



YMCA of Owen Sound
Grey Bruce

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

AODA Accessible Service

Effective: January 31, 2012; Updated: June 2016

*Building healthy
communities*



Our Mission

The YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce (Association) is a charity dedicated to building a caring, healthy community by creating opportunities for all people to achieve personal growth in spirit, mind and body.

Our Commitment

In fulfilling our mission, the YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce strives at all times to provide its goods 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 goods and services and allowing them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other customers. All information and communications materials and services provided by the Association shall follow the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

The YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce is committed to Diversity and Social Inclusion and to meeting its obligation under Ontario's Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), by providing accessible environments that respect the rights of every individual.

The purpose of the Accessible Service Policy is to foster inclusive YMCA environments, and to ensure that any accessibility-related complaints are dealt with promptly and effectively through consistently applied procedures.

Definitions

The following terms are used in this policy:

Accessible Formats may include but are not limited to large print, electronic formats and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

Accommodation is a way, through reasonable efforts or measures, of preventing or minimizing barriers that impede a person with a disability from fully participating in the services offered.

Example: Accommodation means permitting a member or program participant to use their personal assistive device, or to be accompanied by their support person, or their guide dog or service animal unless the animal is excluded by another law, in order to increase accessibility to YMCA programs.

Assistive device is any device that helps a person with a disability do everyday tasks and activities. Assistive devices include digital audio players, hearing aid, teletypewriter (TTY) for people unable to speak or hear by phone, mobility devices (such as scooters, walkers or crutches, or white canes, oxygen tanks), and speech generating devices. Note: Bell has a Relay Service from any phone for free (1-800-855-0511).

Barrier is anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability. This may include architectural or physical barriers, an information or communications barrier making it difficult for people to receive or send information, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy, or a practice.

Communication Supports may include but are not limited to alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, and other supports that facilitate effective communications.



Customer is any person who uses the services of the YMCA.

Disability means (Source: Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, Section 2):

- Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness,
- A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- A mental disorder, or
- An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

Service animal is any animal being used by a person for reasons relating to his or her disability, and it is readily apparent or is supported by a letter from a physician or nurse.

Support person is another person who accompanies a person with a disability to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs or with access to programs and services offered by the YMCA.

Legislative Context

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, (2005)

The AODA details specific requirements and standards for accessibility in Ontario. Standards include Accessibility Standards for Customer Service which requires the YMCA to make reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices, and procedures relating to the delivery of services are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity. Additionally, the Integrated Accessibility Standards which requires the YMCA to create, provide, and receive, information and communications in ways that are accessible for people with disabilities.

Providing goods and services to people with disabilities

The YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities and we will carry out our functions and responsibilities as detailed below.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

Unless deemed unconvertible the YMCA will provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities, upon request. Accessible formats and communication supports will be provided in a timely manner and at no additional cost to the individual.

YMCA will take into account the person's accessibility needs when customizing individual requests and shall consult with the individual making the request to ensure suitability.



Billing

We are committed to providing accessible invoices to all of our customers. For this reason, invoices can be provided in various formats such as hard copy, large print and e-mail.

We will answer any questions customers may have about the content of the invoice in person, by telephone or e-mail.

Communication

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

We will train staff who communicate with customers on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

Emergency Procedures

YMCA will ensure that all publicly available safety and emergency information (e.g. evacuation procedures, floor plans etc.) is provided in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, upon request.

Websites and Web Content

YMCA will ensure that our website and all web content published after January 1, 2014, conform to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 in accordance with the schedule set out in the IASR this includes our commitment to achieve or surpass the WCAG 2.0 Level AA by January 1, 2021.

Use of Assistive devices

Persons with disabilities may use their own personal assistive devices while accessing or using YMCA programs or services in any premise owned, leased or operated by the YMCA. Barriers to the use of assistive devices will be removed where they can be.

Use of Service Animals

Service animals are permitted to accompany any person with a disability while accessing or using YMCA programs or services in any premise owned, leased or operated by the YMCA, except where animals are excluded by law.

Where an animal is excluded by law from the premises, or may affect the health and safety of other customers, other measures will be explored in order to provide service to the person with a disability.

Where it is not readily apparent that an animal is a service animal, the YMCA may request a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability.

