

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH

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ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

Revised January 2026 & Approved by the Official Board March 24, 2026¹

¹ Original dated January 2012 and amended at the Annual Meeting 2018.

Available in alternative format upon request.

St. Paul's United Church Accessibility Policy

1. Core Values:

- Loving and engaging community
- Diverse and open spirituality
- Respect for all creation

2. Mission Statement:

To be an open, Christian community seeking spirituality and loving relationships.

3. Fulfilling Our Mission:

Our church is committed to providing people with disabilities the same opportunity to access and benefit from our programs, goods and services with dignity and independence, in the same place, and in a similar way as all other participants. We will, therefore, put the following policies into practice in accordance with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation which had a compliance deadline of January 1, 2015.

4. Providing Programs, Goods and Services to People with Disabilities:

St. Paul's United Church is committed to excellence in serving all participants. We will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

4.1 Communication (e.g. telephone, print, electronics, etc.)

St. Paul's United Church is committed to meeting and continually improving the communication needs of people with disabilities.

We will communicate with people with disabilities with sensitivity and consideration for their disability.

When asked, we will provide information and communications materials in accessible formats or with communication supports. This includes publicly available information about our goods, services and facilities, as well as publicly available emergency information. St. Paul's United church will consult with people with disabilities to determine their information and communication needs. We will train staff, volunteers and other service suppliers to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

4.2 Assistive Devices

We are committed to serving people 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 and other areas of the church for worship and other applicable programs, goods and services.

We will familiarize staff/volunteers and other service providers with the various assistive devices that may be used by participants with disabilities while accessing our programs, goods and services.

Staff/volunteers and other service providers will be trained in the use of the assistive devices available on our premises. Upon request from a member of our congregation for an assistive device not presently available, we will endeavour to respond in a considerate and reasonable manner recognizing that final approval will be required from the Official Board.

4.3 Accessibility Committee

The Accessibility Committee will oversee all issues relating to accessibility in consultation with the Official Board.

The Accessibility Committee membership will comprise a cross section of congregants including those with disabilities and Official Board members as well as staff. The Committee shall have a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 9 members. The Chair will be chosen from the Committee members.

The Accessibility Committee will have the following role:

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

The Committee will monitor our programs, goods and services to ensure that practices and procedures are consistent with our governing policies.

The Committee will coordinate accessibility training and training materials for all relevant staff, volunteers and other service suppliers.

The Committee will ensure that assistive devices provided by our church are in good working order. Requests for other or additional assistive devices will be considered, pending approval from the Official Board.

The Committee will be responsible for developing feedback procedures, reviewing feedback on accessibility and responding to any complaints, concerns or requests.

The Committee will provide guidance and direction within St. Paul's United Church on subsequent AODA standard issuance.

5. Use of Service Animals and Support Persons

We are committed to welcoming people who are accompanied by a service animal on those parts of our premises that are open to the public and other service suppliers.

We will ensure that all staff, volunteers and other service suppliers 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 welcomed into St. Paul's United Church premises with his or her support person.

Appropriate fees may be charged for support persons accompanying a participant to applicable services or programs.

6. Notice of Temporary Disruption

St. Paul's United Church will provide participants with notice in an appropriate manner 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.

7. Employment

St. Paul's United Church will notify the public and staff that, when requested, we will accommodate disabilities during recruitment and assessment processes and when people are hired. If needed, we will provide customized workplace emergency information to employees who have a disability. If using performance management, career development and redeployment processes, we will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities.

8. Training for Staff and Volunteers

St. Paul's United Church's Accessibility Committee will coordinate training for all employees, volunteers and other service suppliers, and all those who are involved in the development and approval of accessibility policies, practices and procedures.

9. Design of Public Spaces Public Spaces

St. Paul's United Church will meet the Accessibility Standards for the Design of Public Spaces when building or making major modifications to public spaces.

Public spaces that apply to St. Paul's United Church include:

- Accessible off-street parking
- Service-related elements like service counters, fixed queuing lines and waiting areas

10. Feedback Process

The ultimate goal of St. Paul's United Church is to ensure the needs of all "customers" are met including participants with disabilities.

Comments regarding how well those needs are being met are welcomed and appreciated.

Feedback regarding the way St. Paul's United Church provides programs, goods and services to people with disabilities can be made through the Feedback Procedure.

All feedback will be directed to the Accessibility Committee.

Participants can expect to hear back in a timely manner.

Confidentiality will be respected.

Complaints (submitted in written or alternate format to any member of the St. Paul's United Church ministerial staff or any member of the Accessibility Committee) will be addressed according to the procedures outlined by the Accessibility Committee. This procedure will be documented by the Accessibility Committee and made available to the congregation in defined locations and in multiple formats.

11. Modifications to this or Other Policies

We are committed to developing accessibility policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Any of our policies that do not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed. No changes, therefore, will be made to this or any other policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities or their families.

12. 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 Accessibility Committee.