



<b>Policy:</b>	AODA: Customer Service Policy
<b>Department of Ownership:</b>	Human Resources
<b>Effective Date:</b>	December 19, 2023
<b>Date Last Reviewed:</b>	December 15, 2023
<b>Scheduled Review Date:</b>	December 1, 2024
<b>Supersedes:</b>	All previous Policies and/or Statements
<b>Related Policies:</b>	AODA – Employment Policy; AODA – Information & Communications Policy

## PURPOSE

This Policy is intended to meet the requirements of the Customer Service Standards included in the Integrated Accessibility Standards under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. This Policy applies to the provision of goods and services to the public or other third parties, not the goods themselves.

For reference, the AODA regulations can be found online at: [AODA Legislative Regulations](#)

Victoria University is committed to complying with the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). Victoria University is committed to excellence in serving all customers including persons with disabilities. Our customer service policies are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity for people with disabilities.

This Policy applies to Victoria University’s operations in Ontario, Canada and to all Employees, Contractors or others performing work on behalf of Victoria University, in Ontario.

## 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.

**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** – an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if:

- the animal can be readily identified as one that is being used by the person for reasons relating to the person's disability, as a result of visual indicators such as the vest or harness worn by the animal; or
- the person provides documentation from one of the following regulated health professionals confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability:
  - A member of the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario;
  - A member of the College of Chiropractors of Ontario;
  - A member of the College of Nurses of Ontario;
  - A member of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario;
  - A member of the College of Optometrists of Ontario;
  - A member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario;
  - A member of the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario;
  - A member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario; or
  - A member of the College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario.



**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** – 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 goods and services.

## GUIDELINES

Victoria University 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 goods and 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 goods and services; and
- Communicating in a manner that takes into account the customer's disability.

## Use of Assistive Devices

Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices as required when accessing Victoria University's goods or services.

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 the access of goods and services. For example, open flames and oxygen tanks cannot be near one another. Therefore, the accommodation of a customer with an oxygen tank may involve ensuring the customer is in a location that would be considered safe for both the customer and business. Or, where elevators are not present and where an individual requires assistive devices for the purposes of mobility, service will be provided in a location that meets the needs of the customer.



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

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

### **Service Animal Exclusion Guidelines**

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

### **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, Victoria University may request verification from the customer.

### **Care and Control of the Animal**

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

### **Allergies**

If a health and safety concern presents itself for example in the form of a severe allergy to the animal, Victoria University will make all reasonable efforts to meet the needs of all individuals.

### **Use of Support Persons**

If a customer with a disability is accompanied by a support person, Victoria University 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.

There may be times where seating and availability prevent the customer and support person from sitting beside each other. In these situations, Victoria University will make every reasonable attempt to resolve the issue.



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

### **Notice of Temporary Disruptions in Service**

Service disruptions may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the control or knowledge of Victoria University. In the event of any temporary disruptions to facilities or services that customers with disabilities rely on to access or use Victoria University's 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.

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

- Products or services that are disrupted or unavailable;
- Reason for the disruption;
- Anticipated duration; and
- A description of alternative services or options.

### **Notification Options**

When disruptions occur Victoria University 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 and/or on Victoria University's website;
- Contacting customers with appointments;
- Verbally notifying customers when they are making a reservation or appointment; or
- By any other method that may be reasonable under the circumstances.

### **Customer Feedback**

Victoria University shall provide customers with the opportunity to provide feedback on the service provided to customers with disabilities. Information about the feedback process will be readily available to all customers and notice of the process will be made available upon request to Victoria University's Director of Human Resources. Feedback may be provided verbally (in person or by telephone) or written (handwritten, delivered, website or email).



## **Submitting Feedback**

Customers can submit feedback to:

Victoria University  
ATTN: Director, Human Resources  
73 Queen's Park Crescent  
Toronto, ON  
M5S 1K7

Email: [vic.hr@utoronto.ca](mailto:vic.hr@utoronto.ca)

Customers who wish to provide feedback verbally may do so by scheduling an appointment time to speak with Victoria University's Director of Human Resources.

Customers who provide formal feedback will receive acknowledgement of their feedback, along with any resulting actions based on concerns or complaints that were submitted.

Customers can expect to hear a response on their feedback submission within ten (10) business days following the date of their feedback submission.

## **Training**

Training will be provided to:

- Every person who is an employee of, or a volunteer with Victoria University
- Every person who participates in developing Victoria University's policies
- Every other person who provides goods, services, or facilities on behalf of Victoria University

## **Training Provisions**

Regardless of the format, training will cover the following:

- A review of the purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005;
- A review of the requirements of the Customer Service Standards;
- Instructions on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities;
- Instructions on how to interact with people with disabilities who:



- use assistive devices;
- require the assistance of a guide dog, service dog or another service animal; or
- require the use of a support person (including the handling of admission fees)
- Instructions on how to use equipment or devices that are available at our premises or that we provide that may help people with disabilities;
- Instructions on what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing your services;
- Victoria University's policies, procedures and practices pertaining to providing accessible customer service to customers with disabilities.

### **Training Schedule**

Victoria University will provide training as soon as practicable. Training will be made available to new Employees, Contractors or others performing work on behalf of Victoria University on a quarterly basis. Revised training will be provided in the event of changes to legislation, procedures, policies, and/or practices.

### **Policy Administration & Annual Review**

The AODA – Customer Service Policy will, at a minimum, be reviewed and updated as necessary on an annual basis.

If you have any questions or concerns about this Policy or its related procedures, please email Director, Human Resources at [vic.hr@utoronto.ca](mailto:vic.hr@utoronto.ca).



**POLICY HISTORY & APPROVALS**

<b>NATURE OF CHANGE</b>	<b>VERSION NO.</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>RESPONSIBLE FOR CHANGE</b>	<b>RATIFIED/ APPROVED BY</b>
Policy Creation	1.0	12/18/2023	Director, Human Resources	President