

Accessibility Plan and Policies for YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin

This 2014-21 accessibility plan outlines the policies and actions that YWCA will put in place to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.

Statement of Commitment

YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin 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 needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner, and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA) consists of the following regulations:

- Customer Service Standard - Ontario Regulation 429/07
- Integrated Accessibility Standard - Ontario Regulation 191/11 (which consists of Employment, Information and Communication, and Transportation)
- Design of Public Spaces Standard Ontario Regulation (Built Environment)

Accessible Emergency Information

YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin is committed to providing customers and clients with publicly available emergency information in an accessible way, upon request. We will also provide employees with disabilities with individualized emergency response information when necessary.

Training

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin will provide training to employees, volunteers and other staff members on Ontario's accessibility laws and on the Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities. Training will be provided in a way that best suits the duties of employees, volunteers and other staff members.

YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin will take the following steps to ensure employees are provided with the training needed to meet Ontario's Accessibility Standards by January 1, 2015.

- AODA Customer Service Policy training provided to existing staff – January 2013
- AODA Customer Service Policy training provided to volunteers - January 2014
- AODA Customer Service Policy training required as part of new hire package
- AODA Customer Service Policy training required as part of new volunteer orientation

Information and Communications

YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin is committed to meeting the communication needs of people with disabilities. We will consult with people with disabilities to determine their information and communication needs, as required.

YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin will take the following steps to make all new websites and content on those sites conform with WCAG 2.0, Level A by January 1, 2015.

- Website will be updated with BrowseAloud – September 2014. BrowseAloud is a suite of products that provides reading support on websites. BrowseAloud reads website content out loud, highlighting each word as it is spoken in a high quality, human-sounding voice. Other features include:
 - Dual-Colour Highlighting
 - Text Magnification
 - Talking Dictionary
 - Talking Translator
 - MP3 Maker
 - Screen Masking

YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin will take the following steps to ensure existing feedback processes are accessible to people with disabilities upon request by January 1, 2015.

- The YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin will make information about its feedback and complaints process readily available to the public (i.e. printed materials, website). Feedback or complaints about the delivery of goods and services from persons with disabilities may be given in person, by telephone, in writing, electronically or through other methods.

YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin will take the following steps to make all websites and content conform with WCAG 2.0, Level AA by January 1, 2021. This may include, but is not limited to:

- informative text for all images
- style sheets to control layout and presentation
- tables to identify headers
- pages that can be read without style sheets
- foreground and background colours that provide sufficient contrast when viewed by someone having color deficits
- consistent navigation mechanisms

Employment

YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin is committed to fair and accessible employment practices.

We will take the following steps to notify the public and staff that, when requested, YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin will accommodate people with disabilities during the recruitment and assessment processes and when people are hired:

- let job applicants know that recruitment and hiring processes will be modified to accommodate their disabilities, if requested.

- build the accessibility needs of employees into their human resources practices.
- create a written process for developing and documenting individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.
- help employees stay safe in an emergency by providing them with individualized emergency response information when necessary.

YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin will put in place a process for developing individual accommodation plans and return-to-work policies for employees that have been absent due to a disability, as appropriate.

We will take the following steps to ensure the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities needs are taken into account if YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin is using performance management, career development and redeployment processes:

- The YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin will make information about its feedback and complaints process readily available to the public

YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin will take the following steps to prevent and remove other accessibility barriers identified:

Design of Public Spaces

YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin will meet the Accessibility Standards for the Design of Public Spaces when building or making major modifications to public spaces. Public spaces include:

- main foyer and lounge area
- conference and meeting rooms
- classrooms

In the event of a service disruption, we will notify the public of the service disruption and alternatives available.

For More information

For more information on this accessibility plan, please contact Marla Champion, Executive Director at:

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Accessible formats of this document are available free upon request from:

- Phone: 519-631-9800
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