

YWCA CAMBRIDGE AODA MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION AND COMMITMENT

YWCA Cambridge is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities. We are committed to treating people with disabilities in a way that does not hinder their dignity and independence. We believe in equity and we are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner. We will do so by removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and meeting our accessibility requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and Ontario's accessibility laws.

YWCA Cambridge recognizes the worth of every individual and seeks to create socially inclusive environments in which everyone is able to participate fully. Building on a culture that embraces diversity and supports social inclusion and equity, YWCA Cambridge is a shared experience for everyone to enjoy.

OUR MISSION

YWCA Cambridge, a member of a worldwide network, is a nonprofit organization working with and for cis and trans women and girls, gender diverse individuals and their families. Through pro-active leadership, we offer high quality programs and services, advocate for social and economic change and work towards the empowerment and self-determination of all women.

POLICY STATEMENT

In fulfilling our mission, YWCA Cambridge strives at all times to provide our services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

PURPOSE

This policy is intended to fulfill the requirements set out in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, (AODA)* to establish a policy for YWCA Cambridge that governs the provision of goods and services to people with disabilities.

ACCESSIBILITY PRINCIPLES

YWCA Cambridge will use reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following principles of independence, dignity, integration and equity:

- All individuals, including those with disabilities, shall be able to access services, to the greatest extent possible, free from assistance.
- All individuals, including those with disabilities, will be treated with respect.
- People with disabilities are allowed to fully benefit from the same services in the same place and in the same or similar way as other individuals.
- All individuals, including those with disabilities, will have the same chances and options in the way they obtain and benefit from the services provided.

SECTION 2 - PROCEDURES**Training Accessibility Standards for Customer Service**

YWCA Cambridge will provide training to employees, volunteers, students and other staff members on Ontario's accessibility laws and on the Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities. Training will be provided in a way that best suits the duties of employees, volunteers, students and other staff members.

All YWCA staff, volunteers and students will receive training on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

Timely and on-going training will be provided to YWCA staff, volunteers and students who deal with participants to ensure their understanding of and ability to implement our policies regarding service to people with disabilities.

People with disabilities are welcome to use assistive devices, support persons and service animals to obtain, use or benefit from our services.

Information and Communications

YWCA Cambridge is committed to meeting the communication needs of people with disabilities.



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We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

Prior notice will be provided for any admission fees applicable to support persons who accompany persons with disabilities.

Clear, complete, timely and prominent notice of temporary disruption in any of our facilities used by people with disabilities to help them access our services will be provided.

People with disabilities, who use our services, are encouraged to provide their comments in support of services, suggestions for service improvements or file complaints.

Policies, practices and procedures related to providing accessible services will be available to the public on request.

YWCA Cambridge will take the following steps to make all new websites and content on those sites conform with WCAG 2.0, Level A by June 30, 2021.

Website will be re-created using Wordpress – March 2019 (complete).

YWCA Cambridge will take the following steps to make all websites and content conform with WCAG 2.0, Level AA by June 30, 2021. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Informative alternative text for all images
- style sheets to control layout and presentation
- tables to identify headers
- pages that can be read without style sheets
- foreground and background colours that provide sufficient contrast when viewed by someone having colour perception deficits
- consistent navigation mechanisms

Employment

YWCA Cambridge is committed to fair and accessible employment practices. We will take the following steps to notify the public and staff that, when requested, YWCA Cambridge



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will accommodate people with disabilities during the recruitment and assessment processes and when people are hired:

- let job applicants know that recruitment and hiring processes will be modified to accommodate their disabilities, if requested.
- build the accessibility needs of employees into human resources practices.
- create a written process for developing and documenting individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.
- help employees stay safe in an emergency by providing them with individualized emergency response information when necessary.

YWCA Cambridge will put in place a process for developing individual accommodation plans and return-to-work policies for employees that have been absent due to a disability, as appropriate.

YWCA Cambridge will take the following steps to prevent and remove other accessibility barriers identified:

Design of Public Spaces

YWCA Cambridge will meet the Accessibility Standards for the Design of Public Spaces when building or making major modifications to public spaces. Public spaces include:

- Entranceways
- social enterprise (Women's International Gift & Gallery) area
- programming areas (The W, four child care centres)
- conference and meeting rooms

In the event of a service disruption, we will notify the public of the service disruption and alternatives available.

SECTION 3 - DEFINITIONS

Assistive Device

Is a technical aid, communication device, or medical aid modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Assistive devices that an organization might include: assistive software for people with visual, hearing or mobility impairments, wheelchairs or TTY (telephone teletype), real-time captioning or assistance from a staff person.



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Barrier

As defined by AODA, means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or practice.

Disability

As defined by the AODA and the Ontario Human Rights Code, is:

- 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 coordination, 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.
- 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, or
- An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

The Guide: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 states that: "The definition includes disabilities of different severity, visible as well as non-visible disabilities, and disabilities the effects of which may come and go."

