** – Goods and services will be provided in a way that respects the independence of persons with a disability.

5. IMPLEMENTATION

UGFA has created an Accessibility Committee responsible for:

- i. Developing and implementing policies, practices and procedures to ensure the accessible provision of goods and services to persons with a disability.
- ii. Developing and implementing an accessibility training program as required by the Standard.
- iii. Developing a feedback procedure as required by the Standard.

6. PROVIDING GOODS AND SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

I. Communication

UGFA is committed to communicating with its members and with members of the public in a manner that is accessible and that takes into account the disabilities of persons with a disability.

II. Assistive Devices

Persons with a disability are permitted, where possible, to use their own Assistive Device when on our premises for the purposes of obtaining, using or benefiting from our goods and services.

If there is a physical, technological or other type of barrier that prevents the use of an Assistive Device on our premises we will first endeavour to remove that barrier. If we are not able to remove the barrier we will ask the person how he/she can be accommodated and what alternative methods of service would be more accessible to him/her. We will make reasonable efforts to provide an alternative means of assistance to the person with a disability.

III. Accessibility at Our Premises

UGFA's offices at 5 University Avenue East are currently not fully accessible. There are stairs at the front entrance which create an architectural barrier to access for persons with mobility impairments and/or persons who use wheelchairs. UGFA does, however, have accessible meeting space in Room 534 UC on the University campus. Please let us know if you require an accessible meeting room when booking appointments with us.

IV. Service Animals

Persons with a disability may enter our premises accompanied by a Service Animal and may keep the service animal with them in all areas of UGFA's premises that are open to the public.

V. Support Persons

A person with a disability may enter premises owned and/or operated by UGFA with a Support Person and have access to the Support Person while on the premises.

UGFA may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a Support Person while on UGFA's premises, but only where it is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises.

UGFA occasionally holds functions for which it charges attendees an admission fee. We will ensure that, if a separate admission fee is to be charged for a Support Person, advance notice is provided of the existence and the amount of the admission fee to be charged.

7. TRAINING AND RECORDS

UGFA will provide training, and ongoing training as required under the Standard, to all persons to whom this Policy applies.

8. FEEDBACK PROCEDURE

A. Receiving Feedback

UGFA welcomes and appreciates feedback regarding how it delivers goods and services to persons with disabilities. Feedback can be provided in the following ways:

- i. In person at 5 University Ave East or, by appointment, at Room 534, UC
- ii. By telephone at 519-824-4120-ext. 52126
- iii. In writing to UGFA, 5 University Ave, Guelph, Ontario, N1G 1M8
- iv. Electronically to facassoc@uoguelph.ca or on disk.

B. Responding to Complaints

Where possible, we will respond to complaints within two (2) weeks of the date that the complaint is received.

In certain circumstances we may be required to take more action to effectively address the complaint. In such circumstances the customer will receive an acknowledgement that the complaint has been received within two (2) weeks and we will respond to the complaint as soon as is practicable thereafter.

9. DOCUMENTATION TO BE MADE AVAILABLE

A copy of this Policy shall be made available to any person upon request. We will provide the Policy in a format that takes into account a person's disability. A person with a disability who requires that the Policy be provided in an alternative accessible format (eg. on diskette, in audio format or in large print) should let us know.

10. QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS POLICY

For more information about the Policy or for questions regarding UGFA Service Related Policies for accessible customer service please contact:

UGFA,
c/o S. Hubers, Executive Officer
5 University Ave E,
Guelph, Ontario N1G 1M8
519-824-4120 ext. 52126
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