

## Accessible Customer Service Policy

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## 1. Purpose and Background Information

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (“the AODA”) is a Provincial Act with the purpose of developing, implementing and mandating accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for persons with disabilities, with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises.

Under the AODA, Ontario Regulation 429/07, entitled “Accessibility Standards for Customer Service” (“the Regulation”), came into force on January 1, 2008. The Regulation establishes accessibility standards specific to customer service for public sector organizations and other persons or organizations that provide goods and services to members of the public or other third parties.

The objective of this policy is to identify what the equal treatment provisions of the Ontario Human Rights Code, through the AODA and the Regulation, require as a minimum legal standard in program design and service delivery to persons with disabilities and addresses the following:

- The provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities;
- The use of assistive devices by persons with disabilities;
- The use of service animals by persons with disabilities;
- The use of support persons by persons with disabilities;
- Notice of temporary disruptions in services and facilities;
- Training;
- Customer feedback regarding the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities; and
- Notice of availability and format of documents.

## 2. Scope

The Ontario College of Art & Design (“OCAD” University) strives at all times to provide services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. It applies to all members of the university community, including students, employees, volunteers, visitors, and third party contractors.

## 3. Policy Statement

In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities, Ontario Regulation 429/07, Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, OCAD University herein also referred to as “the university”, is committed to providing a working and learning environment that is accessible and inclusive to all persons who work, study or visit the university. It is the policy of the university that its working and learning environments will be free from discrimination and harassment as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code.

## 4. General Principles

### **The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities**

The University will strive to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with following the core principles as outlined in the AODA.

**Dignity** – Goods and services are provided in a manner that is respectful to persons with disabilities and does not diminish the person’s importance.

**Independence** – Accommodating a person’s disability means respecting their right to do for themselves and to choose the way they wish to receive goods and services.

**Integration** – Persons with disabilities can access all goods and services. This may require alternative formats and flexible approaches. It means inclusiveness and full participation. This is a fundamental human right.

**Equal Opportunity** – Service is provided to persons with disabilities in a way that their opportunity to access goods and services is equal to that given to others.

## **5.Components of the Policy**

### **5.1 Communication with Persons with Disabilities**

When communicating with a person with a disability, the university will do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability. The university commits to provide training on customer service to all current and future employees and volunteers. This training will, in particular, include how to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.

### **5.2 Notice of Planned or Unplanned Disruption in Services and Facilities**

In the event of a service disruption on campus affecting students, employees, visitors, contractors or members of the general public, it is the responsibility of individual service areas (i.e. Office of the Registrar, Student Services, Library, Facilities Planning & Management, Campus Services & Security, Studio Management, Exhibition Services, Faculty Offices, Human Resources, Risk Management, IT Services, etc.) to take reasonable steps to report such disruption in a timely fashion through appropriate information channels.

Such channels include, but are not limited to, the OCAD University website, physical postings (temporary signage) on or immediately adjacent to the affected area, and/or communication via email to affected individuals, departments or groups. In accordance with the AODA, notice must be conspicuous and indicate any alternatives that exist to allow access to persons with disabilities during the disruption. The required information necessary for any communication of a temporary disruption may include:

- The time, date and location of the disruption;
- Information about the reason for the disruption;
- Anticipated duration of the disruption;

- Descriptions of alternative facilities or services, if any; and
- Contact information for the responsible service area.

### **5.3 Assistive Technology**

Personal assistive technologies are permitted and unrestricted in all areas of the university to which students, employees and the public have access, except when subject to operator safety and/or academic integrity. The university will train, on an ongoing basis, current and future employees and volunteers in the use of various assistive devices and related policies. The university will provide an updated list of various assistive technologies available to students; employees and volunteers (see Appendix A). It should be noted that the provision, use and safety of personal assistive devices is the responsibility of the person with a disability.

### **5.4 Service Animals**

Persons with a disability who are accompanied by a service animal may access premises owned or operated by the university, if the public has access to such premises and the animal is not otherwise excluded by law. If a service animal is excluded by law, the university will ensure that alternate means are available within reasonable time and location to provide persons with a disability access to the university's services.

There may be rare circumstances where, for reasons of health and safety of another person, allowing a person with a disability to enter a premises accompanied by a service animal needs to be considered. Examples of such situations include but are not limited to:

- a) A studio environment, where chemicals and/or equipment present hazards to other persons and/or to the service animal; and
- b) Where a person is allergic to animals and adversely affected if they are in close proximity to a service animal.

If deemed necessary, a risk assessment will be conducted by the relevant academic or administrative manager, in consultation with the Risk Management Office. This assessment will identify:

- a) The risks inherent with the service animal being in the area of concern;  
and
- b) Alternate measures available to enable the person with a disability to access this service.

