

# Accessibility Plan Multi-Year Plan Updated as November 23, 2023

Additional formats are available upon request.

Note: This document has been prepared in Arial 14 pt.

The Accessibility Plan is also available on our website.

## **Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities (SCHC)**

Originally founded in 1977, Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities (SCHC) is one of the most established and comprehensive community health organizations in the province. The organization owes its beginnings to 13 community agencies, a core group of community leaders and countless volunteers who identified emerging health and social needs within Scarborough.

After incorporating and acquiring not-for-profit and charitable status, SCHC built on the initial services of our Meals-on-Wheels, home support, transportation and family support programs. We employ over 250 staff, engage over 250 volunteers and operate 40 distinct and integrated services across 10 sites that work together to improve the health of our community. We provide medical assistance through our clinics; are involved in a growing youth program and have a multitude of social support programs including a food bank.

To maintain our status as a client-centered, integrated, engaged, and proactive organization, SCHC has maintained its close ties with our community members. We continuously foster partnerships with initiatives aimed at addressing pressing needs while consistently raising the bar in terms of service excellence. Our unwavering dedication is evident in our tireless efforts to offer programs and opportunities that profoundly impact the health and well-being of the communities we serve.

### **Statement of Commitment**

SCHC' Vision is to be recognized by our clients, communities and partners as leaders in championing holistic health and wellness for the diverse populations of Scarborough. This 'community' includes people with disabilities.

With the introduction of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, SCHC has been examining ways in which we can better serve our population. We are committed to creating a welcoming, barrier-free environment for clients, staff, volunteers and our community. We are also committed to increasing awareness on accessibility issues and providing accessibility supports to those with disabilities.

SCHC will support its community by supporting persons with disabilities: 1) to enter and exit our facilities without encountering barriers, 2) to receive SCHC's services they require without encountering barriers and 3) to work in an inclusive environment without barriers.

The AODA sets-out to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities by providing for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of perceived barriers to accessibility. The AODA has the long-term goal of a barrier-free Ontario for people with disabilities by 2025 through the implementation of accessibility standards for the private and public sectors.

The AODA has identified five accessibility standards which SCHC must comply with related to: 1) Customer Service, 2) Transportation, 3) Information and Communication, 4) Built Environment and 5) Employment.

The AODA also mandates that all health service providers prepare a multi-year accessibility plan. The goal of the plan is to remove existing barriers and prevent new ones. The Plan is to be made public and in accessible format(s) upon request, and SCHC must review and update the accessibility plan every five years..

Scarborough Centre for Health Communities Accessibility Plan summarizes the measures that SCHC has taken in the past, along with the measures the organization plans to take to identify, remove and prevent barriers for persons with disabilities.

## **Review Process**

The Quality and Client Safety Advisory Committee (QCSEC) will review and update the SCHC AODA plan every three years in accordance with the policy review cycle, with the goal to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with both visible and invisible disabilities, including clients, staff, volunteers and community. The Committee will:

- Monitor the implementation and ongoing compliance with the five standards outlined in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.
- Identify, review, prioritize and remove barriers to accessibility.
- Review feedback received internally and externally regarding barriers and respond accordingly.

- Disseminate information to appropriate groups in order to prevent the inclusion of accessibility barriers in remodeled/new construction.
- Raise organizational awareness and education on accessibility issues, barriers and government legislation.
- Develop communications designed to promote staff understanding and sensitivity to the accessibility issues of people with disabilities.
- Review and Update the Accessibility Plan and ensure it is made available to internal and external stakeholders.

## **Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)**

In 2005, the Ontario Government passed a law called the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* to ensure a more accessible province for people with disabilities. The goal of the AODA is for all of Ontario to be fully accessible by 2025 and all public sector organizations, including non-profit organizations, must be in compliance by 2021.

The purpose of the AODA is to develop, implement and enforce standards of accessibility for all Ontarians. The standards will ensure that there are established measures, policies, practices or other requirements for the identification and removal of barriers to accessibility.

Several accessibility standards are contained in one regulation under the AODA, called the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) which was released and became law in July 2011.

### **Five key areas in the IASR have been developed:**

**Customer Service:** Service delivery to the public, business practices and employee training.

**Information and Communication:** Information and communications provided to the client or end-user through print, telephone, electronic devices, and in-person. This includes publications and software applications.

**Employment:** Hiring and retaining employees, including employment practices, policies and processes such as job advertisements and interviewing.

**Transportation:** Reflects a variety of environments, financial capabilities of users/providers and the differing modes of travel including conventional and specialized modes, and on-demand taxi services.

**The Built Environment:** Access to, from and within buildings and outdoor spaces. This also includes counter heights, aisles, door widths, parking, signage, pedestrian access routes and signal systems.

## Definitions

**Accessible** - Accessible means that customer service is provided in a way that is capable of being easily understood or appreciated, that is easy to get at, be reached, or entered. It is equally obtainable to all.

**Disability** - As defined in Section 2 of the *Act*, Disability means:

- 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 impairment, 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;
- A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- A learning disability or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- A mental disorder; and/or
- An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

This definition includes disabilities of different severity, visible as well as non-visible disabilities, and disabilities the effects of which may come and go.

