



ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (AODA)

Accessible Customer Service Policy

Application

This policy applies to those employees of Yorkville University or any of its subsidiaries and affiliated companies located in Ontario.

Policy

The AODA was developed by the Ontario government with the aim of making Ontario fully accessible to persons with disabilities by 2025 and has developed a number of standards that businesses have to meet. The first standard developed concerns customer service and the recognition that people with disabilities may have different needs. Future standards are related to transportation, information and communication, employment and the building environment.

The AODA defines disability as: any degree of physical, development, mental or learning disability including: deaf/hard of hearing; speech/language; intellectual/developmental; learning delays; mental health; physical/mobility; vision loss; other (disfigurement, illness, amputation etc.). Yorkville University aims at all times to provide access to programs of study in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

Yorkville University is committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access programs of study and allow them to benefit from the same services, in the same place and a similar way as other students.

Procedure

Yorkville University is committed to excellence in serving all of our students including those with disabilities:

Assistive Devices. Yorkville University will ensure that employees, where applicable, are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by people with disabilities.

Communication. Employees will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disabilities.

Service Animals. Yorkville University welcomes people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on 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 Yorkville University premises.

Notice of Temporary Disruption. In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities, Yorkville University will ensure this is clearly communicated,

including information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time and a description of alternative facilities or services if available.

Feedback Process. Feedback regarding the way Yorkville University provides goods and service to people with disabilities can be made by email, verbally or in writing. All feedback will be directed to the Director, Human Resources and responded to within 10 business days.

Education for Employees. Yorkville University will provide education and training to employees who deal with the public or other third parties on their behalf. This education will be provided as part of the Employee Handbook distributed during orientation.

Education will include:

- An overview of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and Yorkville University’s associated policy and procedure.
- 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 Yorkville University’s programs of study
- Employees will also be trained on an ongoing basis when changes are made to these policies and procedures.

Updates/Modification to Policy

Yorkville University is committed to developing policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. This policy will be reviewed and amended as required.

How to Interact and Communicate with People with Various Types of Disabilities

Here are some suggested tips to interact and communicate with people who have various disabilities:

