

Multi-Year 2023- 2028 Accessibility Plan

Alternative formats of this plan are available upon request. If you require information on the alternative format, please email administration@lcds.on.ca or call the Administration Office at 519-882-0933.

Commitment Statement

As a result of the Ontario Disability Act (ODA, 2001) and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA, 2005), LCDS has developed a multi-year Accessibility Plan. This Accessibility plan outlines the steps we are taking to meet the AODA and ODA requirements. Lambton County Developmental Services (LCDS), its Board of Directors, Staff, and Volunteers are committed to providing quality services that are accessible to all persons. LCDS will use reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, practices, and procedures are consistent with the Accessible Customer Service principles of diversity, dignity, inclusion, independence, integration, and equal opportunity for all. In 2020 LCDS last strategic plan updated our vision to Inclusive Communities~ Innovative Leaders. LCDS recognizes this is a long- term process and is committed to moving towards full accessibility for all.

Introduction

In 1955 a group of parents whose children had developmental disabilities dreamed of a life for their children beyond institutions. They wanted their children to lead a life with choices and opportunities within their community which resulted in LCDS. We provide services to approximately 200 people with developmental disabilities in Lambton County. LCDS has a strong commitment to their community and is governed by a diverse Board of Directors composed of family members and community leaders. The people that participate in the programs/services offered often face barriers to full participation in their community.

Accessibility Goals

Lambton County Developmental Services is dedicated to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility through advocacy work and as available resources allow. LCDS is guided by its vision. We want not only people with developmental disabilities to access their community but all people.

Purpose

The Accessibility Plan is to identify and address accessibility issues in the community including locations owned/leased/operated by LCDS. This plan identifies barriers that LCDS intends to address as well as any new ones brought to the Agency's attention. Completion deadlines may or may not be in place as they are dependent on available resources.

Review and Monitoring Process

LCDS will consult with support locations and those with disabilities to further identify LCDS accessibility issues and update the Multi-Year Plan to meet the accessibility guidelines yearly and as required.

LCDS will report publicly on progress being taken to develop accessibility in the following ways:

- Make publicly available accessibility plans (web and hard copy).
- Submission of required compliance reports to the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario.

The criteria used to assist in identifying the accessibility level of all LCDS buildings and outdoor spaces are noted below. It is critical to note that although we included an increased level of accessibility that will improve the condition of LCDS spaces, it is not possible to make all locations completely accessible to every individual.

The barriers identified include both internal concerns for LCDS and community of people we serve. Each action includes a Current Barrier, Action Plan, and status.

The areas that we reviewed were:

- Design of Public Space (Physical/ Environmental)
- Customer Service Standard
- Information and Communication
- Transportation
- Training
- Employment
- Procurement
- Self-service Kiosks

Completed Past Achievements of Removed and Prevented Barriers

<p>PHYSICAL/ ENVIRONMENTAL (LCDS): accessibility in the organization owned or operated properties.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automated doors throughout agency owned buildings. (Maple Street, Hill St, Ann St, Administration, Olde Post Office). • Driveway re-paving completed around the Administration Building. • Parking lot lighting installed. • Persons supported apartments have had kitchen renovated to include accessible cooktop, dishwasher, sinks and fixtures. • Generator systems installed in various locations. • Washrooms renovated to make accessible for changing needs at Zone St, Brigden, and Hill St. locations.
<p>CUSTOMER SERVICE: language & terminology used, persons supported treated with dignity and respect, public relations, media, orientations, impact on employment, social and recreation.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly Family information sessions are held to update stakeholders on the agency activities and provide guest speakers on relevant topics. • Public training that is accessible for all Safe talk, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). • Public awareness of services that are provided for people with developmental disabilities. • Updating of agency website and promotional materials to include updated terminology • Agency involvement in various fundraising / social engagements in the community- Blood donor clinics, flu shot clinics. • Provide Social-Sexual Relationship, Workplace Specific safety training to persons supported, AODA, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for all employees. • Empowering Employment services provides job coaching and job readiness training for persons supported.
<p>INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION: plain language information, alternate forms of communication, public promotion of access for persons supported, technology assistance.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation and access to computers/ tablets and internet for all agency operated locations for employees and persons supported. • Accessible web-based agency platforms to provide communication and agency/ policies information. • Web site has been reviewed in November 2023 to ensure compliance with Accessibility Standards. • Adapted Group Orientation Training for New Hires.

- Provide individualized LCDS employee email account for direct communication to ensure confidentiality and the ability to modify the format to meet the individual accessibility needs.
- Partner with community partners to ensure people supported have adaptive communication devices is needed.

TRANSPORTATION: are not conducive or limit reliable, affordable transportation to complete and participate in daily activities.

- Purchased a variety of vehicles to suit the needs of persons supported at each location – mini-vans, car, conversion vans, full-size vans, and mini-buses (with or without automated lifts – as required).
- Utilize community transportation resources when possible, such as, Lambton Elderly Outreach, taxi service and community bus transit.
- Vehicle Replacements and maintenance made as funds allow.
- Internal transfers of vehicles to maintain accessibility needs for people supported.

TRAINING: Training provided to assist employees and community members with knowledge to help better assist with person's interactions.