**Barrier** - A barrier is anything that stops a person with a disability from fully participating in society. Barriers are classified by the following types:

physical,  
architectural,  
information or communications,

attitudinal,  
technological and  
policy or practice

Standard	Evidence	Status (Met(compliant)/ In Progress)
<b>General Requirements</b>  IASR Sec. 3 IASR Sec. 4 IASR Sec. 6 IASR Sec. 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policies documented inclusive of IASR and statement of organization commitment</li> <li>• AODA plan in place reviewed and updated every 5 years</li> <li>• All employees, volunteers and students are trained on the IASR and the Ontario Human Rights Code via e-Learning modules, training completion is tracked, refresher training is offered annually</li> </ul>	<b>Met</b>  <b>Met</b>  <b>Met</b>
<b>Customer Service</b>  IASR Sec. 80.46 IASR Sec 80.47 IASR Sec. 80.48 IASR Sec. 80.49 IASR Sec. 80.50 IASR 80.51	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SCHC Accessibility Standards Policy outlines the processes for providing goods, services and/or facilities to persons with disabilities.</li> <li>• Process in place for clients to call in advance for SCHC services.</li> <li>• SCHC is committed to serving persons with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, to use, or to benefit from our services. Assisted devices are available when required. SCHC provides training on how to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices.</li> <li>• SCHC is committed to welcoming persons with disabilities and their service animals at our multiple locations that are open to the public and other third parties, and welcomes the person to keep the service animal with them.</li> <li>• Any person with a disability accompanied by a support person is welcome to SCHC locations with his or her support person.</li> </ul>	<b>Met</b>  <b>Met</b>  <b>Met</b>  <b>Met</b>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SCHC will provide the public with notice of service disruption as soon as possible after becoming aware of the disruption. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, how long it may last, and what other facilities or services are available.</li> <li>• All organization members including employees, volunteers and students are trained on accessible customer service and how to interact with people with various disabilities, via e-Learning modules, training completion is tracked, refresher training is offered annually or when changes are made to the training material.</li> <li>• Organization members are trained on equipment and devices available on SCHC premises or otherwise provided by SCHC that may help with the provision of goods, services or facilities to a person with a disability.</li> <li>• Process in place and made available to the public for receiving and responding to client feedback via several accessible vehicles including online, telephone, in-person, writing and comment cards.</li> <li>• Employee feedback process in place via several accessible vehicles, including employee engagement survey, staff meetings, incident reporting system, and directly to manager or HR.</li> <li>• Documents describing SCHC policies, practices, and procedures are provided in accessible format upon request. The SCHC Accessibility Standards for Customer Service policy is posted on the intranet and public access website.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Met</b></p> <p><b>Met</b></p> <p><b>Met</b></p> <p><b>Met</b></p> <p><b>Met</b></p> <p><b>Met</b></p>
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<p><b>Employment</b></p> <p>IASR Sec. 22 - 32</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicants are advised via job postings and when selected for an interview that SCHC is compliant with AODA standards and that accommodations are available upon request at each stage of the recruitment and selection process.</li> <li>• Employment offer letters advise employees to advise Human Resources should they require accommodation.</li> <li>• The Recruitment Policy, the Duty to Accommodate Policy, The Return to Work Policy and the Accessibility Standards Policy are posted on the intranet site and advise employees that SCHC is compliant with AODA standards and accommodations are available upon request. These policies are provided to new employees during the new hire e-learning modules.</li> <li>• Communication supports including providing documents, policies and other information in accessible format are available upon request and documented in accommodation plans where applicable.</li> <li>• The Duty to Accommodate Policy posted on the intranet site outlines the disability management program that supports the accommodation needs of employees with temporary and permanent disabilities, including the process to develop written accommodation plans, as well as individualized emergency response plans where required.</li> <li>• Accommodation and modified work plans include a section for employees to self-identify when they have accessibility needs during an emergency situation.</li> <li>• The Return to Work policy outlines the process for employees returning to work</li> </ul>	<p><b>Met</b></p> <p><b>Met</b></p> <p><b>Met</b></p> <p><b>Met</b></p> <p><b>Met</b></p> <p><b>Met</b></p> <p><b>Met</b></p> <p><b>Met</b></p>
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	<p>after an injury, accident or illness to help transition them back to work into their previous or new position.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Resources informs managers of any accommodation needs identified by their employees. These needs are taken into account with respect to employee evaluation, performance management, career advancement opportunities and redeployment if applicable.</li> <li>• Employees applying to internal job opportunities are advised via the internal job posting that accommodations are available required.</li> <li>• The new employee enrollment form contains a pre-placement questionnaire for new employees to identify to Human Resources if they have accessibility needs.</li> <li>• The Duty to Accommodate Policy outlines the disability management program that supports employees with temporary or permanent accommodation needs.</li> <li>• Exit plans are put in place for all employees who have permanent disabilities and who have self-identified as having a potential need for assistance in the event of an emergency.</li> <li>• Permanent and temporary accommodation and modified work plans include a section which identifies when an employee has accessibility needs during an emergency situation.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Met</b></p> <p><b>Met</b></p> <p><b>Met</b></p> <p><b>Met</b></p> <p><b>Met</b></p> <p><b>Met</b></p>
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<p><b>Information and Communication</b></p> <p>IASR Sec. 9, 11-14</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SCHC internet website meets both WCAG 2.0 A and AA Standards.</li> <li>• SCHC will make its emergency and public safety information available in an accessible format upon request.</li> <li>• SCHC provides documents, materials or information in accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities upon request. If deemed unconvertible, SCHC will provide the person requesting the information or communication with an explanation as to why the information is unconvertible.</li> <li>• Process in place and made available to the public for receiving and responding to client feedback via several accessible vehicles including online, telephone, in-person, writing and comment cards.</li> <li>• SCHC provides information and communications in accessible format upon request. The SCHC Accessibility Standards for Customer Service policy is posted on the intranet and public access website.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Met</b></p> <p><b>Met</b></p> <p><b>Met</b></p> <p><b>Met</b></p> <p><b>Met</b></p>
<p><b>Transportation</b></p> <p>IASR Part IV</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clients with a disability can use various modes of transportation, i.e. Wheel Trans and SCHC owned vehicles, which support accommodation needs of clients.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Met</b></p>

