



# **ACCESSIBILITY POLICY STATEMENT**

## **Accessible Customer Service Plan: Providing Goods & Services to People with Disabilities**

### **ELIM'S VISION & MISSION**

It is our belief that Elim is a gift from God to Christ's community, and that we are called to renew, refresh and enable His people to present the Gospel to the world.

### **ELIM'S COMMITMENT**

In fulfilling our mission, Elim Ministries Inc. (operating as Elim Lodge) strives at all times to provide the entirety of its goods and services, programs, retreats and conferences in such a way as to fully respect the dignity and independence of all people with disabilities. Elim is also committed to ensuring that people with disabilities receive the same opportunity to access all of the goods and services, programs, retreats and conferences offered by/at Elim Lodge. And that this will allow a person with a disability to benefit from the same services, in the same place, and in a similar way to all other participants.

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Elim Ministries Inc. is committed to excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities. Thus, we are committed to preventing, identifying and removing barriers at Elim that impede the ability of people with disabilities to access our goods and services. This includes all customers, guests, families, staff, volunteers and members of Elim's community.

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* was passed by the Ontario government in June of 2005. The purpose of the AODA is to develop, implement and enforce standards of accessibility for all Ontario residents. Elim's Accessibility Policy is consistent with the AODA, 2005 and the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07.

### **PROCEDURE**

Elim Ministries Inc. will ensure we are identifying and removing barriers to access for people with disabilities as we carry out our functions and responsibilities by:

#### **1. Assistive Devices**

We are committed to serving people with disabilities who use assistive devices to participate in and benefit from our goods and services, programs, retreats and conferences. We will ensure that people are permitted to use their own personal assistive devices to access all applicable goods and services, programs, retreats and conferences at Elim and we will familiarize our front-line staff/volunteers with the various assistive devices that may be used by people with disabilities for such purposes.

## **Assistive Devices Continued...**

Elim will ensure that our staff/volunteers are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that we have on site as deemed necessary for accessing our goods and services, programs, retreats and conferences. Upon a customer/guests request, we will make every effort to provide the requested assistive device/service and to cover relevant financial expenses in order to achieve access appropriate for the persons disability.

### **2. Communication**

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. We will provide our publications (website, brochures, newsletters) in formats that are accessible to people with disabilities, and will train our staff/volunteers on how to interact and communicate appropriately with people with various types of disabilities.

### **Telephone Services**

Elim Ministries Inc. is committed to providing accessible telephone services to our customers/guests. We will train our office staff to communicate in clear, concise language and to speak clearly and at an understandable speed. If telephone communication is unavailable or not suitable to their needs we will offer an alternative such as email or letter format, whichever they prefer.

### **3. Service Animals**

Elim Ministries Inc. is committed to welcoming people with disabilities and their accompanying service animal. Service animals are allowed on the parts of our premises that are open to the public.

### **4. Support Persons**

Elim Ministries Inc. is committed to welcoming people with disabilities and their support person. Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter Elim Ministries Inc. premises with his or her support person. Fee arrangements for support person(s) accompanying a customer/guest with a disability will be determined on an individual basis at the discretion of the Executive Director.

### **5. Notice of Temporary Disruption**

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to any services or facilities usually used by customers/guests with a disability, Elim will notify customers/guests promptly. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of the alternative services or facilities, if available. The notice will be delivered by means of publication in our newsletter/brochure, a special notice on the website and where applicable, signage's in main areas (Office, Dining Room, Chapel and the Information Bulletin Board located by the main road).

### **6. Training for Staff & Volunteers**

Elim Ministries Inc. will provide training to employees, volunteers and others who deal with the public or other third parties on our behalf. Training will also be provided to people involved in the development of policies, plans, practices and procedures related to the provision of our goods and services. Individuals holding the following positions will be trained: both full-time and part-time permanent staff, all summer staff, management and volunteers. Training to new employees will be provided within the first 3 months of their employment. Summer staff and volunteers positions will receive training at the start of the summer season (June) each year. All full and part time permanent staff will also attend this training in June as a refresher. Staff will also receive updated training when changes are made to our accessible customer service plan.

