

SIFTON PROPERTIES LIMITED ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In June 2005, the Ontario Government passed a new law called the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). The Act provides for the development, implementation and enforcement of accessibility standards with a vision of a fully accessible Ontario by 2025.

The Senior Management Committee in reviewing the requirements of the Act took actions to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities, to people who live in, work in or visit the Sifton sites. Areas were assessed and identified where we need to implement or establish new initiatives to ensure we meet the needs of our diverse population.

The Senior Management Committee membership is comprised of dedicated staff, managers and ad hoc consultants, and has involved numerous staff members throughout the organization. Our compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 was reviewed in the following five areas: customer service, transportation, information and communications, built environment and employment.

The Committee has taken into account the customer service regulations and has also given consideration for the future standards currently in development.

All considerations for preventing barriers have been included as they are established in any of our new buildings to ensure early compliance. All of our existing buildings have been audited for equipment and capital needs to remove and prevent barriers as we move forward in creating a barrier-free environment.

We are committed to providing services that are accessible to all. The Plan will be revised regularly and begins with compliance to the customer service standards which also have a direct relation to a number of the other accessibility standards allowing Sifton to plan and implement barrier-free services.

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PURPOSE

To identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities who live, work in or use our sites and services including all residents, their families, staff, volunteers, and members of our communities.

OBJECTIVES

- Describe the process by which Sifton will identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.
- Review efforts at the individual sites to prevent and remove barriers for people with disabilities over the years.
- Describe measures that Sifton and the sites will take in the coming years to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.
- Describe how Sifton and the sites will make this accessibility plan available to the public.
- Sifton Properties Limited will endeavor to remove barriers to people with disabilities within the confines of available human and financial resources.

DESCRIPTION OF SIFTON PROPERTIES LIMITED, RETIREMENT LIVING

Sifton Properties Limited is a Canadian-owned private company. Using our experience and reputation as a premium quality home builder, we have diversified into commercial construction and leasing, residential rental accommodation and retirement accommodation. We operate a Long Term Care Home, and Retirement Residences as part of our portfolio. We provide accommodation, care and services to seniors in one long term care home totaling 86 beds and 4 retirement residences offering 606 suites and villas in London, Waterloo, and Mississauga.

An experienced group of managers provides expertise in all aspects of operations including construction, property management, administration, nursing, food services, environmental services (laundry, housekeeping, and maintenance), accounting, recreation, marketing, information technology and human resources.

Our new development initiatives are centered in the development and construction of retirement residences in Southwestern Ontario. Management and acquisition interest for suitable

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retirement holdings is another diversification when determined to be a suitable fit within our existing portfolio.

THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Senior Management Committee was created to:

- Review and list policies, programs, practices and services that cause or may cause barriers to people with disabilities;
- Identify barriers that will be removed or prevented in the coming years;
- Describe how these barriers will be removed or prevented in the coming years;
- Prepare a plan on these activities, ensure all sites make the plan site specific in areas they have identified;
- Ensure plans are available to the public;
- Provide support and guidelines to the sites for education, training, identification of barriers and audit tools;
- Develop policies and procedures to be used in all the homes to support an accessible environment; and
- Review, revise and change the accessibility plan as required in the coming years.

The Committee has representation and consultation in all areas of operation, new developments, and corporate office.

SIFTON PROPERTIES LIMITED COMMITMENT TO ACCESSIBILITY PLANNING

The senior management is committed to:

- The continual improvement of access to our properties, policies, programs, practices and services for customers, , staff, volunteers, and members of our communities;
- The participation of people with disabilities in the development and review of our accessibility plan annually;
- Ensuring our policies and practices are consistent with the principles of accessibility; and
- The continued support of the Senior Management Committee.

The President has authorized the preparation of an accessibility plan that will enable the Company to meet these commitments. The following have and will be considered/ consulted in the process of barrier identification/ removal initiatives:

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- Latest building code requirements
- Tenant, customer, resident, staff, and visitor feedback
- Site audits identifying existing barriers
- Consultations with representatives from the disabilities community to ensure design solutions and programs are sensitive to their needs as needed
- A philosophy that removes or reduces accessibility barriers impact of architectural and building system elements on accessibility
- Resources and information provided from AccessON.

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN INITIATIVES

The table below identifies the standard the action addresses as defined under the new Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. The plan includes common areas to address in most sites but each site will revise their plan to include all areas they identify in their on site audits.

STANDARDS AND DEFINITIONS:

Customer Service: Refers to delivering service to the public and could include business practices and employee training.

Built Environment: Refers to access to, from and within buildings, and outdoor spaces, and could include heights, aisle/doors widths, parking, and signs as well as pedestrian access routes and signage.

Employment: Refers to hiring and retraining employees, and could include employment practices, policies and procedures.

Information and Communications: Refers to but is not limited to, information and communication provided to the customer or user through print, telephone, electronically, and in person.

Transportation: Refers to the modes of passenger transportation within provincial and municipal jurisdiction.

