



Multi-Year Accessibility Plan – 2023 to 2028

Message from the CEO

The Humane Society of Kitchener Waterloo & Stratford Perth (HSKWSP) is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities. We are committed to treating people with disabilities in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence.

We believe in integration, and we are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner. We will do so by removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and by meeting our accessibility requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

We look forward to continuing to adapt our current practices and facilities. We are pleased to announce our new building (to open Fall 2024) will be fully accessible.

Introduction

This accessibility plan outlines our achievements, strategies, and actions taken to identify, prevent and remove barriers for persons with disabilities between 2023 and 2028. Our plan shows how we will play our role in making Ontario an accessible province for all Ontarians. The plan is reviewed and updated at least once every 5 years.

To date, we have made progress as it relates to serving individuals with disabilities. Specifically, we have advanced how we provide customer service, updated our website to meet accessibility requirements, and introduced accommodation into the recruitment and hiring procedure.

However, we still have work to do including, growing our accommodation program, providing annual accessibility training to customer facing roles, constructing a new accessible building, and accomplishing our strategic priorities related to diversity and inclusion. We are working hard to fulfill our requirements.

Past Achievements to Remove and Prevent Barriers

Customer Service

The HSKWSP is committed to providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities. This means that we will provide goods, services and facilities to people with disabilities with the same high quality and timeliness as others.



In 2022, we published our Customer Service Accessibility Policy (available on our website), which addresses how we serve all customers including people with disabilities. The policy covers multiple areas including assistive devices, communication, service animals, support persons, notice of temporary disruption, training, information and communications, and employment.

Moreover, we gladly welcome comments on the way that we provide goods, services, or facilities to people with disabilities and as such, you will see notices posted in our reception areas and on our website on how customers can provide feedback.

Information and Communications

The HSKWSP is committed to making our information and communications accessible to people with disabilities. To this end, our website was amended in 2021 to meet the internationally-recognized Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA website requirements.

Employment

The HSKWSP is committed to fair and accessible employment practices.

We have been notifying job applicants, volunteers, and new employees that accommodations can be made during recruitment, hiring, and as soon as practicable after beginning their employment.

In 2022, we updated our Employment Accessibility Policy to ensure compliancy with Ontario's accessibility laws.

Training

The HSKWSP is committed to providing training in the requirements of Ontario's accessibility laws and the Ontario Human Rights Code as it applies to people with disabilities.

All employees receive at the time of hire, training related to the AODA Customer Service Standards.

Strategies and Actions

Employment

One of our goals is to grow and expand our existing employment accommodation program to better serve our employees.

As well, when creating new policies, procedures, and practices, we will ensure that they are carefully reviewed in order to prevent barriers to employment.

Training



In addition to the initial AODA Customer Service training provided to new employees, we will implement annual refresher training for customer facing roles, whether that be through our existing training platform, via guest speakers, or delivered in another format.

Design of Public Spaces

The HSKWSP will meet accessibility laws when building or making major changes to public spaces.

As our programs and services continue to grow, more public space is needed. A second building will be constructed by the fall of 2024 which will host our education room, donation centre, and more. This space will be fully accessible.

Other

Within our Strategic Priorities Plan for 2022 to 2024, we outline how we will engage and innovate by leading the creation of diverse, inclusive, accessible and innovative programs and services for people and animals in our communities. Primarily, we will enhance the involvement of specific populations, including people with disabilities, in HSKWSP activities.

We will also enhance sustainability by securing resources to support our activities now and into the future. This includes implementing new methods of attracting, engaging with and retaining staff and volunteers from diverse communities, including those individuals with disabilities.