Dignity

Treating a participant with a disability as valued and deserving of the same type of service YWCA Cambridge provides to any other participant.

Interpretation

Interpretation means rendering spoken language into another spoken language, or the process of rendering spoken language into visual language, e.g. American Sign Language. Interpretation includes a variety of alternative methods of communication that meet the needs of the person with a disability.



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Training

Every person who deals with a member of the public or participates in developing the organization's policies, procedures, and practices governing the provision of services to the public, including organization, will receive training and orientation to AODA, policies, procedures and practices governing the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities.

Service Animals

Service animals are animals that are individually trained to perform tasks for people with disabilities, such as guiding people who, for example, are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling wheelchairs, alerting and protecting a person who is having a seizure, or performing other special tasks. An animal is qualified to be a service animal if it is readily apparent the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

Guide Dog

A guide dog is a dog trained as a guide for a blind person. This is a dog that has successfully completed the training program at any of the facilities listed in the Blind Persons' Rights Act and has been qualified as a guide dog.

Support Person

A support person is an individual hired or chosen to accompany a person with a disability to provide services or assistance with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs, or access to services. This may be a professional, relative, volunteer or friend.

SECTION 4 – MORE INFORMATION

For more information on this accessibility plan, please contact Rosalind Gunn, Director of Marketing and Communications:

Phone: 519-267-6444 ext 224

Email: info@ywcacambridge.ca

Accessible formats of this document are available free upon request from:

Phone: 519-267-6444

Email: info@ywcacambridge.ca

PROVIDING SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Support Persons

- YWCA Cambridge will allow persons with disabilities to be accompanied by their support person when accessing services.
- YWCA Cambridge reserves the right to request the person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person in the event that it is considered necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with a disability or others. This will occur after consultation with the person with a disability and when it is the only means to allow the person with a disability to access services.
- Where the protection of privacy and confidentiality are concerns during an interaction, the YWCA will confirm with the person with a disability if they would like to continue with their



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support person present. In the event that a support person is present while private or confidential matters are being discussed, the YWCA may require him or her to sign a confidentiality agreement.

- YWCA Cambridge will provide prior notice of any admission fees for support persons who accompany a person with a disability as he or she accesses services where admission is charged. Information on applicable admission fees will be provided at the same location where other fee information is provided.

Service Animals

- Persons with disabilities are permitted to be accompanied by their service animal and keep that animal with them when accessing services provided by YWCA Cambridge, unless otherwise prohibited by law i.e. where food is being prepared.
- Service animals must be supervised by their owners and kept in control when used to access the YWCA's services.
- If an individual on location has a severe allergy to animals, which could result in health and safety concerns, the YWCA shall make reasonable efforts to meet the needs of all individuals.

Assistive Devices

- Persons with disabilities may use assistive devices as required in accessing services.
- Should a person with a disability be unable to access services through the use of their own personal assistive device, the YWCA will work with the individual to :
 - Assess service delivery and potential service options to meet the needs of the individual, and
 - Identify alternative services and how a person with a disability can access the services, either temporarily or on a permanent basis.

Communication

- YWCA staff, volunteers and students will communicate with people who have disabilities in a manner that takes into account their disability.
- Individuals, including those with disabilities, are able to communicate with the YWCA by telephone, in person, in writing through regular mail, facsimile, or by email.
- YWCA staff, volunteers and students will be trained to communicate to individuals over the telephone, in person in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly.

Formats of Documents

- YWCA Cambridge will endeavor to ensure its documents or the content of the documentation is made accessible to people with disabilities. For this reason, an alternative format will be provided upon request that takes into account a person's disability.
- Materials printed in-house and publications produced on behalf of the YWCA should contain a note indicating "alternate formats of information are available upon request", and include relevant contact information.



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- Should the YWCA be required to provide a copy of a document to a person with a disability, the YWCA shall provide the document 7, or the information contained in the document, in a format that takes into account the person's disability.
- The YWCA and the person requesting the information may agree upon the alternate format to be used, subject to feasibility. Feasibility will be determined based upon cost in relation to the size of the document and time associated with processing document requests.
- Documents and information shall be provided in a timely manner.
- Converting documents to an alternate format of information shall be processed in-house whenever possible. When an individual requests a document in an alternative format, the department of origin shall be responsible for the cost of conversion, materials and distribution, not the individual requesting the information.

Meetings and Events

- YWCA Cambridge will endeavor to ensure meetings and events held, either publicly or by invitation only, are made accessible to people with disabilities. For this reason, accommodations will be provided upon request that take into account a person's disability. A standard line such as "Please contact (name) if you require information in an alternate format, or if any other arrangements can make this event accessible to you" will be added to invitations.
- If meetings and/or events are held in locations or premises not owned or operated by YWCA Cambridge, the YWCA will endeavor to ensure the meetings or events are held in locations or on premises that support the YWCA's accessible service policies, especially in regards to the use of service animals, support persons and assistive devices.