People who have hearing loss	People who have hearing loss may be Deaf, oral deaf, deafened or hard of hearing. These are terms used to describe different levels of hearing and/or the way a person’s hearing was diminished or lost. Tips: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Speak in normal tone of voice. Do not exaggerate lip movement. Slow down your speech.• Attract the person’s attention before speaking. Try a gentle touch on the shoulder or wave of your hand.• Ask how you can help. Don’t shout.• If necessary, ask if another method of communicating would be easier (for example, using a pen and paper).• Keep your face clear for people who speech read. Do not cover your mouth or block lines of vision. Do not be afraid to use gestures that can provide additional information.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always carry a pad and pencil. Writing brief notes back and forth can be an effective way to give and receive information. • Always speak to the person with a communication barrier even if he or she is accompanied by a support person. • If they use a hearing aid, reduce background noise or move to a quieter area. • Recognize that foot stamping by someone who cannot speak may be an urgent attempt to get attention in an emergency.
<p>People who have vision loss</p>	<p>Vision loss can restrict someone’s ability to read, locate landmarks or see hazards. Some people may use a guide dog or a white cane, while others may not.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you have to give something to a person with a vision loss (i.e. brochure, menu, change), place the item directly into his or her hand. • When assisting a person with vision loss to a seat, it is important to ask the person where they would like to sit. Do not assume. • When providing directions or instructions, be precise and descriptive. • Never touch the person without asking permission, unless it is an emergency. • Offer your elbow to guide them if needed and walk slowly. • Don’t assume the individual can’t see you. Many people who have low vision still have some sight. • Ask if they would like you to read any printed material out loud to them. • Be alert for clues such as holding reading materials very close to the eyes, which may indicate the person has vision loss. • Do not touch or address service animals; they are working and have to pay attention.
<p>People who have physical disabilities</p>	<p>There are many types and degrees of physical disabilities. Only some people with physical disabilities use a wheelchair. Someone with a spinal cord injury may use crutches while someone with severe arthritis or a heart condition may have difficulty walking longer distances.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always ask “how may I help you?” then listen carefully to what they say. Be ready to assist, but allow them to do it themselves if they wish. • Give time for them to move or carry out tasks for themselves, if they wish to do so. • Offer to open doors for easy access; offer assistance in reaching or carrying items. • Don’t touch assistive devices, such as canes or wheelchairs, without permission, unless it is an emergency. Respect the person’s personal space; do not lean on them or their assistive device. • If you have permission to move a person’s wheelchair, don’t leave them in an awkward, dangerous or undignified position, such as facing a wall or in the path of opening doors. • If you need to have a lengthy conversation with someone who uses a wheelchair or scooter, consider sitting so you can make eye contact at the same level.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not attempt to lift, support or assist a person unless you know safe techniques or methods for doing so. Know your limitations. Do not attempt to assist alone if in doubt. Never lift or support without the person’s express permission. • Provide them with information about accessible features of the immediate environment (automatic doors, ramps, accessible washrooms, etc).
<p>People who have intellectual / developmental disabilities</p>	<p>Developmental or intellectual disabilities, such as Down Syndrome, can limit a person’s ability to learn, communicate, do everyday physical activities and live independently. You may not know that someone has this disability unless you are told.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don’t make assumptions about what a person can or cannot do. • Use plain language and speak in short sentences • Be prepared to communicate in various ways if necessary - pictures, sounds and gestures. • Provide one piece of information at a time. • Be prepared to repeat information, even if you just told them. • Be careful of what you ask them to do – they may take instructions literally. • Speak directly to the person, not the support person. • If the person seems to be having difficulty understanding something in print, offer to read it to him or her. • Take extra care to ensure you are understood. They may say they understood even if they didn’t.
<p>People who have mental health disabilities</p>	<p>Mental health issues can affect a person’s ability to think clearly, concentrate or remember things. Mental health disability is a broad term for many disorders that can range in severity.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat a person with a mental health disability with the same respect and consideration you have for everyone else. • Be confident, calm and reassuring. • Communication is both verbal and non verbal – think about tone and be aware of facial expressions and body language. • Be confident and reassuring. Listen carefully and work with your guest to meet their needs. • If communication difficulties continue try to use different words to communicate your message or write instructions or information down • If a person appears to be in crisis, ask them to tell you the best way to help.
<p>People with speech or language impairments</p>	<p>Cerebral palsy, hearing loss or other conditions may make it difficult for a person to pronounce words or may cause slurring. Some people who have severe difficulties may use a communication board or other assistive devices.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don’t assume that a person with a speech impairment has another disability. • Repeat what you have understood and allow the person to respond.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always carry a pad and pencil. Writing brief notes back and forth can be an effective way to give and receive information. • Whenever possible, ask questions that can be answered with “yes” or “no”. • Be patient. Don’t interrupt or finish the person’s sentences.
<p>People who are deaf-blind</p>	<p>A person who is deaf-blind may have some degree of both hearing and vision loss. Many people who are deaf-blind will be accompanied by a support person, a professional support person who helps with communication.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don’t make assumptions about what a person can or cannot do. • Identify yourself to the support person when you approach your guest but then speak directly to the person as you normally would, not to the support person. • Someone who is deaf-blind is likely to explain to you how to communicate with them, perhaps with an assistance card or a note. • Don’t suddenly touch a person who is deaf-blind or touch them without permission.
<p>People who have learning disabilities</p>	<p>The term “learning disabilities” refers to a variety of disorders, such as dyslexia, that affect how a person takes in or retains information. This disability may become apparent when a person has difficulty reading material or understanding the information you are providing.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be patient people with some learning disabilities may take a little longer to process information, to understand and to respond. • Try to provide information in a way that takes into account the person’s disability. For example, some people with learning disabilities find written words difficult to understand, while others may have problems with numbers.
<p>All Disabilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat people with disabilities with the same respect and consideration you would have for everyone. • Smile, relax and keep in mind that people with disabilities are just people. • Do not make assumptions about what type of disability or disabilities a person has. • If you are not sure what to do, ask the person, “May I help you?” • Find a good way to communicate • Use plain language and speak in short sentences. • Some disabilities are not visible. Take the time to get to know their needs.
<p>How to interact with people who use assistive devices</p>	<p>An assistive device is a tool, technology or other mechanism that enables a person with a disability to do everyday tasks and activities, such as moving, communicating or lifting. Personal assistive devices can include things like wheelchairs, hearing aids, white canes or speech amplification devices.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don’t touch or handle any assistive device without permission. • Don’t move assistive devices or equipment, such as canes and walkers, out of the person’s reach.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let the person know about accessible features in the immediate environment that are appropriate to their needs.
<p>How to interact with people with disabilities who require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal</p>	<p>People with vision loss may use a guide dog, but there are other types of service animals as well. Hearing alert animals help people who are Deaf, deafened, oral deaf, or hard of hearing. Other service animals are trained to alert an individual to an oncoming seizure.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember that a service animal is not a pet. It is a working animal. • Avoid touching or addressing service animals as they are working and have to pay attention at all times. • Avoid making assumptions about the animal. If you're not sure if the animal is a pet or a service animal, ask the person.
<p>How to interact with people with disabilities who require the assistance of a support person</p>	<p>Some people with disabilities may be accompanied by a support person. A support person can be a personal support worker, a volunteer, a family member or a friend.</p> <p>A support person might help your person with a variety of things from communicating, to helping with mobility, personal care or medical needs.</p> <p>Welcome support people to your workplace. They are permitted in any part of your premises that is open to the public.</p> <p>Tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you're not sure which person has the disability, take your lead from the person using or requesting your goods or services, or simply ask. • Speak directly to the person, not to their support person.