## **Training for Staff & Volunteers Continued...**

Training will include:

- a. An overview of the accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standards
- b. Elim's plan related to the customer service standard
- c. How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities
- d. How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
- e. How to use the on-site equipment and devices available to help with providing goods and services to people with disabilities
- f. What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing Elim's goods and services

### **7. Feedback Process**

The ultimate goal of Elim Ministries Inc. is to meet and exceed expectations while serving guests/customers with disabilities. Comments and suggestions regarding how well those expectations are being met through our goods and services, programs, retreats and conferences are welcomed and appreciated. Feedback regarding the way Elim provides goods and services, programs, retreats and conferences to people with disabilities can be made via email to [director@elimlodge.com](mailto:director@elimlodge.com) or by phone at 1-800-420-6287.

Feedback can be provided by email, verbally, through our feedback section on our website, through written means (letter, suggestion card, note).

All feedback, including complaints will be directed to the Executive Director. Together the Executive Director and the Accessibility Officer will address all complaints/suggestions according to the procedures outlined by the Accessibility Officer. Customers/guests can expect to hear back within 7 business days.

### **8. Notice of Availability**

Elim Ministries Inc. will notify the public that our policies are available upon request by access on our website, or a request from the office for a printed or emailed copy of the policy.

### **9. Modification to This or Other Policies**

Elim Ministries Inc. is committed to the development of our accessibility policies so as to respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Therefore, any policy of Elim that does not respect and promote the dignity and independent of people with disabilities will be modified or removed. No changes will be made to this policy without the consideration of the impact on people and their families with disabilities.

### **10. Further Information**

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this or any other policy please do not hesitate to contact our Executive Director via email to [director@elimlodge.com](mailto:director@elimlodge.com) or by phone at 1-800-420-6287.

For *definitions* as pertaining to the language used within this policy, please refer to the following Appendix.

For further information regarding our *accessibility training* please visit our office to request a copy of the presentation.



# ACCESSIBILITY POLICY STATEMENT

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### APPENDIX I

#### DEFINITIONS

##### **Disability**

According to the Ontario Human Rights Code Section 10(1), a “disability” is defined as:

- 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 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*

“Disability” should be interpreted in broad terms. It includes both present and past conditions, as well as a subjective component based on perception of disability. Although sections 10(a) to (e) set out various types of conditions, it is clear that they are merely illustrative and not exhaustive.

##### **Assistive Device**

An *assistive device* is a tool, technology or other mechanism that enables a person with a disability to do everyday tasks and activities such as moving, communicating or lifting. It helps the person to maintain their independence at home, at work and in the community (*Training Resource, Ministry of Community & Social Services, February 2009*).

##### **Service Animals**

A *service animal* is defined as an animal with a job to do for a person with a disability. An animal is a service animal if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons related to his or her disability, or if the person has a letter from a physician or nurse verifying that the animal is required for reasons relating to his or her disability. Examples include guide dogs and animals trained to alert an individual to an oncoming seizure and lead them to safety (*Training Resource, Ministry of Community & Social Services, February 2009*).

##### **Support Person**

A support person is an individual hired or chosen to accompany a person with a disability to provide services or assistance with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs or access to goods and services. The support person can be a paid personal support worker, volunteer, a friend or a family member. He or she does not necessarily need to have special training or qualifications (*Training Resource, Ministry of Community & Social Services, February 2009*).



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### APPENDIX II

#### PRINCIPLES OF CUSTOMER SERVICES

**Dignity** – service is provided in a way that allows the person with a disability to maintain self-respect and the respect of other people. People with disabilities are not treated as an afterthought or forced to accept lesser service, quality or convenience (*Training Resource, Ministry of Community & Social Services, February 2009*).

**Independence** – allowing a person with a disability to do things on their own without unnecessary help, or interference from others (*Training Resource, Ministry of Community & Social Services, February 2009*).

**Integration** – service is provided in a way that allows the person with a disability to benefit from the same services, in the same place and in the same or similar way as other customers/guests, unless an alternate measure is necessary to enable the person to access goods or services (*Training Resource, Ministry of Community & Social Services, February 2009*).

**Equal Opportunity** – people with disabilities have an opportunity equal to that given to others to access your goods and services (*Training Resource, Ministry of Community & Social Services, February 2009*). This means that people with disabilities should not have to make significantly greater efforts to access or obtain your goods or services. They should also not have to accept any lesser quality of your goods and services or experience any more inconvenience.