

**Policy Number: 06 Area: Operations**

Board Approval: February 18, 2025

Last Revision: n/a

Scheduled Review Date: 2026

## Background and Purpose

First Unitarian Congregation of Toronto (FirstU) is committed to meeting its current and ongoing obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code respecting non-discrimination. FirstU understands that obligations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) and its accessibility standards do not substitute or limit its obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code or obligations to people with disabilities under any other law.

## Policy Statement

FirstU is committed to complying with both the Ontario Human Rights Code and the AODA. We are committed to excellence in serving everyone, including people with disabilities. Our accessible policies are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration, and equality of opportunity for people with disabilities.

## Policy Description

1. **Assistive devices:** People with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing our services or facilities. In cases where the assistive device presents a significant and unavoidable health or safety concern, or may not be permitted for other reasons, other measures will be used to ensure the person with a disability can access our services or facilities. We will ensure that our staff are familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by people with disabilities while accessing our services or facilities.
2. **Communication:** We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. We will work with the person with a disability to determine what method of communication works for them.
3. **Service animals:** We welcome people with disabilities and their service animals. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public. When we cannot easily identify that an animal is a service animal, our staff may ask a person to provide documentation (template, letter or form) from a regulated health professional that confirms the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.

A service animal can be easily identified through visual indicators, such as when it wears a harness or a vest, or when it helps the person perform certain tasks. A regulated health professional is defined as a member of one of the following colleges:

College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario  
College of Chiropractors of Ontario  
College of Nurses of Ontario  
College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario  
College of Optometrists of Ontario  
College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario  
College of Physiotherapists of Ontario  
College of Psychologists of Ontario  
College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario

If service animals are prohibited by another law, we will do the following to ensure people with disabilities can access our services or facilities: explain why the animal is excluded and discuss with the visitor another way of providing services or facilities.

4. Support persons: A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises.
5. Notice of temporary disruption: In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for people with disabilities, FirstU will notify people promptly. This clearly posted notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.
6. Training: FirstU will provide accessible visitor service training to all employees and volunteers, anyone involved in developing our policies, and anyone who provides services or facilities to people on our behalf.
7. Feedback process: FirstU welcomes feedback on how we provide accessible service. Feedback will help us identify barriers and respond to concerns. All feedback, including complaints, will be appreciated and given serious consideration. We will make sure our feedback process is accessible to people with disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports, on request.
8. Modifications to this or other policies: Any FirstU policies that do not respect and promote the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity for people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

# Accessibility Policy



## Accountability

The Executive Committee is accountable to the Board for implementation of this policy.

## Related documents and/or relevant legislation:

- [Ontario Human Rights Code](#)
- [AODA Act](#)
- [Free AODA Online Training](#)