

# **WELCOMING COMMUNITIES**



## **Northlea United Church Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Policy Statement**

**Revision to 2012 Policy  
Approved April 21, 2021  
Northlea United Church Council**

This policy establishes the standards and procedures for providing accessibility for the members, adherents and other persons who attend services, programs and activities at Northlea United Church.<sup>1</sup> These statements meet the requirements of the Customer Service Standard and other items that are considered good practices. This policy will be revised as other standards are introduced under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

## **1. Our Mission**

*The Mission of Northlea United Church is to Love God, Connect with others, Nurture the spirit and Serve the world.*

## **2. Our Commitment**

In fulfilling our mission, Northlea United Church strives at all times to provide its programs and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We are also committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access our programs and services and allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place, and in a similar way as other participants.

## **3. Providing Programs and Services to People with Disabilities**

Northlea United Church is committed to excellence in serving all participants, including people with disabilities and we will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

- Worship
- Fellowship
- Social Events
- Community Events
- Pastoral Care
- Youth and Adult Programs
- Music Programs

### **3.1 Communication**

- We 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.

### **3.2 Telephone Services**

- We are committed to providing accessible telephone services to our participants.
- We will train office staff/volunteers to communicate with participants over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly.

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that this policy only applies to services, programs and activities provided by Northlea United Church to its members, to its adherents and to the general public, and not to services, programs or activities provided by Maria Montessori School (MMS), Pawsitively Pets for Kids (PPK), Servants of Christ or other users of our building.

- We will offer to communicate with participants by e-mail, postal service or personal visits if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs, or is not available.

### **3.3 Assistive Devices**

- We are committed to serving people who use assistive devices to participate in and benefit from our worship services, programs and other activities.
- We will ensure that people are permitted to use their own personal assistive devices to access the Sanctuary, Community Room and other parts of the building for programs and activities.
- We will familiarize staff and volunteers with the various assistive devices that may be used by participants with disabilities for accessing our worship services, programs and other activities such as:
  - Headsets to provide accessibility to hearing the worship services;
  - Large Print Bulletins (provided as requested)
  - Large Print Hymn Books
  - Other Large Print items as needed
  - An accessible washroom available on the main floor
  - A portable projector, computer and sound system for use in the Community Room and in the Sanctuary if needed
- The church provides access for people with physical disabilities that limit mobility with a **gradually elevated walkway** to the main west outer doors leading to the ground floor of the building where the Sanctuary, offices and the Community Room, **a wheel chair and motorized scooter accessible washroom**, and **a chair lift** are located. At Northlea there are 4+1 floors and 3 stairwells.<sup>2</sup>
- The chair lift is located on the ground floor in the centre stairwell. From the ground floor it goes down a half flight to the centre outside door level, then a half flight down to the Montessori level, and then 2 steps down to the gym level. Going up from the ground floor level, the chairlift goes up to the top floor level where PPK is located. A portable 4 foot suitcase ramp with a non-skid surface can be put down to take a person from that level up two steps to the Montessori school level. There is a weight and size restriction for motorized scooters. A scooter and occupant can weigh no more than 660 pounds with the scooter being less than 48 inches in length. Volunteers will be trained to operate the lift for Sunday Worship and other church programs and activities.
- Upon a participant's request, we will make every effort to provide the requested assistive device and/or service, subject to the approval of the church Council.

### **3.4 Accessibility Liaison**

- At Northlea we feel that accessibility is a responsibility that we all share in providing and maintaining. With that in mind we will have an accessibility checklist on all Event Starters to ensure that the organizing person or group indicates what special accessibility needs are to be met and by whom.

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<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that the west stairwell is for the exclusive use of PPK and the centre and east stairwells are currently for the exclusive use of MMS, except in the event of an emergency. When we return to normal times post pandemic with other users in the building, the centre stairwell will be mixed use.