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Accessibility Plan Initiatives – Ongoing

Action	Description	Expected Outcome	“Standard”
Educate staff and volunteers regarding the needs of individuals with a disability and the assistive devices/ resources available.	Include training in the customer service module and Employee/ Volunteer Hand Books.	Staff/ volunteers are more aware of the needs of the disability community and resources/tools available	Customer Service Information and Communication
Increase awareness with staff regarding how to create a barrier free environment	A building audit was developed to have all sites identify their barriers and start to develop plans to address	Site audits completed AODA and Customer Service Orientation program implemented	All standards
Provide additional education on hire for staff and volunteers to increase understanding serving individuals with disability	Develop an orientation presentation to be viewed on hire using AccessON		Customer Service
Review existing policies and identify needed for development	Reviewed existing manuals for any requirements for each accessibility element	Amendments to be made as needed through recognized process.	All standards
Assess recruiting and selection, return to work accommodation and other human resources policies and practices	Implement changes and enhancement to policies to clarify supports available and determine alternative formats for communication	The employer will be better able to clarify and confirm supports available for disabled staff	Employment

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Action	Description	Expected Outcome	“Standard”
Make the Sifton website more accessible	Research what the public sector has done and discuss with IT options to implement Redesign as needed the web site with features to assist the disabled community, include resources, screen design, translation, or audio casts	Consult with community support agencies such as CNIB and review for comment and suggestions; investigate and conform to international website standards	Information and Communication Customer Service
Create access to interpretation services in the sites to improve communication	List staff, family, volunteer interpreters. Language line phones can be available for access to on the phone interpreters Contact the Canadian Hearing Society to arrange for ASL interpreter when needed.	Each site to access and implement	Customer Service Information and Communication
Create more options and more direct access to interpretation services to improve communication for our customers.	Develop a list of staff volunteer interpreters in each site. Sites can contact the Canadian hearing Society to arrange for an ASL interpreter when needed and review TTY phones and products. Other resources may be available through our suppliers	Staff will be better able to respond to the interpretation needs of customers, tenant, residents/families and more effectively communicate.	Information and Communications Customer Service
More staff education to ensure that staff are aware of how to provide service and care to people with disabilities.	Forums are featured throughout the year to educate staff on a variety of topics. The industry related associations have provided key	Staff will gain further knowledge into respectfully and appropriately providing care and service to individuals with	Customer Service

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Action	Description	Expected Outcome	“Standard”
	<p>information and resources for staff to access.</p> <p>The Canadian Hearing Society can meet with staff to outline the process for ASL interpreters and the needs of the deaf community.</p>	<p>disabilities.</p>	
<p>Policies and procedures need to be reviewed to ensure that they are inclusive.</p>	<p>Regular manual review continues at all sites to ensure that related policies are inclusive.</p>	<p>Amendments as they are developed will ensure all sites implement best practices.</p>	<p>Employment Customer Service</p>
<p>Staff/volunteers need a forum to ask questions and address concerns pertaining to people with disabilities.</p>	<p>All sites will solicit feedback from staff / volunteers on addressing concerns and answering questions, this will be further enhanced by the Accessibility Audit and education plans at each site.</p>	<p>Continued improvements to all processes by receiving feedback and developing actionable processes.</p>	<p>All standards</p>
<p>All new buildings will meet accessibility standards, voice, lighting textures, signage needs etc. to be pursued if required.</p>	<p>Each site to complete physical audit to identify areas that can be improved.</p>	<p>Sites will work through capital budgets and process changes to implement improvements identified.</p>	<p>Customer Service Built Environment</p>
<p>Elevators have adequate lighting and buttons that are voice activated.</p>	<p>Improvements will be made to existing elevators as they are rebuilt through capital.</p>		<p>Built Environment</p>
<p>All sites will audit accessibility needs and review in capital planning.</p>	<p>Sites to review all areas of the environment and determine needs.</p>	<p>Every site will review their audits and determine Action plans for</p>	

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Action	Description	Expected Outcome	“Standard”
		implementing update and change plan as needed.	
Customers with disabilities including speech, language and learning may have trouble communicating/ understanding information and reading written documentation.	Through education, encourage staff to utilize a variety of strategies for effective communication. Review current methods of communication and establish additional methods where possible. Each site will review policies resources and use organizations to assist.	Communication will continue to be improved.	Information and Communications Customer Service
Every site will review the physical audit to determine any improvements to reduce barriers for location	Wayfinding and signage will be enhanced if identified and capital resources will be considered.	Staff will be educated on communicating building access changes to people with disabilities.	Customer Service Built Environment Employment
Ongoing education to ensure that everyone is aware of how to effectively interact with people with disabilities and ensure a barrier-free environment.	Learning tools including on line access for all staff to complete yearly to ensure education needs are met.	Staff will be more aware of how to provide accessible care that is free of barriers to people with disabilities.	Customer Service Employment
The disability community supports to be further involved in any initiatives to improve care and services.	Individuals from the disability community will be invited to speak at key times/employee functions throughout the year at the sites. The Senior Leadership Committee has and will continue to consult with community resources	Best practices will be developed and implemented with consultation from the groups with the expertise in specific disabilities.	Customer Service All standards

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Action	Description	Expected Outcome	“Standard”
	and groups to ensure we continue to improve services.		
Solicit feedback and monitor improvements in reducing barriers.	Individuals from the disability community will be asked to provide feedback on how well we are meeting their needs.	Review all feedback and as possible include in site plans.	All standards

As part of the implementation of the barrier-free initiatives identified all sites will develop a plan to assist in educating staff, customers, and volunteers which may include:

- In-person meetings
- Diversity internet sites
- Hard copy resources at key locations
- Orientation process
- Presentation to family /residents, nursing care teams
- Department safety meetings
- OH& S Committee

REVIEW AND MONITOR PROGRESS

The accessibility plan will be reviewed annually by the OH&S Committee and Senior Committee to review progress. Ad hoc meetings will be arranged on an as needed basis and all sites will submit theirs at least annually.

COMMUNICATION OF THE PLAN

Sites will provide feedback from Accessibility Audit internal findings and any customer surveys and audits.

Every site will be provided a copy of the corporate plan and will expand upon it to include their site specific initiatives with their task force.

An item for Accessibility updates has been added to the Regional Agenda for the Senior Management Team to provide progress reports at least annually.