

<p style="text-align: center;">Niagara University Accessibility Policy</p>	<p>Effective date: January 6, 2020</p> <p>Replaces: New</p>
<p>Application: Ontario Programs only</p> <p>Access: Public</p>	<p>Position: Office of Human Resources and Office of Student Affairs</p>

I. POLICY

The purpose of this Accessibility Policy is to outline the commitment of Niagara University (the “University”) to improving accessibility for our students, customers and employees, and our strategy to identify, prevent and remove barriers to accessibility for persons with disabilities.

This Accessibility Policy has been developed in accordance with the *Accessibility Standard for Customer Service*, Ontario Regulation 429/07 (the “Customer Service Standards”) and the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11 (the “IASR”) made pursuant to the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (the “AODA”) and other comparable legislation.

II. STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

The University is committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and equal opportunity. We are committed to meeting the accessibility needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner, and will do so by identifying, preventing and removing barriers to accessibility, and by meeting the accessibility requirements under the AODA.

III. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

a. Establishment of Accessibility Policies

The University has established this Accessibility Policy and will make this document available in an accessible format upon request. The University will also post this Accessibility Policy on its website.

The University will update this Accessibility Policy at least every five (5) years to reflect progress and will consult with students, customers, employees and other stakeholders in the development and implementation of this Policy.

b. Training

The University will provide accessible customer service training to all employees and volunteers, every person who participates in developing the University’s policies, and others who deal with third parties on the University’s behalf (collectively referred to as “staff”).

Staff will be trained on accessible customer service within two weeks of being hired. Staff will also be trained when changes are made to our accessible customer service policies.

Training will cover the following topics:

- An overview of Ontario's accessibility laws, including the AODA, the Customer Service Standards, the IASR and the applicable provincial human rights legislation as it pertains to individuals with disabilities;
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities;
- How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or support person;
- How to use the accessibility features that may help a person with a disability access goods, services, or facilities; and
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing the University's goods, services and facilities.

Training will be provided in a way that best suits the needs of employees, volunteers and other staff members. Training will be provided to new employees on an ongoing basis.

The University will take the following steps to ensure employees are provided with the training needed to meet Ontario's accessibility laws:

- Assess duties and specific training needs of Ontario employees;
- Deliver training modules for all Ontario employees in accordance with the AODA's customer service standard (the "Customer Service Training");
- Deliver training modules on the accessibility requirements under the AODA, IASR and the Ontario Human Rights Code (the "IASR Training") to appropriate employees; and
- Conduct the Customer Service Training and IASR Training on an ongoing basis for new Ontario employees and when changes are made to the University's accessibility policies, practices and procedures.

c. Reporting Compliance

The University will file accessibility reports with Ontario's Ministry of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure in accordance with the reporting deadlines set out under the AODA.

IV. CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD

a. Purpose

In accordance with this Accessibility Policy, reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that:

- Persons with disabilities are provided equal opportunity to obtain, use and benefit from the University's goods and services;
- Goods and services are provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities;
- The goods and services provided to persons with disabilities are integrated with the provision to others unless an alternative measure is necessary to allow a person with a disability to benefit. The alternative measure may be temporary or permanent;
- Communications with a person with a disability are conducted in a manner that takes the person's disability into account; and

- Persons with disabilities may use assistive devices, service animals and support persons as is necessary to access the University's goods and services unless superseded by other legislation.

b. Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities

Assistive Devices: The University permits all assistive devices on our premises that may be required by persons with disabilities while accessing our goods and services. We will ensure that our staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by individuals with disabilities while accessing our goods, services, or facilities.

Service Animals: The University welcomes people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public.

Support Persons: A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises.

Notice of Temporary Disruption: The University will give notice of temporary disruptions to any of its services or facilities that may be used by persons with disabilities, including the reason(s) for the disruption and expected duration. This clearly posted notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. The notice will be clearly placed at the main entrances of our facilities and on our website, as well as where the disruption is taking place. In the event of an unexpected disruption to services or facilities used by persons with disabilities, the University will notify promptly notify the public.

V. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS STANDARD

a. Feedback Process

Individuals who wish to provide feedback on the way the University provides goods and services to people with disabilities may do so in person or by mail at [2904 Hwy 7 West, Vaughan ON L4K 0K4](#), by phone at [\(906\) 294-7260 ext.1106](#), or by email at onaccess@niagara.edu.