Use of Support Persons

Any person with a disability who is accompanied by their support person will be permitted to access and use a YMCA program or service with his or her support person.

In most cases, program fees shall be waived for the support person, provided that the support person remains beside the person with a disability when accessing and using a program or service, and while



moving through the building or on YMCA property. However, where a YMCA program or registration fee is charged and a portion of revenues are payable to a third party, or where a fee includes or covers such costs as food or accommodation, the support person may be required to cover these costs. If any amount is payable by the support person, the YMCA shall ensure that notice is given in advance about the amount, if any, that is payable in respect of the support person.

The YMCA may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person when on the premises, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

The YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce will provide customers 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, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

Notice may be given by posting the information on the premises, on the YMCA website, voicemail messaging or by any other reasonable method.

Before visiting a YMCA program site, people are also encouraged to check the YMCA website or call the YMCA (519-376-0484) to find out if there is a disruption of program or service, and what if any alternative options exist.

Training for Staff

The YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce will provide 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 of customer service policies, practices and procedures.

The training will be provided within six months of staff commencing work.

Training will include the following:

- The purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard
- 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 a support person
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing the YMCA goods and services
- The YMCA's policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standard.

Applicable staff will be trained on policies, practices and procedures that affect the way goods and services are provided to people with disabilities. Training will be provided on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies, practices and procedures.



Roles and Responsibilities

Senior Manager or designate shall:

- Monitor and support staff in implementing the Accessible Customer Service Policy in their program or process area(s);
- Ensure that their program area(s) facilitate the use by persons with disabilities of their personal assistive devices, service animals and allow access for their support person, as outlined herein, when accessing the program and moving through the building;
- Arrange training in accessibility standards for front-line staff and program volunteers interfacing with members or customers.
- Ensure notice of temporary disruption is provided as outlined herein;
- Respond to feedback including any accessibility-related issues or concerns as outlined herein.

All staff, including program volunteers, shall:

- Participate in required training related to Accessibility Standards for Customer Service;
- Support the implementation of Accessibility Standards by providing service in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities, including permitting the use of assistive devices, service animals and support persons as outlined below. Suggested practices and tips for providing customer service for persons with disabilities are available by contacting a supervisor;
- Forward any feedback from members or customers regarding accessibility to their immediate supervisor or manager for handling.

The C.E.O. or designate shall ensure that processes are put in place to:

- Identify training needs Association-wide;
- Ensure that mechanisms are put in place to support managers implementing Accessibility Standards for Customer Service or responding to accessibility-related concerns;
- Ensure that AODA reporting requirements on implementation of Accessibility Standards for Customer Service are completed and forwarded to the Ontario government;
- Ensure that YMCA's policies, practices, and procedures related to the AODA are available to any person upon request;
- Ensure that communications with persons with disabilities are done in a manner that takes into account their individual circumstances.



Feedback process

The ultimate goal of the YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce is to meet and surpass customer expectations while serving customers with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are welcome and appreciated.

Feedback regarding our accessibility and/or how the YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce provides goods and services to people with disabilities can be made by: e-mail, verbally, suggestion box, feedback card, etc. Staff will respond as promptly as possible. Our Complaints Policy is also available to guide the process.

Modifications to this or other policies

We are committed to developing customer service policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Therefore, no changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities.

Any policy of the YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

Multi-year Accessibility Policy

The YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce has established and implemented a multi-year accessibility plan that outlines our strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet our requirements as per the AODA and applicable standards. This plan is available through our website and upon request will be provided in an accessible format that takes into consideration the needs of the individual requesting it.

Questions about this policy

This policy exists to achieve service excellence to customers with disabilities. If anyone has a question about the policy, or if the purpose of a policy is not understood, an explanation should be provided by, or referred to any Manager or Program Director of the YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce.

Resources Available

The YMCA's policies, practices and procedures related to the AODA are available to the public upon request. Where a request is made for a document by a person with a disability, the YMCA shall provide the document or the information contained in the document in a format that takes into account the person's disability.

In addition, the following are sources for information about Accessibility Standards in Ontario:

- To view the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, or Ontario Regulation 429/07 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, visit www.e-laws.gov.on.ca
- To review requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act or for additional resources about accessibility, visit www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/mcss
- More information about the customer service standard for accessibility is also available at www.AccessON.ca/compliance