



centre IN THE SQUARE

LET US **ENTERTAIN** YOU!

CENTRE IN THE SQUARE

ACCESSIBILITY POLICY



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Centre In The Square Accessibility Policy

Commitment to Accessibility

As the Region's largest and busiest performing arts centre, Centre In The Square (CITS) is committed to access and equity. We believe in equal opportunity and are dedicated to providing a barrier-free environment that allows all persons to maintain their independence and dignity. This means treating people fairly and taking into account and accommodating different needs, where possible, so that everyone can have access to employment and programming, as well as participate in other activities at CITS.

As a not-for-profit registered charity, CITS respects and upholds the requirements set forth under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005) and associated Regulations, and strives to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities in a timely and effective manner. With the support and leadership of the Board of Directors, General Manager, management and staff, Centre In The Square is committed to ensuring our world-class facility is enjoyed by all.

Training

We are committed to training all staff and volunteers in accessible customer service, other Ontario's accessibility standards, and aspects of the Ontario Human Rights Code that relate to persons with disabilities.

In addition, we will train:

- a) all persons who participate in developing the organization's policies; and
- b) all other persons who provide goods, services or facilities on behalf of the organization

Training of our employees and volunteers on accessibility relates to their specific roles.

Training includes:

- purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and the requirements of the Customer Service Standards
- our policies related to the Customer Service Standards
- 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
- how to use the equipment or devices available on-site or otherwise that may help with providing goods, services or facilities to people with disabilities. These include:
 - Wheelchair (2 available for temporary use)



- Sennheiser Infrared Assistive Listening Systems (in both the pendant and headphone styles)
- Booster seats
- Obus Form back supports
- Opera glasses
- what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing our organization's goods, services or facilities.

We train every person as soon as practicable after being hired and provide training in respect of any changes to the policies.

We maintain records of the training provided including the dates on which the training was provided and the number of individuals to whom it was provided.

Self-Service Kiosks

Centre In The Square does not use self-service kiosks at the present time but will take the following steps to ensure management considers the needs of people with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks in the future:

- Consider a variety of accessibility features that could be built into future kiosks to best meet the needs of users.
- Consider technical features, structural features and the access path.

Feedback Process

In order to ensure the continued success and efficacy of our Customer Service, Centre In The Square has set up a process for receiving and responding to feedback given to us by customers with disabilities.

The System includes:

- A hardcopy feedback form that can be filled out and returned to any CITS staff member.
- An email address, comments@centreinthesquare.com, dedicated to customer feedback.
- The option of having an in-person talk to discuss our Customer Service Standards.
- A guarantee that any feedback will receive a response, if desired, within ten (10) business days.

Since customers with disabilities may communicate in different ways, CITS allows them to offer feedback in a variety of formats. Customers can provide feedback in the following manner:

- In person
 - Speak with the Front of House Manager or a Box Office representative on duty.
 - Communicate with staff through a support person.



- By phone
 - Call the Box Office at (519) 578-1570 or 1-800-265-8977.
 - Call the Bell Relay service (BRS) for TTY.
 - Voice to TTY: 1-800-855-0511
 - TTY to Voice: 711
 - TTY to TTY: 1 800 855-1155

The BRS supports communication by phone between hearing people and people who are deaf, deafened, hard of hearing, or those with speech disabilities and is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Bell Relay Service

- In writing
 - Mail to 101 Queen St N, Kitchener, ON N2H 6P7.
 - Email to comments@centreinthesquare.com.
 - Message CITS via social media outlets.

Additionally, Centre In The Square will review its process for receiving and responding to feedback in order to:

- Identify additional barriers.
- Ensure compliance.
- Ensure mechanisms are available to persons with disabilities in accessible formats or with appropriate communication supports on request.
- Integrate best practices for improvement.
- Ensure the public is aware of the feedback processes that are available to them.

Alternate Means of Communication (Accessible Formats)

Centre In The Square will communicate with its customers in whatever way is most useful to them. To this end, CITS will attempt to have accessible formats of all pertinent documents and information available upon request.

These formats include but are not limited to:

- Large Print
- High Contrast
- Electronic Formats

CITS uses a variety of ways, wherever possible, to make communications more accessible by:

- Using plain language to make a document easier to read for people with certain learning disabilities.



- Handwriting or typing information back and forth for patrons with hearing impairments.
- Reading information to our visually impaired patrons, as required.
- Providing commonly used information in printed format, on our websites and on our telephone lines.
- Providing assistive listening systems to the patrons at our shows and events.
- Informing patrons who are accessing information on our website and who may be experiencing some difficulties reading the information in its current size to use Control + or Command + to make the information appear in a larger version.

In the future, Centre In The Square will assess the need for the following means of communication:

- American Sign Language (ASL) and related technologies
- Braille

Support Persons

Centre In The Square welcomes all patrons with disabilities, including those who are accompanied by a support person. At no time will a person with a disability be prevented from having access to their support person while at CITS.