Feedback Forms will also be made available upon request in accessible formats. As needed, the University will consult with the person making the request or providing the feedback as to the suitability of feedback mechanisms available, and will provide alternative formats or communication supports for providing feedback.

Individuals who provide feedback can expect a response, if requested, within 10 business days.

b. Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

The University is committed to meeting the communication needs of people with disabilities. When requested, the University will provide publicly available information and communications materials in accessible formats or with communication supports in a timely manner and at no additional cost to the individual. This includes publicly available information about our goods, services and facilities, as well as publicly available emergency information.

The University will consult with persons making requests for accessible formats to determine the suitability of a particular accessible format or communication support.

The University will take the following steps to make sure all publicly available information is made accessible upon request:

- Review accessible formats and communication supports currently available at the University;
- Review the current process in place for requesting accessible formats and communication supports;
- As needed and where practical, update the current the process for requesting accessible formats and communication supports;
- As needed and where practical, create additional accessible formats and communication supports for publicly available information;
- Develop a process for responding to, approving or declining a request; and
- Where practical, incorporate language in marketing materials and on the University's external website to advise that, in accordance with the AODA, accessible formats may be made available on request.

VI. EMPLOYMENT STANDARD

The University is committed to fair and equitable employment practices. In accordance with this commitment, the University will take steps to identify existing barriers to accessibility and solicit employee feedback on how to minimize and eliminate those barriers.

a. Recruitment, Assessment and Selection Process

The University will take the following steps to notify its employees, the public and job applicants that the University will accommodate individuals with disabilities during the recruitment, assessment and selection process:

- Conduct a review of all mechanisms for job postings in Ontario;
- Incorporate language into all job postings in Ontario notifying applicants that the University will accommodate disabilities during the recruitment and selection process;
- Incorporate language into all notifications to applicants for interviews in Ontario that accommodation is available upon request;
- Ensure that any job applicants self-identifying as requiring accommodation in the recruitment process are consulted with to determine their individual accommodation needs;
- Review the current hiring process (tests, assessments, interview rooms) to ensure barriers may be removed or accessible features provided, upon request; and
- Review employment policies and procedures to ensure they reflect our commitment to employment practices which attract and retain employees with disabilities.

b. Informing Employees of Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

The University will take the following steps to notify successful applicants and employees of our policies for accommodating employees with disabilities:

- Incorporate a section in each offer letter regarding the University's accessibility policies and provide information on where employees can access additional information; and
- Incorporate training and awareness of the University's accessibility policies into orientation procedures.

c. Performance Management, Career Development and Advancement

The University will take the following steps to ensure the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities are taken into account if the University is using performance management or career development processes:

- Assess current performance review and career development processes to ensure accessibility features are incorporated and accessibility needs are considered;
- Review any individualized accommodation plans when performing assessments of performance or managing career development;
- Ensure promotion criteria, practices and processes take into account individualized accommodation plans; and
- Ensure equal opportunities for employees with disabilities to undertake professional development, such as attending courses or seminars.

d. Workplace Emergency Response Information

The University will provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability if the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary and the employer is aware of the need for accommodation.

The University will take the following steps to ensure individualized workplace emergency response plans are in place:

- Circulate an email to all employees in order to identify the availability of individualized emergency response information;
- Develop and implement a process for consulting with employees to determine accommodation needs;
- Where accommodation needs are identified, work with employees requiring accommodation to develop an individualized workplace emergency response plan;
- Ensure consent is obtained from the employee to share information with those designated to provide assistance to the employee in the event of an emergency; and
- Review the individualized workplace emergency response plan and information when the employee moves to a different location in the workplace, when the employee's accommodation needs or plans are reviewed and when the University reviews its general emergency response policies.

VII. POLICY AND PROGRAM REVIEW

This policy and program will be reviewed at least annually to reduce the risk of workplace harassment and sexual harassment and to comply with applicable legislation.

a. Scope of Policy

This policy covers all employees, students, visitors, and contractors associated with Niagara University in Ontario.

b. Oversight of the Policy

This policy will be under the purview of the office of the Office of Human Resources and Student Services

c. Revision of this Policy

The University is committed to developing accessibility policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to this Accessibility Policy before considering the impact on persons with disabilities.

Any University policy that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities will be modified or removed.

For more information about the University's Accessibility Policies, contact the following:

For Students, Coordinator of Accessibility Services. By Email: kadams@niagara.edu By Phone: 716.286.8541	For Employees, Human Resources. By Email: hro@niagara.edu By Phone: 716.286.8690
--	---