If it is not readily apparent that an animal is a service animal, Campus Services & Security may ask the person with the service animal to provide verification of the animal's duty. It should be noted that the use and safety of the service animal is the responsibility of the person with a disability.

## **5.5 Support Persons**

The university welcomes staff, students and visitors who are accompanied by a support person, when the support person has been hired or chosen by the person with a disability to accompany them in order to assist in accessing goods or services and/or for the purposes of providing support with mobility, personal assistance and/or communication. Persons with a disability who require a support person may access premises owned and/or operated by the university with their support person, provided the interaction between the person and their support person does not compromise academic integrity.

Support persons are permitted to accompany students and employees with disabilities to their work and learning environments. Individuals who are accompanied by a support person are encouraged to inform relevant persons of their participation (e.g. instructors/facilitators, supervisors, event organizers).

There may be rare circumstances where, for reasons of health and safety of another person, allowing a person with a disability to enter a premises accompanied by their support person needs to be considered. Examples of

such situations include potential fire code violations. If deemed necessary, a risk assessment will be conducted by the relevant academic or administrative manager, in consultation with the Risk Management Office. This assessment will identify:

- a) The risks inherent with the support person being in the area of concern;  
and
- b) Alternate measures available to enable the person with a disability to access this service.

Support persons shall be permitted entry to all OCAD University facilities and meeting rooms that are open to the public, except when there are fees applied against participants by a third party. Where there are admission fees for an event organized by OCAD University, persons with a disability shall be expected to pay the same fee as other attendees, but no admission fee shall be charged to their support person.

## **5.6 Feedback**

Feedback about the delivery of services to persons with disabilities is welcomed, as it may identify areas that require change and assist in continuous service improvement. Such feedback may be by telephone, in person, in writing, or by delivering an electronic text via email, on diskette or otherwise. The university will make best efforts to provide a response in the same format in which the feedback was received.

Where possible, feedback will be addressed immediately. Some feedback may, however, require more effort to address and may need to be reviewed before an action is taken. The university will respond within 21 working days. Information about the feedback process will be posted on the university's website at [http://www.ocad.ca/about\\_ocad/diversity\\_equity/accessibility.htm](http://www.ocad.ca/about_ocad/diversity_equity/accessibility.htm)



Feedback may be provided directly to the department concerned and/or to:

**Mail:** Accessibility Manager  
Diversity & Equity Initiatives  
Ontario College of Art & Design  
100 McCaul Street  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5T 1W1

**Telephone:** 416-977-6000 extension 2205

**Fax:** 416-977-3034

**Email:** [accessibility@ocadu.ca](mailto:accessibility@ocadu.ca)

**In Person:** Accessibility Manager  
115 McCaul Street, Second Floor  
Toronto, Ontario

## 5.7 Training

The university shall provide training on AODA customer service to all current employees and volunteers and, in particular, to those providing services and who are involved in the development and approval of customer service policies, procedures and practices. New employees will be provided such training as part of their orientation. Through the relevant hiring department, the university shall also require volunteers, new employees, student monitors, and/or third party contractors to provide proof of AODA customer service training as a condition of contract.

Such training shall include:

- A review of the purposes of the AODA and the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service;
- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities;
- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person;
- How to use the available equipment or devices that may assist with the provision of services to persons with disabilities;
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing OCAD services;
- How to develop and review policies, procedures and practices relating to the provision of services to persons with disabilities.

Documentation of the training of employees, monitors, volunteers, and third part contractors shall be maintained by the relevant department and submitted to the Office of Diversity & Equity Initiatives, as required by law.

### 5.8 Availability and Format of Documents (Alternative Formats)

All documents required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, including the university's Accessible Customer Service Policy, notices of temporary disruptions, training records, and written feedback process are available upon request, subject to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act ("FIPPA"). When providing these documents to a person with a disability, the university will endeavor to provide the document, or the information contained in the document, in a format that takes the person's disability into account.

Notice of the availability of documents required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service will be posted on the university's [website](#).

## 6. Definitions

**Accessible** means obtainable, usable, readable, audible, visible, understandable, clear, able to be entered and exited, flexible, etc. To be accessible to all people, a variety of accessibility plans are necessary. Ensuring inclusive practices will ensure that all goods and services can be accessed by a larger audience.

**Alternative Formats** refers to alternate ways to provide goods and services. This may be through forms of communication such as speech or writing, or methods such as in person or over the phone. Other examples are large print, electronic text (Word or html), Braille, sign language interpretation, communication devices, media caption, etc.

**Assistive Devices** are equipment that persons with disabilities utilize to assist in their daily lives at home, work, school, etc. Such devices could be a walker, scooter, cane, magnification or specialized learning software, communication board, etc.