A support person is an adult who accompanies a person with a permanent disability to assist with services that are not provided by the employees at the participating venue, such as assistance with eating, administering medication, communication and use of the facilities.

Every patron and accompanying support person attending a performance must have a valid ticket to enter the theatre. Admission prices will be charged for both attendees based on the location of the seating section chosen.

CITS recognizes and accepts the CNIB Card and the Access 2 Card. There are limited complimentary admission tickets for one support person accompanying a patron who has a valid CNIB Card or an Access 2 Card. Please note that these special access seats are allocated on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Patrons may contact the Box Office at (519) 578-1570 or 1-800-265-8977 for more information or to address the specific needs of their situation.

Service Animals

Guide dogs or other service animals, including service animals in training, are allowed to accompany patrons to a performance. If you are planning to attend CITS with a service animal,



please advise the Box Office when you purchase your tickets so that an appropriate seat (aisle or special access) can be assigned to you.

Special effects during performances such as noise and lights may affect your service animal. Please contact the Box Office if you have any concerns regarding specific performances. We are committed to making every effort to ensure the safety of our patrons, addressing special circumstances on an individual basis.

If a service animal is causing a disruption for other patrons, the owner and service animal may be asked to leave the performance.

Please contact our Box Office at (519) 578-1570 or 1-800-265-8977 to make appropriate seating arrangements.

Assistive Devices

Some visitors may require assistive devices to enjoy their experience at Centre In The Square. CITS will allow any and all persons who require or desire the use of an assistive device such as a wheelchair, cane, walker, hearing assistance device or anything else of the sort to use them at all locations on our premises.

Further, we have the following available for use by any patrons who request them:

- Wheelchair (2 available for temporary use)
- Sennheiser Infrared Assistive Listening Systems (in both the pendant and headphone styles)
- Booster seats
- Obus Form back supports
- Opera glasses

Centre In The Square recognizes that visitors with disabilities may bring personal assistive devices and will strive to accommodate any such devices that a patron may require.

Wheelchair Seating

Centre In The Square has wheelchair seating for patrons who use a wheelchair or a walking device. Please inform the Box Office when you purchase your tickets and accessible seating will be made available to you. The seats are limited and are on a first-come, first-serve basis.

During performances, wheelchairs and walking devices are permitted on all levels by way of the passenger elevator located in the lobby spaces. Please note that walkers must remain in the lobby spaces, excluding the right balcony lobby, and are not allowed in the main hall.



For easy and close access to the theatre entrance, patrons using wheelchairs or walking devices are advised to be dropped off at the entrance off of the ring road on the Ellen Street East side of the theatre.

Please contact our Box Office at (519) 578-1570 or 1-800-265-8977 to make appropriate seating arrangements.

First Aid/AED

Centre In The Square has made it a priority to continuously train our staff in basic First Aid and CPR. At any given performance or presentation, there are a number of trained staff members on duty. Should you require any assistance at all during your time at our facility, please approach any staff member and they will assist you. Additionally, CITS has an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) onsite and staff members have been trained in its use.

Communicating Temporary Disruptions in Service

Centre In The Square will provide notice to customers of any planned or unplanned maintenance or disruptions in any of our services or devices which are usually used by persons with disabilities.

This notice will appear by way of:

- an announcement on our website; and/or
- an email communication to applicable patrons; and/or
- a message on our after-hours voicemail; and/or
- printed signs at each public entrance, the Box Office and at each of our bars.

The notice will include the reason for the disruption, the expected duration of the disruption and a description of any alternative services that may be available. This will be done by the Director of Guest & Event Services.

Individual Emergency Evacuation Plans

Centre In The Square will provide an individualized emergency response plan to employees with disabilities and any member of the public who discloses they require accommodation upon request and will ensure that the plan is provided in such a way that the person with the disability can understand its contents and direction.

Additionally, CITS will:

- Obtain consent from employees with individualized plans to disclose emergency response or evacuation plans to the person(s) responsible for assisting the employee in situations where the plan requires the assistance of a co-worker.
- Provide plan-related training to the affected employee and others directly involved in that employee's plan.
- Review the individualized plan:
 - When the employee moves to a different location.
 - When the employee's overall accommodation needs and plan are reviewed.
 - When CITS reviews its general emergency response plan(s).

The Individual Emergency Evacuation Plan will include:

- Specific information about the workplace such as the floor, office number, or work location of the employee.
- The employee's personal emergency contact information.
- Information related to any assistance the employee needs, such as:
 - Whether the employee needs assistance or a volunteer to help them exit the building or work area.
 - How to move the employee if they have a mobility impairment.
- Detailed information regarding equipment and devices the employee uses such as:
 - Any piece(s) of equipment or device(s) the employee uses.
 - The location of the equipment or device(s), if it is stored.
 - How to use the equipment or device(s).

Centre In The Square's emergency evacuation plan(s) as well as individual plans will be reviewed periodically to identify gaps and updated as needed to ensure continued compliance.

