

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2023/2024

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Accessibility Plan is to ensure that the accessibility needs and challenges of program participants, personnel and other stakeholders are identified, reviewed, and addressed to the extent possible by the organization. The Accessibility Plan will guide the improvement of access to services to:

- Enhance the quality of the contact with Island Community Services for program participants
- Remove barriers to access for any and all people seeking service from Island Community Services
- Implement non-discriminatory employment practices
- Meet legal and regulatory requirements
- Meet the expectations of funders and stakeholders in the area of accessibility

COMPONENTS

Accessibility means that Salt Spring Island Community Services programs, services and employment opportunities are provided on an equal basis to persons who meet program eligibility and job requirements. "Equal" basis refers to the elimination or reduction of barriers that otherwise prevent or reduce a person's participation in a program or service. This plan identifies and addresses seven barriers:

1. **Architecture.** The structural components that impede or prevent independent entry into and movement about a building including accessing all public areas such as washrooms and areas of refuge. Examples of barriers are stairs, narrow doorways or hallways, lack of appropriate signage etc.

2. **Environment.** The many components and aspects of an environment that perform a function (e.g. light switches, thermostats, equipment and technology) or that adversely affect a person (e.g. fluorescent lights flickering that precipitate seizures, perfumes that trigger allergic reactions, lack of sound proofing in counselling rooms, décor that may impact comfort levels).
3. **Attitudes.** The way program participants are viewed and treated. It is reflected in the language and terminology used, the level of involvement people have with Island Community Services, our opinions of our program participants' abilities and worth etc.
4. **Finances.** Working towards ensuring that adequate funding is available for programs and services. This would include accurate budgeting, lobbying where appropriate and instituting fund raising as needed.
5. **Employment.** Island Community Services recruitment practices provide equal opportunity to applicants. This means that recruiting is based on skills, experience and qualifications and that reasonable accommodation is made to individuals having special needs.
6. **Communication.** The ways and means by which information is exchanged. This includes the written material used (e.g. brochures) the availability of communication devices (e.g. TDD, TTY) or the web site. Language and format are considerations, as well.
7. **Technology.** The ways by which technology is used to enhance or sometimes limit the degree to which individuals may connect with services. This may include access to technology and ability to use technology.
8. **Transportation.** A person's ability to get to and from all work sites and service locations in order for them to participate in the full range of services and other activities offered.
9. **Community Integration (Services for people with Support Needs).** Any barrier which may limit an individual in fully participating in their community.

In order to prepare for this report the action plan from 2020/2021 was reviewed, current issues identified and a plan prepared to address existing needs. The information sources for this report are:

- Health & Safety Committee site inspections
- Community Stakeholder survey
- Employee Satisfaction survey
- Suggestions and Complaints
- Staff meetings and other staff input
- Requests for accommodation from prior years

2022-23 REQUESTS FOR ACCOMMODATION

There were no formal requests for accommodation during the year. A number of our programs deal with client groups with various and unpredictable needs. The program is, by necessity, highly client-centered, so accommodations at some level are a constant. This is most common in emergency shelter and food programs. We have also recognized that as we re-shape our CYSN (child and youth with special needs) to offer more dynamic and responsive services that requests from families for accommodations may emerge.

REVIEW OF 2022-23 PRIORITIES

Program Area: Early Childhood		
Barrier	Action Plan	Status
Architecture	Replace fence at Family Place, create welcoming play area	Done
Environment	Establish welcoming food distribution area	Done
Attitudes	Work with Early Years Table to increase profile of parent support as part of early childhood service	Ongoing
Finances	More intentional use of travel and food vouchers	in review
Employment	None	None
Communication	Promote concept of Early	On hold

	Years network for SGI region	
Transportation	Parent-led social media presence for Family Place programs	Ongoing
	Evaluate ride share program	In review

Program Area: Child and Youth		
Barrier	Action Plan	Status
Architecture	Renovation-add elevator	Done
Environment	establish safe and comfortable lounge area for older youth at Core Inn	On hold
Attitudes	Reduce stigma related to suicide. Participate in MH awareness at GISS	Done
Finances	Clinician to focus on younger children	Done
Employment	Develop work opportunities for youth at Core Inn	On hold
Communication	Promote "Foundry"-style of service at Core Inn	in process
Transportation	Strengthen e health remote service delivery (tech and training)	Done

Program Area: Housing First and Outreach		
Barrier	Action Plan	Status
Architecture	Expand shelter capacity	Done
Environment	Establish safe and confidential space for Housing First workers	Done
Attitudes	Build strength-based and capacity building attitude among staff	Ongoing
Finances	Establish guidelines for Housing First financial supports	Done
Employment	Train peer support people for outreach	Done, ongoing

Communication	Promote positive perspective on shelter as a first step in a recovery process	Ongoing
Transportation	explore connection with SSI Literacy regarding computer literacy supports	Done
	Mobile meal delivery and outreach	In process

