

# Toronto Metropolitan University Student Centre (TMU-SC) Accessibility Policy

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this Accessibility Policy is to help guide TMU-SC employees, volunteers, and representatives in providing equal access to all Student Centre goods, services, and facilities. The TMU-SC and the Palin Foundation work to develop and maintain policies and procedures that promote the dignity, integration, independence, and safety of persons with disabilities. This document also helps fulfill the requirements set out in Regulation 429/07 of the AODA to govern how the TMU-SC provides access to its services and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

## 2. Definitions

**Accessible Format:** Accessible and alternate formats may include but are not limited to large print, recorded audio and video and electronic formats, braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

**Assistive Device:** A device used to assist persons with disabilities in carrying out activities or in accessing the services and facilities. Assistive devices may include but are not limited to wheelchairs, walkers, canes, oxygen tanks, and electronic communication devices

**Barrier:** Anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of their disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an informational or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

**Disability:**

a) 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 service animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;

- b) A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- c) A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- d) A mental disorder; or
- e) 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:** Guide dog is defined in section 1 of the Blind Persons' Rights Act and means a dog trained as a guide for a blind person and having the qualifications prescribed by the Act.

**Kiosk:** An interactive electronic terminal, including a point-of-sale device, intended for public use that allows users to access services or products or both.

**Service Animals:** Working animals that have completed training qualifications to assist a Deaf, disabled, or neurodiverse person to address needs related to their disability or condition.

**Support Person:** In relation to a person with a disability, a support person accompanies them to assist with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or with access to goods and services.

### 3. Statement of Commitment to Accessibility

The Toronto Metropolitan University Student Centre ("TMU-SC" or "the Student Centre") and the Palin Foundation's commitment is to provide access to our goods, services, facilities, and opportunities in a way that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. We are committed to giving persons with disabilities the opportunity to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as others. We welcome feedback to assist us in identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to accessibility and to increasing inclusion in all TMU-SC operations.

### 4. Scope

This Accessibility Policy applies to every employee, board member, and anyone who provides goods or services on behalf of the TMU-SC or the Palin Foundation. This Policy has been reviewed and approved by the Palin Foundation Board of Directors.

The Palin Foundation is a not-for-profit organization, whose elected Board of Directors is responsible for the governance of the TMU-SC. In addition, the Student Centre works closely with the TMSU (Toronto Metropolitan Student Union), and TMAPS (Toronto Metropolitan Association of Part-time Students) to produce outstanding events that both build and further the work of each organization and consistently reflect the desires of TMU students.

## 5. Responsibility

As part of the TMU-SC onboarding process and refresher training as required, all TMU-SC employees are required to review and apply the principles and procedures described in this Accessibility Policy.

It is the responsibility of the TMU-SC Management Team to ensure that all employees are trained on the AODA and TMU-SC accessibility-related policies and procedures and that they follow the guidelines set out in this policy.

The TMU-SC Management Team is responsible for reviewing this policy annually to ensure ongoing compliance with legislated requirements and Student Centre commitments.

## 6. Customer Service Procedures

### 6.1 Accessible Communication

When communicating with others – including members of the public, employees, or volunteers – TMU-SC employees will do so in ways that take into account a person’s disabilities and requested communication formats.

The TMU-SC will provide training to staff and volunteers on how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities. We will make every effort to provide communication in accessible formats and with communication supports in a timely manner whenever possible.

### 6.2 Notification of Accessible Formats

The public will be notified that information and communication are available in accessible and alternate formats.

The Student Centre will address accessible communication and format requests (for example, large print, braille, audio) and provide the same or similar information (for example, a summary or description of requested information) at no additional cost.

To request TMU-SC information or communications in an accessible format, contact Building Services by email at [info@tmusc.ca](mailto:info@tmusc.ca) or by phone at 416-979-5250, extension 552353.

### 6.3 Telephone Services

The TMU-SC is committed to providing fully accessible telephone services. We will train all employees, volunteers, and others to communicate over the telephone in clear and plain language and to speak clearly and slowly

### 6.4 Accessible Websites and Web Content

The TMU-SC will ensure that public websites and web content that they control or manage directly will meet or exceed the AODA requirements (for example, Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, Level AA or higher).

### 6.5 Accessible Emergency Information

TMU-SC Management Team and Student Centre employees are committed to providing customers and visitors with publicly available emergency information in an accessible way.

We will also provide employees with disabilities with individualized emergency response information and, when requested, support during emergencies and evacuations.

### 6.6 Billing and Contracts

The TMU-SC is committed to providing accessible invoices and contracts and will provide information in alternate formats upon request.

We will respond to any questions about the content of invoices and contracts in person, by telephone, or by email, and in alternate formats upon request.

### 6.7 Kiosks

The TMU-SC will consider the needs of people with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.