- AODA Customer Service training
- Diversity, Equity Inclusion training
- Mental Health First Aid
- First Aid
- Trauma Informed Care
- Beyond Silence
- Safe Talk
- Human Rights training for people supported
- Respect in the Workplace
- Crisis Prevention Intervention training
- Myer's Brigg's Type Indicator personality tool
- Guest speakers

EMPLOYMENT: Skills and knowledge provided to complete the necessary job requirements.

LCDS is committed to fair and accessible employment practices. Accessibility has been incorporated into all employment practices from job postings, hiring and throughout an employee's career.

The Agency requires Individual Accommodation Plans for employees who have a disability which may include:

- An employee completing a Functional Capacity Assessment Form with their doctor to understand what accommodations are needed.
- Any limitations that may impact job related tasks.
- What accommodation strategies and tools can be put into place.
- Roles and responsibilities of the employee and LCDS.
- The accessible and communication supports the employee needs.

- The timeframe in which the accommodation plan will be reviewed.

An emergency response plan will be developed for any employee that needs assistance to evacuate in an emergency. This will identify in what circumstance the plan needs to be shared with others, with the employees signed consent.

2023-2028 Areas to be Addressed

Completion of Barrier

Physical/ Environmental (LCDS) to be Addressed

LCDS is committed to meet the Ontario Building Code Requirements and the Accessibility Standards for the Design of Public Spaces when building or making major modifications to its public spaces. Agency public spaces include:

- sidewalks, ramps, and curb ramps,
- accessible off-street parking, and service counters and waiting areas.

LCDS is committed to continue to advocate with and for the people we service and other people with disabilities to make our community more accessible whether that is a local general store or restaurant.

<i>Current Barrier</i>	<i>Action Plan</i>	<i>Status</i>
LCDS locations requiring automated door entry/exit buttons	Incorporate this accessibility feature in locations that have identified this need (448 First Ave and King Street)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Has been identified and is on the list for funding replacement in 2023/2024</i>
Increase the entrance to the washroom to allow for increase accessibility	Quote and establishing a timeframe to complete with minimal interruption to the person supported (465/463 First Ave)	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Has been identified and is on the list for funding replacement in 2023/2024</i>
Fit flashing lights to audible smoke or evacuation alarms in the administration building	Install throughout Administration building when funding becomes available. Discuss with the landlords of properties that LCDS does not own and discuss if this is a possibility.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-accessible exterior entry to second floor of the	When funding is available and when completing renovations or changes to	<input type="checkbox"/>

King Street location (Petrolia)	building structure; provide a ramp to allow accessibility	
Non-accessible Interior/exterior entries in Administration Building	When funding is available and completing renovations or changes to building structure; provide a ramp to allow accessibility.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Customer Service Barriers to be Addressed

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

<i>Current Barrier</i>	<i>Action Plan</i>	<i>Status</i>
Emergency Information	Define where to identify the best spot to display any notice of temporary disruptions that include the reason and duration to the public.	<input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing
Committee Diversification	Continue to evaluate LCDS committees' structures to ensure inclusion and diversity of committee members.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Information and Communication Barriers to be Addressed

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

<i>Current Barrier</i>	<i>Action Plan</i>	<i>Status</i>
Achieve compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) Level AA excluding captioning and pre-recording audio descriptions) to ensure the website is accessible for people with disabilities	Contact web design company for upgraded technology resources. Ensuring all new web content conforms to all accessibility requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Waiting for quotes to upgrade the website to compliance levels



Transportation Barriers to be Addressed

LCDS is committed to providing accessible transportation to people supported if not provided by another provider in the community.

Current Barrier	Action Plan	Status
Inconsistent training around vehicle orientation	Create a new virtual vehicle training program for all employees	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employees to complete a virtual training
Raising operational cost for accessible fleet vehicles	Apply for Grants and look for fundraising options. Develop a multi-year plan to address the future transportation needs for people supported. including looking at community options and partnerships	<input type="checkbox"/> Collect and analyse information surrounding fleet vehicles

Training Barriers to be Addressed

Current Barrier	Action Plan	Status
Provide more accessible tables/desks that can support a person with a disability better when attending training.	Quote the cost to have accessible desks in training room.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Employment Practice to be Addressed

LCDS will continually review the following employment processes and policies to identify any barriers to employment for people with disabilities:

- the recruitment, assessment and hiring processes,
- return-to-work policies for employees that have been absent due to a disability,
- the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities are considered when using performance management, career development and job changes, and methods to prevent and remove other accessibility barriers identified

Procurement

It is policy of LCDS that publicly funded expenditures and/or commitments, purchases of goods and services, construction services and information technology are acquired by LCDS through a process that is open, fair, and transparent and that they are acquired in accordance our Procurement policy AF3.300.

Self-Service Kiosks

LCDS has not had a request for a self-service kiosk and has no plans to establish one.

LCDS has identified areas that may be affected or could potentially cause accessibility issues in the future:

- Murray Street location in Corunna could require a ramp installation outside of the home
- Evaluate if Braille signage would make publicly owned buildings more accessible

Resources

Government of Ontario Accessibility Laws:

<http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/en/mcass/programs/accessibility/index.aspx>

Accessibility Works- Accessibility Information for Businesses:

[Discover Ability Network | OCC](#)



Jill Cousins
Board Chair



Nick Salaris
Executive Director

December 11, 2023

LCDS Mission: Empowering people with developmental disabilities.