



## **POLICY STATEMENT ON ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE**

Version: 2.1

Approved by the APUO Executive Committee – November 22, 2018

### **1. PURPOSE AND POLICY STATEMENT**

The goal of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (the “Act”) is to create a more accessible Ontario, by identifying, and to the extent possible preventing, and eliminating barriers experienced by persons with a disability.

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (the “Standard”) have been established under the Act to ensure goods and services are, where possible, equally accessible to every member of the public.

The Association of Professors of the University of Ottawa (the “APUO”) strives to make its services accessible to persons with disabilities. If you require accommodations to access or fully participate in any APUO event, please contact the APUO office no later than three (3) working days prior to the meeting/event. Such advance notice is essential for the APUO to make arrangements for any appropriate accommodation requests.

The objective of this policy (the “Policy”) is to ensure the APUO meets the requirements of the Standard and promotes its underlying core principles, as described below.

### **2. APPLICATION**

The Policy applies to all persons who, on behalf of the APUO, deal with APUO members, members of the public or other third parties. This includes APUO employees and officers.

The Policy also applies to all persons responsible for the development, implementation and/or oversight of APUO policies, practices and procedures.

### **3. DEFINITIONS**

- i. **Assistive Device** – A device used to assist a person in performing a particular task(s) or to aid that person in activities of daily living.
- ii. **Disability** – Has the same definition as is provided under the Act and *Human Rights Code*, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19.
- iii. **Guide Dog** – Has the same definition as is provided in section 1 of the *Blind Persons’ Rights Act*.
- iv. **Service Animal** – An animal for a person with a disability,

- (a) if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
  - (b) if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.
- v. **Support Person** – A person who accompanies a person with a disability to assist with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs, or with access to goods or services.

#### 4. CORE PRINCIPLES OF THE POLICY

The APUO endeavours to ensure that the Policy and related practices, policies and procedures are consistent with the following four (4) core principles:

- i. **Dignity** – Persons with a disability should be treated as valued members as deserving of service as any other member.
- ii. **Equality of Opportunity** – Persons with a disability should be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from our services.
- iii. **Integration** – Wherever possible, persons with a disability should benefit from APUO’s services in the same place and in the same or similar manner as any other member. In circumstances where integration does not serve the needs of the person with a disability, services will, to the extent possible, be provided in another way that takes into account the person’s individual needs.
- iv. **Independence** – Services should, where possible, be provided in a way that respects the independence of persons with a disability. To this end, the APUO will assist a person with a disability but will not do so without the express permission of the person.

#### 5. IMPLEMENTATION

The APUO has created an *Ad Hoc* Accessibility Committee responsible for:

- i. Developing and implementing policies, practices and procedures to ensure the accessibility of services to persons with a disability.
- ii. Developing and implementing an accessibility training program, as required by the Standard.
- iii. Developing and implementing a feedback procedure, as required by the Standard.

#### 6. PROVIDING SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

##### I. Policies, Practices and Procedures

The APUO shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures, which impact the delivery of its services to its members or to other third parties (“Customer Service Related Policies”), are consistent with the core principles as defined above.

**This Policy does not supersede the APUO constitution.**

## **II. Communication**

The APUO strives to communicate with its members through accessible mediums of communication.

The APUO strives to communicate with persons with a disability in a manner that takes into account the disability. Approaches for communication are set out in our accessibility training program.

## **III. Assistive Devices**

Persons with a disability are permitted, where possible, to use their own Assistive Device when on APUO premises for the purposes of obtaining, using or benefiting from APUO services. If there is a physical, technological or other type of barrier that prevents the use of an Assistive Device on APUO premises, the APUO will first endeavour to remove that barrier. If the barrier is unable to be removed, the APUO will ask the person how he/she can be accommodated and what alternative methods of service would be more accessible to him/her. The APUO will make reasonable efforts to provide an alternative means of assistance to the person with a disability.

## **IV. Accessibility at APUO Premises**

The APUO offers the following facilities and services to enable persons with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from APUO's services. This may include, but is not limited to:

- (a) alternate formats of documents, i.e. commonly asked member questions, such as grievance procedures, available in a handout and in large print;
- (b) assistance of a staff person to complete a form;
- (c) wheelchair friendly access to the office.

## **V. Service Animals**

Persons with a disability may enter premises owned and/or operated by the APUO accompanied by a Service Animal or Guide Dog and keep the Service Animal or Guide Dog with them, if members have access to such premises and the Service Animal or Guide Dog is not otherwise excluded by law.

If a Service Animal or Guide Dog is excluded by law, the APUO must explain to the person with a disability why this is the case and explore alternative ways to meet the person's needs.

## **VI. Support Persons**

A person with a disability may enter premises owned and/or operated by the APUO with a Support Person and have access to the Support Person while on the premises.

The APUO may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a Support Person where it is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises.

## **VII. Notice of Temporary Disruptions**

The APUO will notify its members if there is a planned or unexpected disruption of its facility or service. The notice will be posted at the entrance of the premise and will include the following information:

- (a) That a facility or service is unavailable.
- (b) The anticipated duration of the disruption.
- (c) The reason for the disruption.
- (d) Alternative facilities or services, if available.

## **7. TRAINING AND RECORDS**

The APUO will provide training, and ongoing training as required under the Standard, to all persons to whom this Policy applies.

### **A. Content of Training**

Training will include modules such as:

- i.* A review of the purpose of the Act and requirements of the Standard.
- ii.* A review of the Policy.
- iii.* How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities.
- iv.* How to interact with persons with a disability who use an Assistive Device or require the assistance of a Service Animal or Support Person.
- v.* What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing our premises and/or services.

### **B. Timing of Training**

Training will be provided to all persons to whom this Policy applies as soon as practicable after he/she is assigned applicable duties.

### **C. Documenting Training**

Records of the training provided, including the date on which the training is delivered, shall be maintained in accordance the requirements of the Standard.

## **FEEDBACK PROCEDURE**

### **A. Receiving Feedback**

The APUO welcomes and appreciates feedback regarding how it delivers services to persons with disabilities. Feedback can be provided in the following ways:

- i. In person at 170 Waller Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 9B9.
- ii. By telephone at 613-230-3659.
- iii. In writing to 170 Waller Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 9B9.
- iv. Electronically to [apuodir@uottawa.ca](mailto:apuodir@uottawa.ca).

### **B. Responding to Complaints**

Where possible, the APUO will respond to complaints within two (2) weeks of the date that the complaint is received.

In certain circumstances, more action may be required to effectively address the complaint. In such circumstances, the member will receive an acknowledgement that the complaint has been received within two (2) weeks and the APUO will respond to the complaint as soon as is practicable thereafter.

## **8. DOCUMENTATION TO BE MADE AVAILABLE**

This Policy shall be made available to any APUO member upon request.

Notification of same shall be posted at a conspicuous place at the APUO's premise to which this Policy applies.

## **9. DOCUMENTS**

The APUO will provide documents, or the information contained in documents, required to be provided under the Standard, to a person with a disability in a format that takes the person's disability into account.

## **10. QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS POLICY**

For more information about the Policy or for questions regarding APUO Customer Service Related Policies for accessible customer service please contact the APUO by email: [apuodir@uottawa.ca](mailto:apuodir@uottawa.ca) or by phone: 613-230-3659.