## 6.8 Feedback

The TMU-SC is committed to providing high quality and accessible goods, services, and facilities to all members of the public that it serves. Feedback from the public is welcomed, as it helps identify accessibility barriers and areas that may require changes as we work towards ongoing service improvements.

Feedback regarding the way the TMU-SC provides access to goods, services, and facilities to persons with disabilities may be provided anonymously or with contact information shared for follow-up on the TMU-SC Accessibility page. Feedback can also be provided:

By email: [Director@tmusc.ca](mailto:Director@tmusc.ca)

By phone: 416-979-5250, extension 552353

In person or by mail:

Toronto Metropolitan University Student Centre  
55 Gould St., SCC 102  
Toronto, ON M5B 1E9

Persons providing feedback to the TMU-SC, where feedback is accompanied by contact information and a request for a response, can expect an acknowledgment of their message within five (5) business days. Where necessary, and where a response might require further investigation or consultation, the TMU-SC will offer a more detailed response within thirty (30) days.

Information about the feedback process is available to the public. The accessibility feedback policy is posted on the TMU-SC website and in relevant locations on-site at the Student Centre.

Employees will be trained on the policy and procedure during onboarding and when refresher accessibility training is provided.

All formal feedback and complaints will be entered in the TMU-SC incident management system with summary reports reviewed quarterly, or more frequently, if necessary, by Palin Foundation board members.

## 6.9 Notification of Disruption of Accessible Services

The TMU-SC recognizes that consistent and reliable operation of its services and facilities is important to its students, employees, and the public. However, temporary disruptions in the Student Centre's services and facilities may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within the TMU-SC's control or knowledge.

Where the disruption to the facilities or services commonly used by people with disabilities is planned, the TMU-SC will provide notice in advance of the disruption. Other methods of notification may include e-mail messages to stakeholders and the use of various forms of local media.

Where the disruption is unplanned, Student Centre staff will provide notice as soon as possible. For example, information will be shared on the TMU-SC website and social media, as well as public entrances and service counters on our premises.

Notice of the disruption of public services and facilities to the public will include:

- Information about the service or facility with disrupted access;
- Reason for the disruption;
- Anticipated duration of the disruption;
- A description of alternate accessible facilities or services, if any, that are available; and
- Contact information for immediate questions, additional information, or feedback.

## 6.10 Assistive Devices

Persons with disabilities may use their own assistive devices for the purpose of obtaining, using, and benefiting from the TMU-SC's goods, services, and facilities.

Personal assistive devices can include a broad range of items, such as wheelchairs, walkers, white canes, oxygen tanks, portable communication boards, and electronic communication devices.

The TMU-SC and Palin Foundation will ensure that appropriate staff members are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by employees or visitors with disabilities.

It is the responsibility of the person with a disability and, if applicable, their support person to ensure that assistive devices are operated in a safe and controlled manner at all times.

### 6.11 Support Persons

Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person is welcome to enter TMU-SC premises and public areas and to be accompanied by their support person at all times while accessing facilities owned or operated by TMU-SC or the Palin Foundation.

Fees will not be charged for support persons for access to public areas of Student Centre premises. Where an admission fee is charged to gain access to a TMU-SC event, facility, or service, and the revenue from the fee is payable directly to the TMU-SC, the support person is permitted to attend at no cost.

Information regarding events will also indicate any necessary arrangements or accommodation requests that may be required on an individual basis with the event organizers in advance of the event. For example, to accommodate a person with a disability and their support person at an event where attendance is by pre-arranged seating, advanced booking may be required.

In situations where it is necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with the disability or the health and safety of others, the TMU-SC may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person while on TMU-SC premises. Before making that decision, we will consult with the person to better understand their needs; we will consider health and safety reasons based on available evidence; and we will determine if there is no other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person or others on the premises.

In situations where privacy and consent issues are applicable, a support person may be subject to the same confidentiality requirements as the person with a disability that they are assisting. For example, a support person might be required to sign documentation with respect to any privacy or confidentiality issues.

### 6.12 Service Animals

The TMU-SC will ensure that persons with a disability who are accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal are permitted to enter public sites owned or operated by the TMU-SC. Persons using service animals may keep the service animal with them unless the

animal is otherwise excluded by law (for example, where food is being prepared commercially).

If the service animal is excluded by law, the TMU-SC will make every effort to enable the person with disability to obtain, use or benefit from the same or similar Student Centre goods and services.

The TMU-SC and the Palin Foundation will 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.

If an animal accompanying a person cannot be identified easily as a service animal, TMU-SC staff or volunteers might ask the person to provide service animal certification (for example, documentation from a regulated health professional). Documentation from a regulated health professional needs to verify the need for a service animal and a description of the service animal for the person accompanied by the animal; documentation is not required to describe the person's disability or the specific purpose of the animal.

