



EWCS 2024-2029 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Message from the CEO

East Wellington Community Services (EWCS) is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities. We believe in equal opportunity for all; this means all clients will receive their goods and services with the same standards of excellence, regardless of limitations and disabilities. We are committed to treating people with disabilities in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We are committed to removing and preventing barriers to ensure accessibility for all clients, staff, volunteers and stakeholders.

We continuously work towards improving accessibility and investigating new initiatives. We are removing barriers, both physically and mentally. We have adopted best practices to ensure our staff are properly educated. Our agency is committed to making our facility and its services available for all, meeting all the regulations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Introduction

East Wellington Community Services (EWCS) strives to meet the needs of its employees, volunteers and clients with disabilities and is working hard to remove and prevent barriers to accessibility.

EWCS is committed to fulfilling our requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. This accessibility plan outlines the steps we are taking to meet those requirements and to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.

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.

Section 1. Past Achievements to Remove and Prevent Barriers

Customer Service

EWCS 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.

EWCS has delivered training on AODA and the Ontario Human Rights Code to all employees and volunteers.

We gladly welcome comments on how we provide goods, services, or facilities to people with disabilities, and as such, there are many channels to provide feedback including our website, and surveys.

Information and Communications

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

We ensure that all clients have access to appropriate feedback mechanisms and can contact EWCS in various ways (website, phone, email, mail) regarding concerns.

Any planned service disruption is communicated and posted as soon as known and a contact for further information accompanies any notice. Additionally, where available, an alternative for accessing the suspended service will be posted or available.

Employment

EWCS is committed to fair and accessible employment practices. We have been notifying job applicants, volunteers, and new employees that accommodation can be made during recruitment, hiring, and as soon as practicable after beginning their employment.

We have updated our Employment Accessibility Policy to ensure compliance with Ontario's accessibility laws.

Training

EWCS 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.

Transportation

EWCS is committed to providing transportation to eligible residents of East Wellington in either a wheelchair-accessible bus, a passenger van, or by car in the company of one of our friendly and dedicated volunteer drivers.

Section 2. Strategies and Actions

Customer Service

EWCS will continue to provide accessible customer service to people with disabilities with the same high quality and timeliness as others.

Our accessibility policies and procedures will continue to reflect changes or advancements in the legislation, as applicable.

We will publish our Customer Service Accessibility Policy on our website, which addresses how we serve all clients 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.

Information and Communications

EWCS is committed to making our information and communications accessible to people with disabilities.

We will provide individualized workplace emergency response information to staff and volunteers with disabilities where necessary.

We will continue to design digital services with accessibility features, striving for all users to have equal access to information and functionality.

Employment

EWCS is committed to fair and accessible employment practices.

EWCS will, when creating new policies, procedures, and practices, ensure they are carefully reviewed to prevent employment barriers.

EWCS will continue to proactively remove barriers across employment life cycle allowing employees to reach their full potential and will readily provide employees with disabilities alternative formats and accommodations using a process that is efficient and responsive.

Training

EWCS 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 existing EWCS employees will be required to take refresher AODA training on a scheduled basis as part of their annual learning track. This course will be managed and updated periodically by EWCS to reflect any changes or advancements in the AODA.

EWCS will maintain records of training, including dates and number of people trained.

Transportation

EWCS will continue to provide transportation to eligible residents of East Wellington in either a wheelchair-accessible van/bus, a passenger van, or by car in the company of one of our friendly and dedicated volunteer drivers.