- Northlea has designated Council Chair Brenda Burton as the Accessibility Liaison to receive comments, concerns, complaints and recommendations relating to accessibility and to forward such to the church Council for action if required.
- The Accessibility Liaison will be assigned a Northlea church email address (accessibility@northleaunited.ca) and will monitor it regularly for feedback on accessibility at Northlea. This request for feedback information will be posted in Newsbites, in the church's Sunday bulletin and on the church website.
- The Accessibility Liaison will monitor any feedback forms which are left in the church office.
- The Accessibility Liaison will coordinate with appropriate persons to provide the accessibility training and training materials for all relevant staff and volunteers.
- The Accessibility Liaison will be responsible for reviewing feedback on accessibility, responding to any complaints or concerns and forwarding accessibility recommendations to the church Council for consideration.

### **3.5 Accessibility Maintenance and Training**

- The Facility Manager will arrange regular maintenance for the chairlift as per the chairlift operating manual.
- The Facility Manager will check the chairlift weekly to be sure it is in good working order.
- The Accessibility Liaison will arrange with the Facility Manager to provide training twice a year in September and January for the rest of the staff, Council, Greeters and other designated parties in the safe use of the chairlift, the routine for unlocking and locking exterior doors and any other procedures required to ensure accessibility.

### **3.6 Role of the Church Council**

- The church Council, in conjunction with the Accessibility Liaison and other appropriate persons, will have the following roles:
  - The church Council in conjunction with the Property Manager will ensure that assistive devices provided by Northlea are in good working order and that requests for assistive devices are met, subject to approval from the church Council.
  - The church Council in conjunction with the Accessibility Liaison will ensure that accessibility training and training materials are provided for all relevant staff and volunteers.
  - When new staff are being hired, the church Council shall authorize the Ministry & Personnel Committee to make such accommodations in the hiring process and in the employment arrangements as may be appropriate to accommodate qualified persons with disabilities who wish to apply for the position.

## **4. Use of Service Animals and Support Persons**

- Northlea is committed to welcoming people who are accompanied by a service animal on parts of our premises that are open to the public.
- 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.

- Northlea is committed to welcoming people who are accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person may enter Northlea United Church premises with his or her support person.
- Fees will not be charged for a support person accompanying a participant for most programs or activities sponsored by or supported by Northlea United Church. For special events for which admission fees are charged, the support person's admission fee may be waived when appropriate.
- If fees are payable by a support person for a special event, participants will be informed of these fees by a notice that will be posted in Northlea United Church premises and in any advertising or communications regarding the function or event.

**5. Notice of Temporary Disruption**

Northlea United Church through the Facility Manager or the Office Administrator 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. The notice will be delivered to participants by means of posting information:

- At the access point to the venue of the event;
- On bulletin boards;
- By e-mail or telephone tree;
- On Northlea's website and Facebook page

If the chair lift will be out of operation for a special event when a person with a disability might need to access it, all reasonable efforts will be made to notify anyone who might be adversely affected.

In the case where the disruption is community-wide, Northlea United Church will ensure available notices are posted as appropriate.

**6. Training for Staff and Volunteers**

Northlea United Church's Accessibility Liaison will be responsible for coordinating with the Facility Manager the 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 approval of accessibility policies, practices and procedures.

The Accessibility Liaison will arrange with the Facility Manager to provide training twice a year in September and January in the safe use of the chairlift, the routine for unlocking and locking exterior doors and any other procedures required to ensure accessibility.

Individuals holding the following positions will be trained:

- Church staff;
- Council members;
- Greeters;
- Children and Youth Volunteers;
- Such other volunteers as are deemed appropriate by the Accessibility Liaison or the Church Council

## **7. Feedback Process**

The ultimate goal of Northlea United Church is to meet and surpass expectations while serving participants with disabilities.

Comments on our programs and services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

- Feedback regarding the way Northlea United Church provides programs and services to people with disabilities can be made by email at [accessibility@northleaunited.ca](mailto:accessibility@northleaunited.ca), verbally or by letter addressed to the Accessibility Liaison in care of Northlea United.
- Feedback forms are available on the Narthex table or on our website at [www.northleaunited.ca](http://www.northleaunited.ca).
- Feedback can also be directed to the Accessibility Liaison through the church office.
- Anyone submitting a comment, concern, complaint or request can expect to hear back within 14 days.
- Confidentiality will be respected.
- Actions taken may include designating a Council member to investigate the complaint or concern to obtain more information; authorizing specific actions to be taken by staff or volunteers to address the complaint or concern; or taking any other action that the church Council considers reasonable and appropriate under the circumstances.

