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## Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities

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### *Institutional Manual*

*Approving Authority: President (Vice-Chancellor)*

*Established: February 17, 2012*

*Date of Last Review/Revision: November 20, 2017, replaces May 28, 2015*

*Office of Accountability: Vice-President, Administration*

*Administrative Responsibility: Vice-President, Administration*

### **Policy Statement**

St. Jerome's University is committed to ensuring that persons with disabilities are able to participate in and have access to its programs, services, and facilities. St. Jerome's University will undertake reasonable efforts to provide goods or services in a way that respects individuals' dignity, independence and integration, and provides equal opportunity in a timely manner. St. Jerome's University honors the obligations set by the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* and related regulations, *Integrated Accessibility Standards*. St. Jerome's University works with the University of Waterloo to ensure compliance with the AODA and related regulations, and to provide access.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all members of the St. Jerome's University community (e.g., SJU employees, Board members, students, and volunteers) providing or receiving services on behalf of St. Jerome's University. It also applies to contractors and agents providing services on behalf of St. Jerome's University.

### **Implementation**

*Service Animals* -- A person with a disability may enter premises owned or operated by St. Jerome's University while accompanied by a service animal and keep the animal with her/him if the animal is not otherwise excluded by law. If the service animal is excluded by law from the premises, St. Jerome's University will look to other available measures to enable the person with a disability to provide, obtain, use or benefit from St. Jerome's University services. The safety, care, and protection of the community will take priority over any individual. If it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, St. Jerome's University may ask the person with a disability for a letter from a qualified medical physician confirming the person requires the animal for reasons relating to their disability. St. Jerome's University may also, or instead, ask for a certificate of training from a recognized guide dog or service animal training school. It is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure their service animal is kept in control at all times.

*Support Persons* -- If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, they are permitted to enter the premises together and are not prevented from having access to each other while on the premises. If it is not readily apparent that the support person is required, St. Jerome's University may ask the person with a disability for a letter from a qualified medical physician confirming the person requires a support person for reasons relating to their disability. St. Jerome's University may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person while on its premises, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or others.

*Notice of Temporary Disruptions in Services and Facilities* -- Temporary disruptions or access to St. Jerome's University services or facilities may occur due to reasons that may or may not be within St. Jerome's University control or knowledge. St. Jerome's University will make reasonable effort to provide notice of the disruption to the SJU community and the public, including information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if any, that may be available. If the disruption is anticipated, St. Jerome's University will provide a reasonable amount of advance notice. Notice will be provided as soon as reasonably possible by any method that be reasonable under the circumstances (e.g., posting the information in visible places, posting to the University website, notifying University of Waterloo counterparts).

*Assistive Devices* -- A person with a disability may provide their own assistive device for the purpose of providing, obtaining, using and benefiting from St. Jerome's University services. Exceptions may occur in situations where St. Jerome's University has determined the assistive device may pose a risk to the health and safety of a person with a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises. In these situations and others, St. Jerome's University may offer a person with a disability other reasonable measures of assistance in obtaining St. Jerome's University services. It is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure their assistive device is operated in a safe and controlled manner at all times.

*Public Spaces* -- In the development, redesign, and implementation of public spaces, the University will seek to consult with persons with disabilities and with the applicable local municipality as necessary to design and construct public spaces accessible to the St. Jerome's University community (i.e. employees, Board members, students, and volunteers). A source of feedback and collaboration would be the University of Waterloo Access Ability office.

*Training* -- Accessibility awareness training will be provided to St. Jerome's University staff, academic staff, student leaders, and volunteers, particularly those who are involved in delivering service and/or in developing policies, practices and procedures involving service to our community members. St. Jerome's University will maintain records of the training provided, including dates training is provided and the number of persons trained. Contractors and agents providing services on behalf of St. Jerome's University will be required to ensure their staff has received the appropriate training.

Accessibility awareness training will include the following:

- (i) how to provide goods and services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities;
- (ii) how to interact and communicate with persons with disabilities in a manner that takes into account their disability;
- (iii) the process to provide feedback to St. Jerome's University about its provision of services to persons with disabilities, and how St. Jerome's responds to the feedback and takes action on complaints;
- (iv) how to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices or who require the assistance of service animals or support persons to access goods and services;
- (v) information on St. Jerome's University policies, practices, and procedures dealing with the AODA; and
- (vi) a review of the purposes of the AODA and the standards outlined within the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Integrated Accessibility Standards, and the Ontario's Human Rights Code.

*Employment* -- Human Resources at St. Jerome's University has developed processes that are committed to fair and accessible employment practices to address the needs of all persons with disabilities who may be prospective and current employees. Taking into account the accessibility needs of all individuals, this includes developing and making available accessible supports and programs during the recruitment and hiring process, and throughout the employee's life cycle within onboarding, career development, performance management, emergency preparedness, and redeployment processes. Such supports may include the development of individual accommodation plans for employees.

*Information and Communication* – St. Jerome’s University is committed to addressing the communication needs of people with disabilities in consultation with persons with disabilities. All documents required by the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service* and the *Integrated Accessibility Standards*, as well as related policies, practices and procedures, are available upon request to the owner or creator of the information or communication in question. St. Jerome’s University will endeavour to provide documents or information contained in documents in a format that takes into account the needs of persons with disabilities at no additional cost. Notice of the availability of such documents will be posted on the St. Jerome’s University website. St. Jerome’s University will also meet internationally-recognized Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA website requirements in accordance with Ontario’s accessibility laws.

*Questions/Concerns/Advice* – Human Resources at St. Jerome’s University works actively with the University of Waterloo to provide consistent support and accommodation services. The University of Waterloo’s accessibility services is available to students, faculty, staff and visitors as a resource and also provides support and accommodation services in a timely manner.

*Feedback* -- Feedback is welcomed at all times to identify potential areas that may require change and to allow for continuous service improvement. St. Jerome’s University will actively ensure its feedback processes are accessible by providing or arranging for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports upon request, in a timely manner.

Individuals who wish to provide feedback pertaining to St. Jerome’s University’s provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities may do so in a format of their preference to any St. Jerome’s University employee.

The following outlines key contact information for St. Jerome’s University:

phone: 519-884-8111, ext. 28258  
fax: 519-884-5759  
email: [sjuhr@sju.ca](mailto:sjuhr@sju.ca)  
mail: Human Resources, St. Jerome’s University, 290 Westmount Road North, Waterloo, ON, Canada N2L 3G3