

Accessible Customer Service Policy

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| Responsibility | Human Resources | Review Period | 3 years |
| Approving Body | President’s Council | Initial Approval Date | January 23, 2026 |
| Advisory Body | Various, including consultations with the University Community | Latest Approval Date | April 19, 2026 |
| Status | Approved | Next Review Due Date | January 2029 |

Introduction

Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) is committed to creating and maintaining an accessible, inclusive, and respectful learning and working environment. CMU strives to uphold the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity for people of all abilities within the University Community and among members of the public who access CMU services.

The purpose of this policy is to support CMU’s commitment to *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA)* and its *Customer Service Standard Regulation*. CMU is dedicated to fostering a culture of generous welcome by promoting accessibility, diversity, and inclusion, and by continually enhancing the quality of service and respect experienced by all who engage with the University.

CMU is committed to identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to accessibility that may limit full participation. These commitments are aligned with and supported by *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA)*, *Canadian Human Rights Act*, and the *Manitoba Human Rights Code (C.C.S.M. c. H175)* (The Code).

Definitions

All capitalized terms used in this policy are defined in Appendix A: Glossary of Terms, using definitions aligned with *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA)* and its regulations.

Scope

This policy applies to the provision of goods and services by or on behalf of CMU and applies to all members of the University Community, including:

- All University employees (faculty, staff, sessionals, and student employees)
- All University students
- All University volunteers
- All members of the Board of Governors and CMU Council
- All University independent contractors and service providers
- All guests and members of the public who access CMU’s goods and services

Customer Service Standard

CMU is committed to making every reasonable effort to ensure that its policies, practices, and procedures reflect the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity for people with disabilities by:

- Ensuring that all members of the University Community receive the same value and quality of service;
- Using alternative methods, where possible, to ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to CMU's goods and services;
- Offering flexible service options that respect individual accessibility needs when delivering goods and services; and
- Communicating in a manner that takes into account individual disabilities.

Communication Needs

CMU is committed to meeting the communication needs of individuals accessing the University's goods, services, or facilities. The University takes into account a person's disability and makes every reasonable effort to ensure that information is communicated clearly and effectively.

CMU offers communication in various ways, including writing information down, reading information aloud, allowing additional time for explanations, offering chairs for longer conversations, providing quieter spaces, and communicating at eye level with individuals using wheelchairs.

CMU uses Access Offer signage with disability icons, ensures publications are available in alternate formats upon request, and applies plain language. Large fonts, and appropriate colour contrast are used in all communications. The University proactively identifies, removes, and prevents barriers to accessible information and communication.

Assistive Devices

CMU is committed to accommodating the use of assistive devices by individuals accessing the University's goods, services, or facilities. The University respects the independence and dignity of people disabled by barriers and recognizes the important role that assistive devices play in enabling access.

CMU does not touch or move a person's assistive devices without permission and ensures that employees are trained in the safe and appropriate use of any assistive devices or accessibility features provided by the University. Where an assistive device presents a significant and unavoidable health or safety concern, the University makes reasonable efforts to provide alternative measures to enable safe access to goods, services, or facilities (e.g., oxygen tanks must not be placed near open flames).

Support Persons

CMU welcomes people disabled by barriers and their accompanying support persons when accessing the University's goods, services, or facilities. The University may require a person disabled by barriers to be accompanied by a support person on CMU premises only where necessary to protect the security, health or safety of the individual or others.

The University addresses individuals directly and not their support persons, unless requested to do otherwise by the individual. CMU provides appropriate space for support persons and ensures that individuals have access to their support persons at all times.

CMU does not charge service fees for support persons. In exceptional circumstances where a service fee cannot be waived, the University provides advance notice. Notice of any

applicable service fees may be provided on campus, the University's website, through social media, or by other reasonable means.

Service Animals

CMU welcomes service animals in all the areas available to the public. The University treats service animals as working animals and does not allow them to be distracted, such as by petting, feeding, or playing, unless permission is given by the person with the service animal. CMU employees and volunteers are trained to recognize service animals by their harness, vest, or the assistance they provide.

If concerns arise, CMU may ask whether the animal has been trained to assist a person with a disability but will not inquire about the individual's disability. The University expects the person handling the service animal to maintain control of the animal, either physically or through voice, signals, or other means.

A service animal may be excluded from a space under the following conditions:

- The service animal is disruptive (i.e. barking, whining, or wandering) and the handler is unable to maintain control;
- The service animal's behaviour poses an unreasonable or direct threat to the health, safety, or property of others; and
- When a law prohibits service animals in the area (e.g., sterile laboratories and food preparation areas).