## **8. 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.

- No changes, therefore, will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities or their families.
- Any policy of Northlea United Church that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

## **9. Questions about This Policy**

This policy seeks to facilitate full participation in the life and work of Northlea United Church for persons with disabilities. If anyone has a question about the policy, or its purpose, an explanation or reply will be provided by the Accessibility Liaison or a member of the church Council. A copy of this policy, called Welcoming Communities, is available on request from the church office.

## SAMPLE DOCUMENTS FOR OBTAINING FEEDBACK

### Sample notice of the Feedback Process

#### Sample 1

Dear Valued Participant,

We strive to improve accessibility for our participants with disabilities. We would like to hear your comments, concerns, questions and suggestions about the provision of our program and services to people with disabilities. Participant feedback forms are available on the table in the Narthex or on our website [www.northleaunited.ca](http://www.northleaunited.ca) . Feedback may be emailed to the Accessibility Liaison at [accessibility@northleaunited.ca](mailto:accessibility@northleaunited.ca).

You may also call 416-425-5252 or e-mail [office@northleaunited.ca](mailto:office@northleaunited.ca) to share your comments, or request a copy of our accessibility policy. You can also leave your feedback form in the office.

Thank you:

(Name)  
Accessibility Liaison

# SAMPLE DOCUMENTS FOR OBTAINING FEEDBACK

## Participant Feedback Form



### Northlea United Church

Love God • Connect with others • Nurture the spirit • Serve the world  
In the community. For the community.

At Northlea United Church:

We strive to improve accessibility for our participants with disabilities. We would like to hear your comments, concerns, questions and suggestions about the provision of our programs and services to people with disabilities. Participant feedback forms are available on the table in the Narthex or on our website [www.northleaunited.ca](http://www.northleaunited.ca). Feedback may be emailed to the Accessibility Liaison at [accessibility@northleaunited.ca](mailto:accessibility@northleaunited.ca). You may also call the church office at 416 425 5252 or e-mail [office@northleaunited.ca](mailto:office@northleaunited.ca) to share your comments, or request a copy of our accessibility policy. You can also leave your feedback form in the church office.

Thank you:

Brenda Burton, Accessibility Liaison

### **Participant Feedback Form**

Thank you for attending Northlea United Church. We value all people who enter our building and wherever possible we endeavor to meet everyone's needs.

Please tell us the date and time you attended Northlea United Church:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Was our church accessible for you (Circle one)?

Yes                  Somewhat (please explain below)                  No (please explain below)

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1

125 Brentcliffe Road, Toronto, On M4G 3Y7  
[office@northleaunited.ca](mailto:office@northleaunited.ca)      416 425 5252





# Northlea United Church

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Were our programs/services provided to you in an accessible manner (Circle one)?

Yes                      Somewhat (please explain below)                      No (please explain below)

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Please add any other comments you may have:

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Contact information (optional): If you would like to receive a communication regarding how we have addressed this issue or would like to discuss the issue further, please provide your contact information in the space provided below.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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125 Brentcliffe Road, Toronto, On M4G 3Y7  
[office@northleaunited.ca](mailto:office@northleaunited.ca)                      416 425 5252

**SAMPLE DOCUMENTS FOR OBTAINING FEEDBACK**

**Record of Participant Feedback**



**Northlea United Church**

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**Record of Participant Feedback On Accessibility**

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

**Date report created:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of participant (if given):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact information (if given):**

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Details of comments, concerns, questions, suggestions:**

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## Northlea United Church

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In the community. For the community.

### Action to be taken:

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### Follow-up:

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Accessibility Liaison: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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125 Brentcliffe Road, Toronto, On M4G 3Y7  
[office@northleaunited.ca](mailto:office@northleaunited.ca) 416 425 5252