**Assistive Technology** is equipment or software such as screen readers, audio recording and voice recognition which people with disabilities use to obtain information and communicate with others.

**Customer** is the term used in the AODA Legislation to describe patrons, stakeholders or anyone in receipt of goods and services. The primary recipients of a university's services are the university's current students and employees who use its teaching, learning and research facilities, including classrooms, studios, laboratories, and library. Other individuals, such as alumni, prospective students and their family members, and members of the broader community, may be entitled to certain university services.

**Disability** Under the AODA, the definition of "disability" is the same as the definition in the Ontario Human Rights code<sup>1</sup>:

- (a) Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal, or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- (b) A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- (c) A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- (d) A mental disorder; or
- (e) An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

**Employee** refers to any OCAD University faculty, academic or administrative staff, managers and contract or temporary employee. Employees of the university may also be students at the university. An employee will be treated as a "student" under this

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<sup>1</sup> Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter H.19, Section 10(1)(a-e), Service Ontario e-Laws, 2006, 03 April 2009, [http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws\\_statutes\\_90h19\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90h19_e.htm)

policy where an incident occurs while the employee is acting within their role as a student, and outside the scope of their employment.

**Service Animal** The Regulation<sup>2</sup> defines a “service animal” as an “animal for a person with disability.” In this policy, a service animal is any animal used by a person with a disability for reasons relating to the disability or where the person provides a letter from a physician confirming that they require the animal for reasons relating to their disability; or where the person provides a valid identification card signed by the Attorney General of Canada or a certificate of training from a recognized guide dog or service animal training school.

**Student** is a person who is registered in an OCAD University course of study, engaged in any academic work which leads to the recording and/or issue of a mark, grade or statement of performance by the appropriate authority in the university or another institution, or entitled to a valid student card who is between sessions, but entitled because of student status to use university facilities.

**Support Person** is someone who accompanies a person with a disability in order to assist them. Their assistance may include, but is not limited to, communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or with access to goods or services.

**University Premises** are any buildings and/or lands owned, leased, operated, controlled or supervised by the university.

**Volunteer** is a person who provides services to the university for which they are not being paid. Where a volunteer is also a student or employee, she/he will be treated as a “student” or “employee” under this policy.

**Working Days** are Mondays to Fridays, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, statutory holidays, and any campus shutdowns observed by the university.

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<sup>2</sup> Ontario *Regulation 429/07*, Section 4(9)(a-b)

This policy may be made available in alternative formats upon request.

Peter Caldwell

Vice-President, Finance & Administration

Adopted Date: March 31, 2010

## APPENDIX A:

### Assistive Devices & Technology

To access available assistive devices and technology on campus, contact the campus number (416-977-6000) followed by the extension number of the department you need to reach.

1. Assistive Technology that related to Information Communications Technology on campus is detailed at <http://www.ocadu.ca/it> under Accessibility.

#### Contact Persons:

A. Stevan Plavsca [splavs@ocadu.ca](mailto:splavs@ocadu.ca) Ext. 441  
Manager, Helpdesk & AV Support

B. Andrew McAllister [amcallister@ocadu.ca](mailto:amcallister@ocadu.ca) Ext. 304  
Manager, Academic Computing

C. Mark Goffin [mgoffin@ocadu.ca](mailto:mgoffin@ocadu.ca) Ext. 203  
Manager, Print & Copy Services

2. Employees wishing to access assistive technology on campus may contact Human Resources, in accordance with the Policy on Accommodation in Employment for Persons with Disabilities at [http://www.ocadu.ca/Assets/pdf\\_media/ocad/about/policies/administrative\\_policies\\_850\\_1\\_accommodation\\_in\\_employment\\_for\\_persons\\_with\\_disabilities.pdf](http://www.ocadu.ca/Assets/pdf_media/ocad/about/policies/administrative_policies_850_1_accommodation_in_employment_for_persons_with_disabilities.pdf)

#### Contact Persons:

Jeffrey Breau [jbreau@ocadu.ca](mailto:jbreau@ocadu.ca) , extension 2926

Benefits Specialist, Human Resources

3. Assistive Technology available to students registered with the Centre for Students with Disabilities is detailed on their [website](#).

**Contact Information:**

Contact the Centre for Students [csd@ocadu.ca](mailto:csd@ocadu.ca) for more information on assistive technology

4. Assistive Technology in the Dorothy H. Hoover Library

**Contact Persons:**

A. Robert Fabbro [rfabbro@ocadu.ca](mailto:rfabbro@ocadu.ca) Ext. 343  
Reference & Access Services Librarian

A. Jill Patrick [jpatrick@ocadu.ca](mailto:jpatrick@ocadu.ca) Ext. 348  
Director, Library Services