

# Accessibility Policy

## 1 - Purpose

United Way Greater Toronto (UWGT) is committed to accessibility and this Policy outlines how the organization will meet the requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA).

## 2 - Scope

This Policy applies to all Board Trustees, volunteers and all employees.

## 3 – Commitment

UWGT supports the principles of the AODA and is deeply committed to meeting the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR). We will work to prevent and remove barriers and to provide fair and effective accommodation for people with disabilities. Inclusiveness is one of our organizational values and promotion of integration and equity is reflected in all that we do. Our commitment to accessibility extends beyond the four walls of our organization and into the community, through partnering with and funding agencies who work to improve the lives of people with disabilities.

## 4 - Policy

UWGT is committed to meeting all requirements under AODA. This includes workplace emergency response plans, fair and accessible employment practices, provision of information and customer service.

Goods and services will be provided in a manner that is based upon the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for all constituents. The provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities will be integrated wherever possible. Persons with disabilities will benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other constituents.

## 5 - Definitions

**Disability:** a physical or mental condition that is permanent, episodic, ongoing or of some persistence that is significant enough to limit or restrict a person's ability to participate in or carry out important life activities. A disability may be visible or invisible.

**Accessible:** capable of being entered or reached; approachable; easy to get at; capable of being influenced; obtainable; able to be understood or appreciated.

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**Accommodation:** an adjustment made to enable a person with a disability to perform the essential duties or requirements of the position.

**Assistive Device:** a device used to assist persons with disabilities in carrying out activities or in accessing the services of persons or organizations covered by the Customer Service Standard.

**Dignity:** respecting and treating every person with a disability as valued and as deserving of effective and full service as any other constituent.

**Goods and Services:** goods and services provided by UWGT to the public or other organizations in Ontario.

**Independence:** freedom from control or influence of others, freedom to make your own choices.

**Service Animals:** an animal that is specifically trained to do work or perform tasks for a person with a physical or mental disability.

**Support Person:** an individual hired or chosen by a person with a disability to provide services or assistance with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or with access to goods or services.

## 6 - Principles

UWGT is committed to excellence in serving all constituents including persons with disabilities and will carry out its functions and responsibilities to ensure that policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the following principles:

- a) Goods and services are provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- b) The provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities is integrated with those provided to persons who do not have disabilities unless an alternative measure is necessary to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from UWGT's goods or services.
- c) Persons with disabilities are given an opportunity equal to that of persons without disabilities to obtain use or benefit from goods and services.
- d) To ensure the best possible constituent service, UWGT encourages open two-way communication and expects persons with disabilities to communicate their need for accommodation or assistance.

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### 7 - Procedures

#### 1. Communication:

UWGT is committed to communicating with persons with disabilities in ways that take into consideration their disability.

- a) UWGT staff and volunteers will be trained in how to interact and communicate with constituents with disabilities guided by the principles of dignity, independence and equality.
- b) Constituents with disabilities will be offered alternative communication formats that will meet their needs as promptly as feasible.
- c) Documents will be provided to constituents in an alternative format such as large print or a text only electronic file that can be read by a device like a computer or smart phone.
- d) If telephone communication is not suitable for a constituent's needs, alternative forms of communication will be offered.
- e) In the event that a planned temporary service disruption occurs that would limit a person with a disability from gaining access to UWGT goods or services, UWGT will make the disruption known to constituents via messages posted on the UWGT web site at [www.unitedwaygt.org](http://www.unitedwaygt.org) and/or notices posted in the building/office regarding disruption of access to meeting rooms or other facilities.

Notices will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, alternate means of accessing services if applicable, and a description of the alternative services.

If an unexpected disruption occurs, UWGT will make every effort to accommodate persons with disabilities by providing goods and services by alternative means, e.g. using an alternative time and place for providing goods and services or other assistive measures.

#### 2. Use of Assistive Devices, Service Animals and Support Persons

UWGT will ensure that the access, use and benefit of goods or services are not compromised for persons with disabilities who require assistive devices, or who are accompanied by a service animal or support person.

##### *Assistive Devices*

Persons with disabilities shall be permitted to obtain, use or benefit from goods or services through the use of their own assistive devices. Exceptions may occur in situations where UWGT has determined that the assistive device may pose a risk to the health and safety of a person with a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises. In these situations, if a person with a disability is hindered from accessing goods or services, UWGT will accommodate the constituent by providing an alternative where possible.

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It should be noted that it is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that their assistive device is operated in a safe and controlled manner at all times.

### *Service Animals*

Service animals shall be permitted entry to all UWGT facilities that are open to the public. Service animals are not permitted where food preparation is being undertaken or as otherwise disallowed by law. In the rare case where a service animal is to be denied access to a facility or meeting room, other accommodations may be afforded, such as teleconference, delivery of goods or service at an alternate time or location or other assistive measures available to deliver a good or service to ensure equitable access and outcomes.

### *Support Persons*

UWGT welcomes constituents with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. At no time will a person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on UWGT's premises.

UWGT holds meetings, events, and workshops sponsored by UWGT or by third parties. For such events, support persons shall be permitted entry to all UWGT facilities and meeting rooms that are open to the public. Any applicable admission fees or fares will be waived for the support person.

