

Accessibility for persons who have Disabilities Constituent Service Policy

Purpose

This policy is intended to reinforce United Way London & Middlesex's commitment to providing accessible Constituent Services.

Scope

This policy relates to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). The regulation "Accessibility Standards for Customer Service" comes into force on January 1, 2012 for not-for-profit organizations.

This Policy applies to Board members, employees and those volunteering for the organization.

Policy Statement – Our Commitment

United Way London & Middlesex is committed to providing accessible service for its constituents. Goods and services will be provided in a manner that is based upon the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity to all constituents. The provision of goods and services to persons who have disabilities will be integrated wherever possible. Persons who have disabilities will benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other constituents.

Definitions

Disability:

- any degree or combination 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 impairment, deafness or hearing loss, loss of speech or impediment, or physical reliance on a service animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device
- a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability
- a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language
- a mental disorder
- an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.

Other definitions used in this policy include:

Accessible: capable of being entered or reached, approachable; easy to get at; capable of being influenced, obtainable; able to be understood or appreciated.

Assistive device: a device used to assist persons who have disabilities in carrying out activities or in accessing the services of persons or organizations covered by the Customer Service Standard.

Dignity: respecting and treating every person including persons with a disability as valued and as deserving of effective and full service as any other constituent.

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Goods and services: goods and services provided by United Way London & Middlesex to the public or other organizations in Ontario such as training, workshops, meeting room facilities, etc. This policy does not include goods and services provided by funded agencies, partners and other collaborators.

Independence: freedom from control or influence of others, freedom to make your own choices.

Service animals: animals that are used by a person who has a disability. 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.

Support person: an individual hired or chosen by a person who has a disability to provide services or assistance with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or with access to goods or services.

Procedures

Principles:

United Way London & Middlesex is committed to excellence in serving all constituents including persons who have disabilities and will carry out its functions and responsibilities to ensure that policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following principles:

- Goods and services are provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons who have disabilities
- The provision of goods and services to persons who have disabilities is integrated with those provided to persons who do not have disabilities unless an alternative measure is necessary to enable a person who has a disability to obtain, use or benefit from United Way London & Middlesex goods or services
- Persons who have disabilities are given an opportunity equal to that of persons without disabilities to obtain use or benefit from goods and services
- To ensure the best possible constituent service, United Way London & Middlesex encourages open two-way communication and invites persons who have disabilities to communicate their need for accommodation or assistance

Procedures:

Communication and notice of temporary disruption:

United Way London & Middlesex is committed to communicating with persons who have disabilities in ways that take into consideration their disability.

- United Way London & Middlesex staff and volunteers will be trained in how to interact and communicate with constituents with disabilities guided by the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity
- Constituents with disabilities will be offered alternative communication formats that will meet their needs as promptly as feasible
- Documents will be provided to constituents in an alternative format such as large print or a text only electronic file that can be read by a computer
- If telephone communication is not suitable for a constituent's needs, alternative forms of communication will be offered



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- In the event that a planned temporary service disruption occurs that would limit who has a disability from gaining access to United Way London & Middlesex goods or services, United Way London & Middlesex will make the disruption known to constituents via messages posted on the United Way London & Middlesex website at www.uwlondon.on.ca and/or a voice message on the main telephone, and/or notices posted in the building/office regarding disruption of access to meeting rooms or other facilities, and/or notification to 211 as appropriate

Notices will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, alternate means of accessing services if applicable, and a description of the alternative services.

If an unexpected disruption occurs, United Way London & Middlesex will make every effort to accommodate persons who have disabilities by providing goods and services by alternative means, e.g. using an alternative time and place for providing goods and services or other assistive measures.

Format and communication of United Way London & Middlesex policies

United Way London & Middlesex develops and updates policies, procedures and practices in such a manner as to respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities, as well as integration and equality of opportunity. Upon request and within a reasonable amount of time, United Way London & Middlesex will provide policy and procedure documents it produces in an alternative print format or a text only electronic file that can be read by a computer.

Use of Assistive Devices, Service Animals and Support Persons

United Way London & Middlesex will ensure that the access, use and benefit of goods or services are not compromised for persons who have disabilities who require assistive devices, or who are accompanied by a service animal or support person.

Assistive devices

Persons who have disabilities shall be permitted to obtain, use or benefit from goods or services through the use of their own assistive devices. Exceptions may occur in situations where United Way London & Middlesex has determined that the assistive device may pose a risk to the health and safety of a person who has a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises. In these situations, if a person who has a disability is hindered from accessing goods or services, United Way London & Middlesex will accommodate the constituent by providing an alternative where possible.

It should be noted that it is the responsibility of the person who has a disability to ensure that his or her assistive device is operated in a safe and controlled manner at all times.

Service animals

Service animals, such as, but not limited to Canine Vision Dog Guides, Hearing Ear Dog Guides, Seizure Response Dog Guides, and other certified service animals shall be permitted entry to all United Way London & Middlesex facilities that are open to the public.

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In the rare case where a service animal is to be denied access to a facility or meeting room, other accommodations may be afforded, such as teleconference, delivery of goods or service at an alternate time or location or other assistive measures available to deliver a good or service to ensure equality of outcome.

In the event that employees or other persons are allergic to animals, United Way London & Middlesex will accommodate both constituents by providing alternative arrangements.

Support persons

United Way London & Middlesex welcomes constituents who have disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. At no time will a person who has a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on United Way London & Middlesex premises.

United Way London & Middlesex holds meetings, events, and workshops sponsored by United Way London & Middlesex or by third parties. Support persons shall be permitted entry to all United Way London & Middlesex facilities and meeting rooms that are open to the public, however United Way London & Middlesex may require pre-registration and will notify all potential attendees when this is the case.

If admission requires fees payable to United Way London & Middlesex, the support person is permitted to attend at no cost for admission. Cost for other services (e.g. food, lodging etc.) may be charged for the support person.

Where an event is held by a third party for the benefit of United Way London & Middlesex the policies of the third party shall apply.

Training

United Way London & Middlesex will provide AODA customer service training to all employees, and to volunteers of the organization and others who deal with the public or other third parties on its behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of constituent service policies, practices and procedures.

This training will be provided as part of new employee and volunteer orientation and on an ongoing basis to ensure that staff stays current with any policy or procedural changes as it relates to the AODA Customer Service Standard.

Feedback

United Way London & Middlesex seeks to meet the needs of our constituents while paying attention to the unique requirements of our constituents with disabilities. Comments regarding how well those requirements are being met are welcomed.

Feedback regarding the way United Way London & Middlesex provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made through our web site contact page at www.uwlondon.on.ca, in person, by telephone, through email, or by other means as required.



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Feedback in person, by telephone or through email should be directed to:

United Way London & Middlesex
409 King St., London, ON N6B 1S5
Email: uw@uwlondon.on.ca
Phone: 519.438.1721

Feedback will be used to improve constituent service. In addition, the author of the feedback will be provided with a response in the format in which the feedback was received. The feedback may outline actions deemed appropriate, if any.