Service Disruptions

- In the event of a planned service disruption to facilities and services that are relied upon by people with disabilities to access YWCA services, notice of the disruption will be provided in advance.
- In the event of an unexpected disruption, notice will be provided as soon as possible.
- Notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities and services that may be available.
- Notice may be given by posting the information in a conspicuous place on the premises owned or operated by YWCA Cambridge, in reception areas, and/or posted on the YWCA's website, or by such method as reasonable under the circumstances.

Feedback Process

The ultimate goal of YWCA Cambridge is to meet and surpass customer expectations while serving participants with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Should an individual wish to provide feedback to the YWC on the provision of services, feedback can be provided in the following manner:

- In person at the administrative building located at 55 Dickson Street.
- In person with any of the supervisors at our child care centres.



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- In person with the any of the coordinators of any of our other programs.
- By telephone, at 519-267-6444 ext. 224
- By email, at k.decker@ywcacambridge.ca
- By mail: YWCA Cambridge, 55 Dickson Street, Cambridge, ON N1E 7A5

Once feedback has been received, the following process will be implemented:

- Feedback relating to accessibility or the manner in which the YWCA provides in services to people with disabilities will be recorded on an Accessible Service Delivery Feedback Form which all staff will have access to.
- Feedback reported at the main office of YWCA Cambridge will be forwarded to relevant staff.
- Upon receipt of the feedback, regardless of format, individuals will receive a response acknowledging receipt of the feedback and the actions that will be taken to address any issues.
- The staff contact will assess current policies, practices and procedures to determine if any changes are required and report to those changes to the Executive Director.

Training

As required by law, YWCA Cambridge will ensure the following people receive training on the provision of services to people with disabilities:

- Staff, volunteers, students and any other individuals who interact with participants and members of the public on behalf of YWCA Cambridge or who are involved in the development of YWCA policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of services to participants and members of the public.

Training will include a review of the purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and Ontario Regulation 429/07, the requirements of this policy and instruction in the following areas:

- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device, service animal or a support person
- How to use the equipment or assistive devices available at the YWCA
- What action to take if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing YWCA's services.

As required by law, the YWCA will keep records of training provided, as well as the name of the person, location and date the training is completed. Training will be provided to all current employees and new employees during orientation. Training will also be provided on an ongoing basis when changes are made to this policy.

Accountability



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Employer:

- Ensures that this policy and procedures are updated as necessary

Coordinators:

- Ensure that any individual who provides goods and services on behalf of the YWCA, are trained on accessible service
- Ensure that procedures under this policy are communicated and are carried out consistently
- Ensure that feedback regarding accessible service is addressed in accordance with the policy and related procedures

Employees:

- Ensure that accessible service is provided to all individuals in accordance with the policy and related procedures

Availability of Documents

As required by Ontario Regulation 429/07, YWCA Cambridge will provide any of the following documentation, upon request, to any person:

- YWCA's policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of services to people with disabilities
- YWCA's policies, practices and procedures governing the use of service animals and support persons
- The steps the YWCA will take in connection with a temporary disruption of facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities
- YWCA's policy on providing training on accessible service, and
- YWCA's process for receiving and responding to feedback on the provision of services to people with disabilities.

Modifications to this or other policies

YWCA Cambridge is committed to developing customer service 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.

Any policy of YWCA Cambridge 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 exists to achieve service excellence to participants with disabilities. If anyone has a question about the YWCA Cambridge Accessible Service Policy Statement, they may contact Kim Decker, Executive Director at 519-267-6444 ext. 224 or by email at k.decker@ywcacambridge.ca



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TRAINING AGENDA FOR YWCA STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS

1. Review of the purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the Requirements of the Customer Service Standard
 - The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act was passed in 2005
 - The goal of the act is to make Ontario accessible for people with disabilities by 2025.
 - Ontario is developing mandatory, province-wide standards to achieve this goal and to improve accessibility.
 - Standards are being developed in the following areas:
 - Customer service
 - Employment
 - Transportation
 - Information and communications
 - The build environment, including buildings
 - The standards are developed by committees that include people from the disability and business communities.
 - The public then has an opportunity to review and comment on each standard before it is finalized.
 - Designated public sector organizations and organizations with 20 or more employees, like the YWCA, must:
 - Document in writing all our policies, practices and procedures for providing accessible customer service and meet other document requirements set out in the standard
 - Notify customers that the documents required under the customer service standard are available upon request
 - When giving documents required under the customer service standard to a person with a disability, provide the information in a format that takes into account the person's disability.
2. Review YWCA Cambridge Accessibility for Participants with a Disability Policy
3. Review the following areas and provide handouts for each area
 - How to interact and communicate with people with various disabilities
 - How to interact with people who use assistive devices
 - How to interact with people with disabilities who require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal
 - How to interact with people with disabilities who require the assistance of a support person
 - What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing our services
4. Resources
www.ontario.ca/AccessON, www.e-laws.gov.on.ca, www.eno.ontariononprofitnetwork.ca



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5. Questions