



**YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin:
Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
2023 - 2028**

INTRODUCTION

This Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for 2023-2028 outlines the policies and actions that YWCA St. Thomas-Elgin (YWCASTE) will implement to maintain and meet accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

YWCASTE is committed to treating all people in a way that supports their dignity and independence. We believe in inclusivity and equal opportunity. We are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities promptly and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility.

Compliance & Reporting

YWCASTE will maintain the following compliance and reporting requirements related to the areas of customer service, information and communication, employment and the design of public spaces.

- Create and implement written policies on how to achieve accessibility by meeting all applicable accessibility requirements through this Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, the AODA Customer Service Policy and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations Policy.
- Ensure all accessibility policies are posted on the organization's website.
- Review the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan at least once every 5 years.
- Ensure all employees and volunteers are trained in the AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations and the Human Rights Code as it pertains to people with disabilities.
- Provide reports to the Government of Ontario as required.
- Update policies and procedures if necessary, based on guidelines of the Government of Ontario through the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

Customer Service

YWCASTE will continue to provide goods, services and facilities ensuring to remove barriers to accessibility for persons. This will be accomplished by:

- Providing training to employees and volunteers on AODA Customer Service Standards; how to interact and communicate with various types of disabilities, with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices or service persons or guide dogs and how to assist a person with disabilities who is having difficulty accessing goods, services or facilities. Record of training will be documented.
- Posting of public notices of temporary disruption of services including reason for disruption, anticipated duration and alternative services or facilities available.
- Maintaining our Customer Service Policy including details about dog guides/service animals, support persons and use of assistive devices by persons with disabilities.

Information and Communication

YWCASTE will continue to provide goods and services respecting the diversity of needs of persons with disabilities using the following approaches relating to the information shared. This will be accomplished by:

- Maintaining websites, web content, social media and apps if applicable to meet World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA compliance standards. Standards will continue to include colour contrasts, text contrast and size options, alt text for images, navigation elements consistent throughout the site, form fields accurately labeled, headings used in logical order, video captions, keyboard navigation.
- Accessibility feedback will continue to be accepted in person, over the phone, or via email. All feedback provided will be responded to by the appropriate department based on the content of the request in a timely manner.
- Accessible formats and communication supports will be provided in a timely manner to support persons with disabilities upon request and at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons. Consultation with persons with disabilities will be had to determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.
- Emergency procedures, plans and public safety information will be made available to the public and in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, as soon as practicable, upon request.
- Educational and training resources/materials will be provided in an accessible format or arrangements for comparable resources will be obtained upon request.

Employment

YWCASTE will continue to uphold the Employment Standards under the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation regarding accessibility requirements to support inclusive recruitment and accommodation of employees with disabilities by:

- Notices will be provided to employees and the public about the availability of accommodations for applicants with disabilities during recruitment processes.
- Applicants will be consulted if accommodations requests are made to provide or arrange suitable accommodations based on the needs of the applicant.
- Successful applicants for employment will be provided AODA policies and procedures and updates to policies and procedures during employment.
- Relating to information and communication support, employees with disabilities will be provided information that is needed in order to perform their job as well as general workplace information in a format that best fits their needs based on consultation with the employee making the request.
- An accommodation plan will be created between the YWCASTE and the employee

with disabilities relating to their individualized workplace emergency response information including processes and procedures if the employee is moved to different locations in the organization, overall accommodation needs, whether or not assistance is required, documented consent and review of the accommodation plan if required. If an accommodation plan is denied, the reasons for denial will be provided to the employee.

- Return to work processes will continue to be in place for employees who are absent from work due to a disability. Training in return-to-work processes will be provided to employees and documentation of plans retained.
- Accessibility needs will be taken into account as per employees' individual accommodations plans when reviews or changes to performance management, career development or advancement and redeployment of the employee with disabilities occur.

Design of Public Spaces

YWCASTE will continue to ensure the design of public spaces meet standards under the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulations relating to newly constructed or significantly renovated public spaces such as outdoor public eating areas, outdoor play spaces, off-street parking, services counters, fixed queuing guides and waiting areas where applicable to YWCASTE facilities both existing and procured in the future. Specific requirements can be found at <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/110191#BK92>

YWCASTE will continue to perform preventative and emergency maintenance of existing accessible elements in public spaces including outdoor ramps, walkways/sidewalks, services counters, wheelchair lift, and push-button door accesses. Public notifications of disruptions to these services will be posted when required with alternative accessible options provided.

CONTACT US

Questions and feedback may be provided in person, via email, or by calling YWCA St.Thomas-Elgin.

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