



# The Bishop of Moosonee

## Accessibility Policy

### Intent

This policy is intended to meet the requirements of Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and applies to the provision of goods and services to the public or other third parties, not to the goods themselves.

All services provided by The Bishop of Moosonee operating as The Diocese of Moosonee (“the Diocese”) shall follow the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

### Scope

- a) This policy applies to the provision of services provided by The Diocese of Moosonee.
- b) This policy applies to Diocesan employees and volunteers who deal with the public or other third parties that act on behalf of the Diocese, including when the provision of services occurs at the Diocesan Administration Office premises and in Churches in and around The Diocese of Moosonee.

### Definitions

**Assistive Device** – is a technical aid, communication device or other instrument that is used to maintain or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities. Personal assistive devices are typically devices that customers bring with them such as a wheelchair, walker or a personal oxygen tank that might assist in hearing, seeing, communicating, moving, breathing, remembering and/or reading.

**Customer** – for the purposes of this policy will mean any individual accessing the Diocesan Administration Office or a Church building of The Diocese of Moosonee for information or services.

**Disability** – the term disability as defined by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and the Ontario Human Rights Code, refers to:

- any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing,
- includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- a learning disability, or 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.

**Guide Dog** – is a highly-trained working dog that has been trained at one of the facilities listed in Ontario Regulation 58 under the Blind Persons’ Rights Act, to provide mobility, safety and increased independence for people who are blind.

**Service Animal** – as reflected in Ontario Regulation 429/07, an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if:

- it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his or her disability; or
- if the person provides a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

**Service Dog** – as reflected in Health Protection and Promotion Act, Ontario Regulation 562 a dog other than a guide dog for the blind is a service dog if:

- it is readily apparent to an average person that the dog functions as a service dog for a person with a medical disability;
- or the person who requires the dog can provide on request a letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires a service dog.

**Support Person** – as reflected in Ontario Regulation 429/07, a support person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or access to services.

### **General Principles**

In accordance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07, this policy addresses the following:

#### **A. The Provision of Goods and Services to Persons with Disabilities**

The Diocese will make every reasonable effort to ensure that its policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity by:

- ensuring that all customers receive the same value and quality;
- allowing customers with disabilities to do things in their own ways, at their own pace when accessing services as long as this does not present a safety risk;
- using alternative methods when possible to ensure that customers with disabilities have access to the same services, in the same place and in a similar manner;
- taking into account individual needs when providing services; and
- communicating in a manner that takes into account the customer's disability.

#### **B. Assistive Devices**

Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices as required when accessing services provided by the Diocesan Administration Office and individual Churches.

In cases where the assistive device presents a safety concern or where accessibility might be an issue, other reasonable measures will be used to ensure access of services. It should be noted that most Church buildings in the Diocese of Moosonee do not have elevators, but where possible some are equipped with ramps.

#### **C. Guide Dogs, Service Animals and Service Dogs**

A customer with a disability that is accompanied by a guide dog, service animal or service dog will be allowed access to premises that are open to the public unless otherwise excluded by law. The Diocese of Moosonee welcomes working animals. “No pet” policies do not apply to guide dogs, service animals and/or service dogs.

**Exclusion Guidelines:**

If a guide dog, service animal or service dog is excluded by law the Diocese will offer alternative methods to enable the person with a disability to access services, when possible (for example, securing the animal in a safe location and offering the guidance of an employee or volunteer).

**Recognizing a Guide Dog, Service Dog and/or Service Animal:**

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is being used by the customer for reasons relating to his or her disability, the Diocese may request verification from the customer.

**Care and Control of the Animal:**

The customer that is accompanied by a guide dog, service dog and/or service animal is responsible for maintaining care and control of the animal at all time.

**Allergies:**

If a health and safety concern presents itself for example in the form of a severe allergy to the animal, the Diocese will make all reasonable efforts to meet the needs of all individuals. This may include seating the parties in different areas of a Church building.

**D. Support Persons**

If a customer with a disability is accompanied by a support person, the Diocese will ensure that both persons are allowed to enter the premises together and that the customer is not prevented from having access to the support person.

In situations where the customers' confidential information might be discussed, consent will be obtained from the customer, prior to any conversation where confidential information might be discussed.

**Admission Fees:**

If payment is required by a support person for admission to any event hosted by the Diocese, the Diocese will ensure that notice is given in advance by posting notice of admission fees for support persons where the Diocesan fees are posted. The Diocese encourages parishes to waive admission fees for support persons whenever possible.

**E. Notice of Disruptions in Service**

Service disruptions may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the control or knowledge of the Diocese. In the event of any temporary disruptions to facilities or services that customers with disabilities rely on to access or use Diocesan services, reasonable efforts will be made to provide advance notice. In some circumstances such as in the situation of unplanned temporary disruptions, advance notice may not be possible.

**Notifications will Include:**

In the event that a notification needs to be posted the following information will be included unless it is not readily available or known:

- services that are disrupted or unavailable
- reason for the disruption
- anticipated duration
- a description of alternative services or options

When disruptions occur the Diocese will provide notice by:

- posting notices in conspicuous places including at the point of disruption, at the main entrance and the nearest accessible entrance to the service disruption;
- by any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances.

**Welcoming**

The Diocese of Moosonee encourages parishes to welcome all people and to provide any services which are possible in the individual circumstances of the parish. This may include providing large print copies of bulletins, books, and other materials, upon request; use of public address systems, where available.

This policy will be reviewed as required in the event of legislative changes.