### 3. Training

UWGT will provide AODA customer service training to all employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on their behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of constituent service policies, practices and procedures.

UWGT will also provide training to employees and volunteers in accordance with the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation.

Training will be provided as part of new employee and volunteer orientation and on an ongoing basis as necessary to ensure that individuals stay current with any policy or procedural changes related to the AODA.

### 4. Individualized Emergency Response Plans

During orientation, People & Culture (P&C) will notify new employees that they may request an individualized emergency response plan if they have a disability. Employees who become disabled after they commence employment are encouraged to speak with P&C who will work with them to develop a plan that meets their specific needs.

#### REVIEW PROCESS

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### 5. Feedback

UWGT will receive and respond to feedback in accessible format when asked. This includes providing alternatives to surveys, focus groups or other means by which UWGT requests input from constituents.

UWGT welcomes comments on how the needs of constituents with disabilities are being met. Feedback regarding the way UWGT provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made through our web site feedback page at <https://www.unitedwaygt.org/contact-us>, in person, by telephone, through email, or by other means as required. Feedback sent through the web site will be directed to the Vice President, People & Culture.

Feedback in person, by telephone or through email should be directed to:

Vice President, People & Culture  
United Way Greater Toronto  
26 Wellington Street East, 12th Floor  
Toronto, ON M5E 1S2  
Email: [accessibility@uwgt.org](mailto:accessibility@uwgt.org)  
Phone: 416-777-2001 x366

Feedback will be used to improve constituent service. In addition, the author of the feedback will be provided with a response in the format in which the feedback was received. The feedback may outline actions deemed appropriate, if any.

### 6. Employment

Employees with disabilities may request that workplace information is provided in an accessible way. This includes one-on-one discussions to explain complex information, sign language interpretation or other supports suited to the individual. UWGT will also work with employees upon request to provide reasonable accommodation during performance management and for training or other orientation to new positions. UWGT will take into account the accessibility needs and accommodation plans of employees with disabilities in the case of job transfers or promotions.

Job candidates are notified via postings that UWGT welcomes applications from individuals requiring accommodation. Upon request, UWGT will provide reasonable accommodation during the hiring process. New employees will be notified about UWGT's policies related to Accessibility and will be informed of any updates that may be made.

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### 7. Accommodation

Accommodation to the point of undue hardship will be provided for UWGT employees, job applicants and volunteers. Accommodations will be determined with the participation of the individual making the request, P&C and the manager and may include but are not limited to:

- Human support services such as sign language interpreters
- Technical aids and devices and adaptive technologies
- Workstation or office minor alterations
- Job redesign
- Reassignments and alternative jobs
- Flexible or alternative work schedules
- Temporary rehabilitative assignments

#### *Employees:*

An employee requesting accommodation should advise their manager and a member of the P&C team in writing. Any employee represented by COPE Local 343 has a right to be represented by their Union in the accommodation process.

The employee will be responsible for:

- providing information about restrictions or limitations including information from health care providers where necessary
- participating in discussions regarding possible accommodation solutions
- cooperating with experts whose assistance is required to manage the accommodation process
- complying with an established accommodation plan
- notifying the manager immediately of any change in circumstances that affects the accommodation plan

Managers who receive requests for accommodation will be responsible for:

- ensuring the policy is consistently and fairly applied
- facilitating requests for accommodation in a timely manner to the point of undue hardship
- maintaining the confidentiality of all information
- implementing an established accommodation plan
- facilitating the integration of the employee being accommodated and providing a supportive work environment

P&C will play a coordination role in any employee request for accommodation role including:

- ensuring the policy is interpreted and applied in a way that promotes UWGT's interest in supporting a safe and productive work environment for all employees

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- facilitating the development of an accommodation plan or communicating with the employee in cases where an accommodation plan was not approved
- including in any established accommodation plan information regarding accessible formats or supports for communication and workplace emergency response information
- obtaining expert opinions or advice where needed
- maintaining the confidentiality of all information and ensuring that confidentiality is maintained by any third party who may be called on for support
- receiving and tracking requests for accommodation and actions taken
- ensuring that any accommodation plan is provided in a format that takes into consideration the employee's accessibility needs

### *Job Applicants:*

Job applicants are responsible for notifying the hiring manager or P&C of any accommodations that may be required through the selection process. UWGT is committed to ensuring that job applicants are only asked to respond to questions through the selection process that relate to their skills, abilities and qualifications for the position.

### *Volunteers:*

Volunteers may request accommodation through their staff partner and/or the registration process. P&C will provide support to staff partners as required.

## 8. Return to Work

Managers and employees returning to work following a disability leave of absence and who require disability-related accommodations will work with P&C to develop a Return to Work plan. The plan will take into consideration medical recommendations regarding limitations or restrictions and outline any gradual resumption of duties needed.

## 9. Format and Communication of UWGT Policies

UWGT develops and updates policies, procedures and practices in such a manner as to respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities, as well as integration and equality of opportunity. Upon request and within a reasonable amount of time, UWGT will provide policy and procedure documents it produces through alternative means such as a different print format or a text only electronic file that can be read by a computer.

#### **REVIEW PROCESS**