Individual Accommodation Plan

Centre In The Square is committed to developing and implementing individual accommodation plans (IAPs) for all employees who require accommodation.

IAPs will be created in consultation with staff to ensure:

- A high level of privacy. The content of the IAP will be limited to only those required to facilitate or supervise the employee.
- Clear communication with the employee of any limitations of the IAP before development.
- Regular review and updates, especially if the employee moves to another location or if CITS amends its procedures.



- IAPs take into account the needs of the employee.

If applicable, employees will be provided with the reason(s) for denial.

Additionally, IAPs shall:

- Outline all accommodations needed by the employee to make their job accessible.
- Identify when accommodations will begin and end, how CITS will provide accessible-format workplace information if needed, how CITS will provide emergency information in an accessible format if needed and when or how often the plan should be reviewed and updated.
- Involve the employee's health care provider(s), the employee's manager and/or union representative and health and safety professional(s), as applicable.
- Be kept strictly confidential. Only pertinent information will be disclosed to those directly involved in the employee's IAP.

The IAP creation process as well as individual plans will be reviewed periodically to identify gaps and updated as needed to ensure continued compliance.

Recruitment Policy

Centre In The Square is committed to inclusive and accessible employment practices that attract and retain individuals with disabilities and is committed to ensuring that its recruitment and assessment processes are fair and accessible.

To this end, CITS will:

- Ensure that those responsible for hiring receive diversity and inclusion training.
- Post an accessibility statement on its online Careers page. As not all applicants apply through our Careers page, this statement will also be included on future job postings to ensure that it is properly communicated to all potential applicants.
- Ensure that information regarding the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities is communicated to employees and the public throughout the recruitment process.
- Notify those applicants selected for interviews and/or further assessments that accommodation is available upon request.
- Consult with the applicants to ensure that the accommodation solution being offered is suitable to their needs.
- Notify successful applicants of CITS' policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.



Any accommodation requests pertaining to the selection/assessment and/or notification process that cannot be met with current alternative formats will be forwarded to the hiring manager who will work with the individual to develop an acceptable alternative.

The recruitment process will be reviewed periodically to identify gaps and updated as needed to ensure continued compliance.

Return to Work Process

Centre In The Square will develop, implement and maintain a return to work (RTW) process for its employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and who require disability-related accommodation to return to work.

The RTW process shall:

- Outline the steps CITS will take to facilitate the return to work of employees who were absent because their disability required them to be away from work.
- Identify when the employee will be returning, what job tasks the employee may need to perform differently after returning and what kinds of accommodations the employee may need.
- Use documented individual accommodation plans as part of the process.
- Involve the employee's health care provider(s), the employee's manager and/or union representative and health and safety professional(s), as applicable.
- Be kept strictly confidential. Only pertinent information will be disclosed to those directly involved in the employee's RTW process.

CITS will ensure RTW plans are properly recorded and retained on file.

The return to work process as well as individual RTW plans will be reviewed periodically to identify gaps and updated as needed to ensure continued compliance.

Performance Management & Career Development

Centre In The Square will ensure its performance management and career development opportunities account for the accessibility needs and plans of employees and that these processes are inclusive and barrier-free.

To this end, CITS will:

- Consider the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans when using its performance management process with respect to employees with disabilities.



- Consider the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities as well as any individual accommodation plans when providing career development and advancement to its employees with disabilities.
- Consider the accessibility needs and accommodation plans of employees who are reassigned to an alternate department or position within CITS as an alternative to a layoff.
- Provide applicable employees with documents, coaching and feedback in the formats that work best for them.
- Evaluate CITS' current performance management, career development/ advancement and re-deployment processes to identify barriers.
- Develop processes to ensure that such functions are completely accessible.

All accommodations will be made in consultation with the employee to determine suitability.

The performance management and career development processes will be reviewed periodically to identify gaps and updated as needed to ensure continued compliance.

Design of Public Spaces

Centre In The Square will meet the Accessibility Standards for the Design of Public Spaces when building or making major modifications to its public spaces, venues and grounds. When building or making major modifications to spaces not governed by the Design of Public Spaces Standards, Centre In The Square will follow current Ontario Building Code (OBC) legislation.

Modifications to Accessibility Policies

No modifications will be made to Centre In The Square's accessibility policies without first considering the impact any changes will have on persons with disabilities. Any modification that is made will maintain the dignity and independence of our patrons with disabilities and any policy found to go against such will be modified or removed. Should any modifications be made to this policy, a notice stating so will be posted on our website and at our Box Office for a duration of fourteen (14) days.

For more information on this Accessibility Policy, please contact:

T: (519) 578-5660

E: Comments@centreinthesquare.com

All feedback will be forwarded to the appropriate personnel, documented, tracked and responded to within ten (10) business days.



Accessible formats of this document are available free upon request.
Please contact the Box Office for the appropriate documentation.

Box Office

T: (519) 578-1570 or 1-800-265-8977

E: Comments@centreinthesquare.com



centreinthesquare.com