In cases where a service animal cannot enter a space, CMU will explain the reason and work with the handler to provide goods, services, or access in an alternative, accessible manner.

Maintaining Accessibility Features

CMU is committed to ensuring barrier-free access to its goods, services, and facilities. The University maintains accessibility features to identify and remove barriers and to ensure that all features function as intended. CMU's Accessibility Plan outlines ongoing and future efforts to enhance accessibility, including expected outcomes.

The University organizes space to accommodate people using assistive devices, provides seating suitable for individuals of varying sizes and abilities, and keeps hallways, aisles, entrances, waiting areas, and meeting rooms free of clutter. Accessibility features, including ramps, automatic doors, elevators, and accessible washrooms are regularly maintained, and the University takes reasonable steps to ensure outdoor areas, such as entrances, are safe and clear of hazards. When premises or structures are not accessible, CMU makes reasonable efforts to provide services at an alternate location or in a manner that meets the individual's accessibility needs.

Notice of Service Disruptions

CMU is committed to notifying individuals when an accessibility feature is temporarily unavailable. The University provides information on the reason for the disruption, its expected duration, and alternative ways to access goods, services, and facilities.

CMU displays this notice on the University campus, website, and social media, if any, or be given by other means that are reasonable in the circumstances. CMU works with individuals

who request assistance to provide services in an alternate or accessible manner during the disruption.

Feedback

CMU welcomes feedback on the accessibility of its goods, services, and facilities and is committed to responding in a timely manner. Individuals may provide feedback in person, by phone, email, or website. The University ensures feedback is accessible in a format that meets the individual's communication needs.

CMU documents all feedback and the action taken in response and will provide any necessary follow-up to the individual of planned actions and expected timelines.

Training

CMU provides accessible customer service training to all University employees and volunteers. The training covers how to interact and communicate with people disabled by barriers, use assistive devices, interact with support persons and service animals, and operate accessibility features. CMU provides this training to all staff and volunteers as soon as reasonably practicable after they've been assigned the applicable duties; and in connection with any changes to the university's measures, policies, and practices related to providing barrier-free access to goods and services.

New employees and volunteers receive training, and refresher training is provided regularly. Records of training completion are maintained, and accessibility-related feedback is addressed in regular University meetings. CMU provides that, in addition to the training contents already listed in the document, its training contents include instruction on what to do if a person disabled by a barrier is having difficulty accessing goods or services, in addition to a review of the *Accessibility Customer Service Standard Regulation* and the *Manitoba Human Rights Code*.

Documentation

CMU maintains written records of its accessibility policies and training programs. The University ensures that policies are publicly available, free of charge, and provided in a format that meets individual accessibility needs upon request. CMU provides notice that its customer service measures, policies, and practices are available upon request. Policies may be made available through campus postings, the University website, social media, service desks, or other reasonable means.

Public Events

CMU takes reasonable steps to make public events accessible, including the promotion of events, planning of meeting spaces, accommodation of participant needs, and providing notice that accessibility accommodations are available on request.

Individuals may request accessibility accommodations through posted notices on the University website, social media, on-campus postings, or in-person via CMU employees or volunteers. When holding a public event, CMU takes reasonable measures to ensure that the physical and communication needs of persons disabled by barriers are met upon request. CMU uses an Accessible Event Planning Checklist to guide the planning and hosting of accessible meetings, workshops, seminars, and other public events.

Appendix B – Glossary of Terms

Definitions:

Accommodation: Changes or adjustments made to policies, practices, environments, or expectations to enable individuals or groups with Protected Characteristics to fully participate in work, academic, or campus life.

Assistive Device: Any piece of equipment that people use to help them with daily living and includes equipment that people bring with them, such as wheelchairs, canes, walkers, electric scooters, or magnifiers.

Service Animal: A service animal as defined in the Manitoba Human Rights Code is an animal that has been trained to provide assistance to a person disabled by barriers that relates to that person's disability.

University Community: Anyone who studies in any CMU program, lives, works, or volunteers on the CMU campus (including Menno Simons College programs at the University of Winnipeg, which may be subject to UW policies, depending on the situation), or serves on the CMU Board or Council. The University Community includes staff, faculty, students, sessional instructors, independent contractors, volunteers, guests, or anyone who is acting in a capacity defined by their relationship to the University.