Program Area: People with Support Needs		
Barrier	Action Plan	Status
Architecture	Renovate space-add elevator	Done
Environment	Improve kitchen space to be more accessible to participants	On hold
Attitudes	Increase capacity for staff team to respond to change in person-centered ways	Ongoing
Finances	None	None
Employment	Increase vocational development including work placements in food programs	Done
Communication	Promote participants community involvement and value to the community	Done
Transportation	Purchase new wheelchair van	Done

Program Area: Community Housing		
Barrier	Action Plan	Status
Architecture	SSI Commons development	n/a
Environment	Improve common space at Lautman	Done
Attitudes	Engage in dialogue with neighbors re: disruptive behaviors in Island	Ongoing

	Community Services housing	
Finances	Add community fridges to housing sites	Done
Employment	Tenant involvement in basic tasks (odd jobs)	Done
Communication	Community education regarding the range of community housing needs, and reduce stigma of affordable housing	Done
Transportation	Streamline rent collection and maintenance requests using technology	Done
	Work with CRD on Ganges Trail	Done

Program Area: Food Security		
Barrier	Action Plan	Status
Architecture	Move Harvest Kitchen to Fulford Hall	Done
Environment	Establish welcoming outdoor public area at Fulford hall	In process
Attitudes	Promote positive attitude towards food reclaim	in process
Finances	Expand coupon program for low income individuals	Done
Employment	Strengthen connection between Harvest Food Programs and Successworks	Ongoing
Communication	Plan fundraiser and PR event At Fulford Hall	n/a
Transportation	On line food bank ordering	Done
	Secure all weather vehicle for meal delivery	Done

2023-24 PRIORITIES

Program Area: Early Childhood		
Barrier	Action Plan	Person Responsible
Architecture	Improve outdoor play spaces	Maintenance
Environment	Make clothing exchange more user friendly	Hannah
Attitudes	Move from cultural competence to humility	Kyla
Finances	Secure funding for additional free drop in hours and lunch program	Rob
Employment	None at this time	n/a
Communication	Support parents instagram	Hannah
Technology	None at this time	n/a
Transportation	Review gas cards and rideshare	Hannah

Program Area: Child and Youth		
Barrier	Action Plan	Person Responsible
Architecture	None at this time	n/a
Environment	Improve safety and security for building and property	Kyla, work teams
Attitudes	Move from cultural competence to humility	CY Team
Finances	Develop free and accessible youth drop in health clinic	Kyla
Employment	Youth kitchen staff	Martin
Communication	Increase social media	Nikky
Technology	Youth led tech projects	Nikky
Transportation	None at this time	n/a

Program Area: Housing First and Outreach		
Barrier	Action Plan	Person Responsible
Architecture	Establish Ganges site	Rob
Environment	None at this time	N?a
Attitudes	Move from cultural competence to humility	Annika

Finances	Low cost accessible dental services	Rob, Deanna
Employment	Peer support positions, build Successworks Voc Dev	Deanna
Communication	None at this time	n/a
Technology	Computer support through SS Literacy	Deanna
Transportation	Plan for inter-island connections	Deanna

Program Area: People With Support Needs		
Barrier	Action Plan	Person Responsible
Architecture	Improve outdoor wheelchair access	Maintenance
Environment	Increase kitchen use at day program	Rosalie
Attitudes	Move from cultural competence to humility	Friends team
Finances	None at this time	n/a
Employment	Explore connections with successworks	Rosalie, Jamie
Communication	Improve information for families	Rosalie, Annika
Technology	None at this time	n/a
Transportation	Staff Class 4 licenses	Annika
Community Inclusion	Increase outings to community events	Rosalie, all staff

Program Area: Community Housing		
Barrier	Action Plan	Person Responsible
Architecture	Murakami heat exchange/airflow	Michael
Environment	SS Commons landscaping	Michael
Attitudes	Move from cultural competence to humility	Community Housing team
Finances	Negotiate use of BC Housing Rent Sups for ICS sites	Deanna
Employment	Tenant involvement for some tasks	Michael
Communication	None at this time	n/a

Technology	Streamline tenant requests	Michael
Transportation	Replace care share vehicle	Rob W

Program Area: Food Security		
Barrier	Action Plan	Person Responsible
Architecture	Explore secondary kitchen space	Jamie, Brody
Environment	Greenhouses to expand growing season	Jamie
Attitudes	Move from cultural competence to humility, improve vegetarian offerings	Harvest team
Finances	Increase market coupons	Jamie, Rob G
Employment	Successworks work experience	Jamie, Deanna
Communication	Promote market coupon program to attract donors	Rob W
Technology	Improve on line meal ordering	Jamie
Transportation	Increase delivery efficiency	Jamie and team