

# **WELCOMING COMMUNITIES**

**“I was a stranger and you welcomed me...” (Matthew 25:35)**

## **PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY**

**For**

**EPWORTH UNITED CHURCH  
56 Division Street S.  
Kingsville, Ontario.  
N9Y 1P6**



The mission statement of **EPWORTH UNITED CHURCH** is:

To be disciples of Christ in the world who, through the power of the Holy Spirit and the example of our lives, love the Lord, nurture faith, teach the scriptures, reach out with compassion, and promote stewardship of all that God has given to us.

Note: All structures and functions of the Congregation, its Boards and Committees shall be in furtherance of the stated Purpose of the Congregation.

In fulfilling our mission, EPWORTH UNITED CHURCH is committed to include people with disabilities as full and active participants. We will remove barriers and attitudes that exclude people with disabilities from full and active participation. All people are encouraged to practice their faith and use their gifts in worship, service, study and leadership.

### **PROVIDING PROGRAMS, GOODS AND SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

EPWORTH UNITED CHURCH is committed to excellence in serving all participants, including people with disabilities. As a congregation we will use reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent and accessible by all.

This document, approved by the Official Board of EPWORTH UNITED CHURCH establishes the policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of its goods or services to person with disabilities.

### **COMMUNICATION**

EPWORTH UNITED CHURCH 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.

### **TELEPHONE SERVICES**

We will attempt to provide accessible telephone services to our participants. We will train office staff and 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 email if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs, or is not available.

### **ASSISTIVE DEVICES**

EPWORTH UNITED CHURCH is 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 and volunteers with the various assistive devices that may be used by participants with disabilities while accessing our programs, goods and services. EPWORTH UNITED CHURCH provides hearing assist devices for those with hearing disabilities in order that they can access our programs, goods and services. We will train ushers, staff and volunteers on how to use any assistive devices available on our premises. Upon a participants 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 Board.

### **ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE/OFFICER**

EPWORTH UNITED CHURCH is committed to the establishment of an Accessibility Committee to oversee all issues relating to accessibility in consultation with our Church Board. The Accessibility Committee will be comprised of people with a passion for people with accessibilities, including congregants with disabilities or family members, congregants professionally or personally interested in accessibility, members of the Board and member(s) of the church staff.

The Accessibility Committee will establish policies on providing accessible programs, good and services to participants with disabilities that are in compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07.

The Accessibility Committee will monitor our programs, goods and services to ensure that practices and procedures are consistent with our governing policies. The Accessibility Committee will coordinate accessibility training and training materials for all relevant staff and volunteers. The Committee will ensure that assistive devices are met, as per approval of the Board. The Accessibility Committee will be responsible for developing feedback procedures, reviewing feedback on accessibility and responding to any complaints or concerns.

### **USE OF SERVICE ANIMALS AND SUPPORT PERSONS**

EPWORTH UNITED CHURCH is 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 EPWORTH UNITED CHURCH premises with his or her support person. Fees will not be charge for support persons accompanying a participant to any service or program.

### **NOTICE OF TEMPORARY DISRUPTION**

EPWORTH 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. This notice will be delivered through the use of the weekly church bulletin, email, telephone answering machine message, a telephone call from an appropriate person, a notice placed upon our website as well as a listing if necessary in the local newspaper.

### **TRAINING FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

EPWORTH UNITED CHURCH's Accessibility 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.

### **FEEDBACK PROCESS**

The ultimate goal of EPWORTH 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 EPWORTH UNITED CHURCH provides programs, goods and services to people with disabilities can be made verbally to our ushers, staff and volunteers, email, telephone and by using a feedback form found in the Narthex of our church. All feedback will be directed to our Accessibility Committee. Participants can expect to hear back in a maximum of 10 days. All those providing feedback will have their confidentiality respected.

By Email – epwsec@mnsi.net

By Telephone – 519-733-4154

By Canada Post – EPWORTH UNITED CHURCH

56 Division Street S., Kingsville, Ontario. N9Y 1P6

Attention Chair – Accessibility Committee

Complaints will be addressed according to the procedures outlined by the Accessibility Committee. Complaint procedures will be documented by the Accessibility Committee and made available to the congregation.

### **MODIFICATIONS TO THIS OR OTHER POLICIES**

EPWORTH UNITED CHURCH is 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 and their families. Any policy of EPWORTH UNITED CHURCH 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 the Chair of the Accessibility Committee.

## **ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE** **FEEDBACK FORM**

Thank you for attending EPWORTH UNITED CHURCH. We value all people and strive to meet everyone's needs.

Please tell us the date and time you attended EPWORTH 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      No

Were our programs and services provided to you in an accessible manner?  
(Circle one)      Yes                      No

Please add any other comments you may have:

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If you would like to provide us with your name, email, telephone number or address you may do so below:

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Thank you from the Accessibility Committee of EPWORTH UNITED CHURCH

**ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE**

# RECORD OF FEEDBACK FORM

Date feedback received: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of participant (optional if supplied) \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information if appropriate

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## Details

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## Follow-up

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## Action to be taken

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Per Accessibility Committee"

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