

TORONTO SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities: Service Policy

1. Our Mission

The mission of the Toronto School of Theology (TST) is:

- to coordinate and provide support for the common educational work of its member colleges;
- to foster formal and informal exchange among the students of its member colleges;
- to promote academic, professional and interdisciplinary collaboration among the faculty of its member institutions;
- to enter into and manage certain institutional relationships connected with these purposes, especially relationships with the University of Toronto and with TST's affiliated schools and inter-faith educational partners; and
- to assist in enhancing the resources available for educational programs in theology and for lifelong learning in ministry.

We seek to fulfill our mission in a way that ensures that the goods and services we provide are accessible to all persons.

2. Our Commitment

TST seeks to create a community that is inclusive of all persons and treats all members of the community in an equitable manner. In creating such a community, TST aims to foster an atmosphere of understanding and mutual respect for the worth, dignity and independence of all persons.

TST will strive to provide support for, and facilitate the accommodation of individuals with disabilities, so that all may share the same level of access to the goods and services provided by TST. TST will work to eliminate or minimize the adverse effects of barriers, including physical, environmental, attitudinal, communication and technological barriers, which may prevent the full participation of individuals with disabilities in the TST community. TST will seek to provide integrated services whenever possible.

TST will provide its employees with education and access to information regarding disability and TST's policies on disability.

At the same time, TST will endeavour to protect the individuals' privacy, confidentiality and autonomy.

TST affirms that all individuals are expected to satisfy the essential requirements of their program of studies or employment, while recognizing that students and employees with disabilities may require reasonable accommodations to enable them to do so.

The achievement of TST's goal depends on the participation of each and every member of the TST community, including officers and staff members of TST, students, faculty members, and staff members and graduates of TST's member colleges. Each of us has a role in creating an equitable and inclusive environment.

In working toward its goals under this statement, TST is committed to acting conscientiously and in keeping with its own policies and existing legislation related to disability. These include:

- TST's policy on Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (Paragraph 12 of the Basic Degree Handbook);
- Ontarians with Disabilities Act
- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
- Ontario Human Rights Code

3. Providing Goods and Services to People with Disabilities

TST is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities and we will carry out our functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

3.1 Communication

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. We will train staff members who communicate with customers on how to interact and communicate with individuals with various types of disabilities.

3.2 Telephone services

TST will make reasonable efforts to provide accessible telephone service to the students of its member colleges and other members of the public. We will train staff members to communicate over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly. We will also make our staff members familiar with telephone technologies intended for people with disabilities. We will offer to communicate with people by regular mail or email if telephone communications is not suitable to their needs.

3.3 Assistive devices

We are committed to serving people with disabilities who use their own assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our goods and services. We will ensure that our staff members are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by persons with disabilities while accessing our goods or services.

We will continue our relationship with the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services to provide accessible services to our student community.

3.4 Billing

We will make reasonable efforts to provide accessible invoices to all our customers. For this reason invoices will be provided by email on request. We

will answer any questions customers may have about the content of the invoice in person, by telephone or email.

4. Use of Service Animals

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on our premises that are open to the public and other third parties. We will also ensure that all staff, volunteers and others dealing with the public are properly trained in how to interact with people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

5. Support Persons

We are committed to welcoming people with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter the TST building with his or her support person. At no time will a person with a disability, who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to his or her support person while on the TST building premises. Fees will not be charged for support persons for admission to any event hosted by TST for which a fee is charged.

6. Notice of Temporary Disruption

TST will provide customers with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. The notice will be placed on our website and at all public entrances and service counters on our premises.

7. Training for Staff

TST will provide training to all employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on their behalf, and all those who are involved in the development and approvals of customer service policies, practices and procedures. All TST employees and persons who volunteer for TST will be trained. This training will be provided for each staff member within a month of his or her commencement of duties.

Training will include the following:

- The purposes of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard;
- how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities;
- how to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person;
- what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing TST's goods and services;

- the accessibility services available to TST students through the University of Toronto; and
- TST's policies, practices and procedures relating to the customer service standard.

8. Questions and Feedback Process

TST welcomes questions and feedback about this policy, including feedback about the delivery of library services to persons with disabilities. Feedback should be submitted to Diane Henson, Manager of Academic Services and Registrar.

In person or by regular mail addressed to:
Toronto School of Theology
47 Queen's Park Crescent East
Toronto, ON M5S 2C3

By telephone: 416-978-4040
By email: diane.henson@utoronto.ca

Students and other members of the public can expect to hear back within seven (7) business days upon receipt by TST of the question or feedback.

9. Modifications to This or Other Policies

TST is committed to developing customer service policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Therefore no changes will be made to this policy before considering the impact on people with disabilities. TST will make reasonable efforts to modify or amend any policy that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.