

EXETER UNITED CHURCH



*Open Arms,
Open Hearts,
Open Spirit*

42 James Street, Exeter ON N0M 1S6 519-235-0860
exeterunitedchurch@gmail.com www.exeterunitedchurch.com

Accessibility Policy-September 2019

Exeter United Church is committed to supporting the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equal opportunity for all individuals.

Providing programs, services or facilities to people with disabilities

Exeter United Church is committed to meeting its current and ongoing obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code respecting non-discrimination.

Exeter United Church understands that obligations under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* and its accessibility standards do not substitute or limit its obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code or obligations to people with disabilities under any other law.

Exeter United Church is committed to complying with both the *Ontario Human Rights Code* and the *AODA*.

Exeter United Church is committed to excellence in serving all individuals.

Assistive devices

People with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing our goods, services or facilities.

We will ensure that staff and volunteers are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that we provide.

This includes, but is not limited to, the lift, assistive hearing devices and wheelchair.

Communication

We will communicate with people in ways that take into account any disability they may have. This may include the following:

Using large print for written materials, providing a quiet space for communication, using technology where appropriate.

We will work with any individual to determine what method of communication works for them.

Service animals

We welcome people and their service animals. Service animals are allowed in the parts of our premises that are open to the public.

When we cannot easily identify that an animal is a service animal, our staff may ask a person to provide documentation (template, letter or form) from a regulated health professional that confirms the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

A service animal can be easily identified through visual indicators, such as when it wears a harness or a vest, or when it helps the person perform certain tasks.

Support persons

An individual who is accompanied by a support person will be able to have that person accompany them on our premises.

If a fee or fare is normally charged to an individual for accessing a program the fee/fare will not be charged for support persons.

We will notify individuals of this by posting a notice in the following location(s):

Andrew Street bulletin board, website and Church Office.

In certain cases, Exeter United Church might require a person to be accompanied by a support person for the health or safety reasons of the individual, and others on the premises.

Before making a decision, we will:

- consult with the person to understand their needs,

- consider health or safety reasons based on available evidence,
- determine if there is no other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person or others on the premises.

Notice of temporary disruption

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities affecting individuals with disabilities, Exeter United Church will provide notice promptly. This clearly posted notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

Services/Facilities include: Church services, events, programs and activities, office hours, accessible entrance, lift.

The notice will be made publicly available in the following ways: Church entrances, website, Facebook page, phone message.

Training

Exeter United Church will provide Accessible Customer Service Training to:

- all employees and volunteers,
- anyone involved in developing our policies, and
- anyone who provides goods, services or facilities to individuals on our behalf.

Staff will be trained on accessible customer service within 1 month after being hired.

Training will include:

- purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard,
- Exeter United Church's policies related to the customer service standard,
- how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities,
- how to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person,
- how to use the equipment or devices available on-site or otherwise that may help with providing programs, services or facilities to people

with disabilities. This includes but is not limited to: the lift, assistive hearing devices, wheelchair, and

- what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing Exeter United Church's goods, services or facilities.

Staff will also be trained when changes are made to our Accessibility Policy.

Feedback process

Exeter United Church welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible customer service. Individual/community feedback will help to identify barriers and respond to concerns.

Individuals who wish to provide feedback on the way Exeter United Church provides programs, services or facilities to people with disabilities can provide feedback in the following way(s):

Feedback cards available from the church office, in the Andrew Street entrance and on our website. Individuals may also contact the office at 519-235-0860 or exeterunitedchurch@gmail.com

All feedback, including complaints, will be handled in the following manner:

Feedback will be directed to the appropriate staff and the Leadership Team Chair.

Individuals can expect to receive a response in 1-2 business days.

Exeter United Church will make sure our feedback process is accessible to all individuals by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports, on request.

Notice of availability of documents

Exeter United Church will notify the public that documents related to accessible customer service, are available upon request by posting a notice in the following location(s)/way(s):

On the Andrew Street bulletin board, in the Church office and on our website.

Exeter United Church will provide this policy in an accessible format or with communication support, on request. We will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of the format or communication

support. We will provide the accessible format in a timely manner and, at no additional cost.

Modifications to this or other policies

Policies of Exeter United Church that do not respect and promote the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for all people will be modified or removed.

September, 2019