It is the responsibility of the person with the disability to ensure their service animal in their care and control at all times.

## 7. Training

The TMU-SC and the Palin Foundation will ensure that all employees and Palin Foundation board members are trained on the AODA and applicable TMU-SC accessibility policies and procedures.

AODA and accessibility training content will include:

- A review of the purposes and principles of the AODA;
- The requirements of the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07);
- Instruction on the TMU-SC policies, procedures and practices pertaining to the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities;
- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities;
- What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the TMU-SC goods or services;



- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices or who require the assistance of a support person or service animal;
- Information about the equipment or devices available on the TMU-SC premises that may help with the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities; and
- TMU-SC accessibility policies and procedures relevant to their role and responsibilities.

New employees will be trained within 30 days of their first day on the job.

Additional training on the AODA and accessibility policies and procedures will be provided when applicable legislation changes, when an employee's role and responsibilities change, when TMU-SC accessibility policies or procedures change, or when deemed necessary by an employee supervisor or manager.

The TMU-SC's Management Team will keep records of training delivered, including the date on which training is provided, the names of individuals who participated, and the nature of the training that is provided.

## 8. Accessibly Recruitment and Employment Procedures

The TMU-SC is committed to fair and accessible employment practices.

All employees are provided with access to the TMU-SC Employment Policies and Procedures with their employment offer.

### 8.1 Recruitment

As part of its recruitment process, the TMU-SC will post information about the availability of accommodations for applicants with disabilities.

As part of any offer of employment, successful applicants will be provided with access to the TMU-SC's Accessible Employment Policy, which describes details of accessibility services and processes for making accommodation requests.

### 8.2 Employee Workplace and Emergency Supports

The TMU-SC will provide all new and current employees with access to its Accessible Employment Policy, which describes policies and procedures available to support

employees who identify as d/Deaf, disabled, or neurodivergent or who require workplace accommodations to perform their job.

Upon an employee's request, Joint Health and Safety Committee members will consult with the employee to assist in identifying accessible formats and communication supports for:

- information that is needed to perform the employee's job; and
- information that is generally available to employees in the workplace.

All employees will be asked during onboarding and during performance management reviews if workplace emergency response information is necessary. If an employee indicates that support is required during an emergency or evacuation, this information will be reviewed with the employee and TMU-SC management and staff will make every effort to provide appropriate and reasonable supports.

### 8.3 Documented Individual Accommodation Plans

A written process for the development and maintenance of documented individual accommodation plans is available for employees with disabilities.

### 8.4 Return-to-Work Process

A documented return-to-work process is available for employees absent from work due to disability and returning to work requiring disability-related accommodations.

### 8.5 Performance Management

The TMU-SC includes accessibility considerations in performance management processes and provides training to supervisors and managers responsible for performance management.

### 8.6 Career Development and Advancement

The TMU-SC includes accessibility considerations and the opportunity for individual accommodation plans in career development and advancement opportunities, including additional responsibilities within current positions.

### 8.7 Redeployment

The TMU-SC includes accessibility considerations and the opportunity for individual accommodation plans in redeployment processes.

## 9. Built Environment and Design of Public Spaces

The TMU-SC and the Palin Foundation will work with TMU to help ensure that TMU facilities and public spaces are accessible and meet both the AODA Design of Public Spaces standards and the Ontario Building Code when TMU is building or making major modifications to public spaces, including:

- Recreational trails and beach access routes;
- Outdoor public eating areas like rest stops or picnic area;
- Outdoor play spaces, like playgrounds;
- Outdoor paths of travel, like sidewalks, ramps, stairs, curb ramps, rest areas;
- Accessible signage;
- Accessible off-street parking; and
- Service-related elements like service counters, fixed queuing lines and waiting areas.

## 10. Availability of Accessibility Policies and Procedures

The TMU-SC Accessibility Policy, Multi-year Accessibility Plan, and additional accessibility information are available on the Accessibility page of the TMU-SC website and upon request. Documents and information are available in alternate formats, upon request.

The TMU-SC and the Palin Foundation are committed to developing policies that respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. No changes will be made to this or other policies before considering the impact on persons with disabilities. Any Palin Foundation policy identified as not respecting or promoting the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities will be modified or removed.

## 11. Contact Us

Building Services

Email: [info@tmusc.ca](mailto:info@tmusc.ca)

Phone: 416-979-5250, extension 552353

In person or by mail:

Toronto Metropolitan University Student Centre

55 Gould St., SCC 102

Toronto, ON M5B 1E9

## 12. Policy History

Created On	December 2024 (revision based on July 2019 version of “ <i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Policy – Customer Service,</i> ” section 3.6 in Palin Foundation Employee Handbook)
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