



# **Grace Mennonite Church**

## **Accessible Service Policy**



# **GRACE MENNONITE CHURCH – Steinbach, MB**

## **Accessible Standard Service Policy**

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**Date of First Approval: January 2019**

We are committed to complying with the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service under The Accessibility for Manitoban Act. Our policies, practices and measures reflect the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity for people with disabilities.

If a barrier to accessing our goods or services cannot be removed, we seek to provide alternate ways to access the goods or services.

The following policy statements, organizational practises and measures are intended to meet the requirements of the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service.

This policy applies to all employees and volunteers.

It is our intention to follow these policies as far as possible within our resources.

### **Grace Mennonite Church**

430 Third Street Steinbach, MB R5G 0K5

204 326 3707

[office@gracesteinbach.ca](mailto:office@gracesteinbach.ca)

[www.gracesteinbach.ca](http://www.gracesteinbach.ca)

# 1. Meet communication needs

## **Policy Statement:**

We will meet the communication needs of persons who access our Facilities. We will work with the person to determine the barrier and what method of communication works for them.

## **Practices and Measures:**

- When appropriate we offer to communicate in different ways, such as writing things down, reading things out loud and taking extra time to explain things
- We also
  - use a clear and audible voice
  - speak at a moderate speed
  - use signs and documents that are easy to read, including using larger fonts and colour contrast, and ensuring messages are not printed on images
  - keep paper and pens available to write things down
  - offer a chair when longer conversations are needed
  - offer a quieter space
  - sit down to engage with someone using a wheelchair
- We use signs and documents that are easy to read, including using larger fonts and colour contrast, and ensuring messages are not printed on images.
- We write signs and documents in plain language.

## 2. Accommodate the use of assistive devices

### **Policy Statements:**

We accommodate the use of assistive devices for persons who access our Facilities.

### **Practices and Measures:**

- We do not touch or move people's assistive devices without permission
- We have people available trained in how to use the assistive devices that we provide, including:
  - Sound equipment
  - Hearing headsets for sanctuary use
  - Wheelchairs
  - Elevator
  - Automatic Doors
- In cases where the assistive device presents significant and unavoidable health or safety concerns, other measures will be used to ensure the person with a disability can access our Facilities.

### **3. Welcome support persons**

**Policy Statement:**

We welcome support persons.

**Practices and Measures:**

- We address the customer, not the support person, unless requested by the customer to do otherwise.
- We make space for support persons on-site and ensure customers have access to their support persons at all times.

## 4. Allow service animals

### Policy Statement:

We allow service animals on our premises

### Practices and Measures

- We:
  - Treat a service animal as a working animal
  - Do not distract a service animal from its job by petting, feeding or playing with it, unless given permission by the person with the service animal to do so
  - Know how to identify a service animal by its harness or vest and by the assistance the animal is providing
- If we have concerns, we may ask if the animal has been trained to help a person with a disability-related need.
- We do not inquire about the disability.
- We expect the person who is handling the service animal to maintain control of the animal physically or through voice, signal or other means.
- If the service animal is showing signs of not being controlled (i.e. by barking, whining or wandering), we may provide a warning to the handler to control the animal.
- If the service animal continues to misbehave, we may ask the handler to leave.
- If another law prohibits service animals (i.e. food preparation areas), we explain why the animal cannot enter the space and discuss with the person another way of providing goods or services.

## 5. Maintain accessibility features

### **Policy Statement:**

To ensure barrier-free access to our goods, services or facilities, we maintain our accessibility features so they can be used as intended.

### **Practices and Measures:**

- We organize our space so that there is room for people with wheelchairs, electric scooters and walkers.
- Our seating accommodates people of varying sizes and abilities.
- We keep foyer, hallways, aisles, entrances, office areas, meeting rooms and sanctuary clear of clutter.
- We keep our entrance area and sidewalks leading to entrances clear of ice and snow.
- We place standing signs out of the way to avoid tripping hazards.

## 6. Notice of temporary disruption

### **Policy Statement:**

We let the public know when and why an accessibility feature is temporarily unavailable, how long it will be unavailable and other ways to access our goods and services.

### **Practices and Measures:**

- If one of our accessibility features becomes temporarily unavailable, we prepare and post a notice and/or announcement about the disruption, the reason for the disruption, how long it will last and whether there are other ways we can provide access to areas needing access. (accessible washroom, elevator, automatic doors)
- If requested, we work with the customer to find other ways to access goods and services.
- We let the public know about disruptions in the following ways:
  - posted on website
  - posted at our building entrance
  - bulletin announcements
  - *Constant Contact* – email notice

## 7. Feedback process

### **Policy Statements:**

We welcome and respond promptly to feedback we receive on the accessibility of our goods and services.

### **Practices and Measures:**

- People may provide feedback in the following ways:
  - Email ([office@gracesteinbach.ca](mailto:office@gracesteinbach.ca))
  - phone (204 326 3707)
  - visit church office (430 Third Street, Steinbach, MB)
- All feedback is directed to the Grace Mennonite Church Accessibility Committee who determines what action, if any, should occur.
- If the feedback requires us to follow-up, the customer is notified that the request is being reviewed and when they can expect a response.
- We let the customer know what action we will take to address their feedback, if any.
- We respond to feedback in a way that meets the communication needs of the individual.

## 8. Training

### **Policy Statements:**

We provide the required training on accessible customer service to employees and volunteers. We are trained on:

- How to interact and communicate with people who face barriers to accessing goods and services, use assistive devices, are assisted by a support person and/or are assisted by a service animal.
- How to use any equipment or assistive devices that are available on-site.
- An overview of The Accessibility for Manitobans Act, The Human Rights Code (Manitoba) and the Customer Service Standard.
- Our organizational policies, practices and measure, including updates or changes.

### **Practices and Measures:**

- Employees are trained within one month of being hired
- Volunteers are trained within one month of assuming their role.
- We provide refresher training regularly, including updates to policies, practices and measures.
- Designated person will record who has taken training and when.
- Feedback on the accessibility of our goods and services is addressed in regular Accessibility Committee meetings.

## **9. Additional policies regarding public events**

### **Policy Statements:**

We will make public events accessible.

### **Practises and Measures:**

We will:

- announce events in a manner that is accessible
- hold events in accessible meeting places
- invite requests for relevant disability accommodations

## 10. Keep a written record of accessibility and training policies

### **Policy Statements:**

We keep a written record of our accessibility and training policies.

Our written documents include a summary of our training material and when training is offered.

We let the public know that our written policies are available on request.

### **Practices and Measures:**

- Will document all policies, practices and procedures including:
  - General policies, practices and procedures
  - the steps we will take when there is a temporary disruption in services and facilities
  - an employee and volunteers training plan
  - a description of the feedback process
- We let public know that our accessibility and training policies are available in the following ways:
  - posted on website
  - posted at our building entrance
  - bulletin (one time per year)
  - through employees and volunteers
- We provide our policies within a reasonable timeframe and in a format that meets the needs of the individual.