<p><b>Built Environment</b></p> <p>IASR Part IV</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SCHC ensures legislated accessibility requirements are incorporated into new construction and remodeling at SCHC, including when entering into a contract for new construction or making changes to existing infrastructure features.</li> <li>• SCHC adheres to the Building Code.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Met</b></p>
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## CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD

### Our Commitment to Service:

We, the staff of SCHC, in compliance with the spirit, intent and provisions of the Ontario Human Rights Code, are committed to providing the highest quality customer service.

This statement of commitment reflects our best efforts to provide excellent customer service, within the limits of our resources by:

- Being sensitive, aware and knowledgeable about the realities of prejudice and discrimination;
- Recognizing and accommodating the diverse needs of our many client groups;
- Providing accessible service, information and materials; and
- Acting on issues brought to SCHC's attention as quickly as possible while maintaining the high quality of our work.

This policy applies to SCHC staff members, volunteers, board members, independent contractors and students who deal with the public.

SCHC makes reasonable efforts to ensure that its policies, procedures, and practices, pertaining to the provision of goods and services to the public and other third parties, align with the following guiding principles, as set out in Ontario Regulation 429/07:

1. The provision of the goods or services is in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
2. Integration of the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities and others unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporarily or on a

permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods or services.

3. Giving persons with disabilities an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, to use, and to benefit from the goods or services.

### **Communications:**

SCHC supports an accessible Ontario, promoting the independence and integration of those with disabilities. When communicating with a person with a disability, individuals working on behalf of SCHC, do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability and makes reasonable efforts to have the person with a disability understand both the content and intent of its communications. We train staff how to communicate with people with various types of disabilities.

### **Use of Assistive Devices:**

SCHC is committed to serving persons with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, to use, or to benefit from our services. SCHC provides training on how to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices.

Clients are encouraged to contact SCHC (or staff or manager involved) as early as possible if any special arrangements are required.

### **Use of Service Animals:**

SCHC is committed to welcoming persons with disabilities and their service animals at our multiple locations that are open to the public and other third parties, and welcomes the person to keep the service animal with them. SCHC provides training on how to interact with persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.

### **Use of Support Persons:**

SCHC is committed to welcoming people with disabilities accompanied by a support person. Any person with a disability accompanied by a support person is welcome to SCHC locations with his or her support person.

On occasion, and if necessary, persons with disabilities may require the assistance of a support person, in order to protect their health and safety, or the safety of others. For health and safety reasons, SCHC may require a support person to accompany a person with a disability if after consulting with the person with a disability it is determined that a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises, and there is no other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability and the health or safety of others on the premises.

**Notice of Temporary Disruptions in Services and Facilities:**

If there is a temporary disruption in SCHC location facilities or services, which are utilized by persons with disabilities, completely or in part, SCHC will provide the public with notice of the disruption as soon as possible after becoming aware of the disruption. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, how long it may last, and what other facilities or services are available.

**Availability of the Accessible Customer Service Documents:**

SCHC will make available any additional documents describing its policies, practices, and procedures as required by Ontario Regulation 429/07 and, upon request, gives a copy of the documents to any person.

In addition, the SCHC Accessibility Standards for Customer Service policy will be posted and available on our intranet and public access website.

Further, SCHC makes reasonable efforts to inform persons to whom it provides services that the documents required under Ontario Regulation 429/07 are available upon request. SCHC gives the person the documents, or the information contained in the documents, described above, in a format that takes into account the person's disability.

**Feedback Process:**

SCHC strives to meet and surpass customer expectations while services customers with disabilities. Comments on our services regarding how well those expectations are being met are appreciated.

**Feedback may be made in writing or by telephone to:**

Scarborough Centre for Healthy Communities  
Chief Executive Officer  
629 Markham Road, Unit 2  
Scarborough, ON M1H 2A4  
Telephone: 416-847-4091