

Definitions:

Accessible Format may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, Braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

Accommodation means special arrangements made or assistance provided so that persons with disabilities can participate in the experiences available to persons without disabilities. Accommodation will vary depending on the person's unique needs.

Barrier means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communication barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

Conversion Ready means an electronic or digital format that facilitates conversion into an accessible format. Information may not be convertible if it is not technically feasible to convert it and/or the technology required to convert is not available.

Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP) means an individualized, collaborative plan of action, based on an assessment of that individual's functional limitations aimed at eliminating barriers to employment.

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2021-2023)

Section “A”

The government of Ontario passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities act (AODA) in 2005. This Act requires that Ontario be an accessible province by 2025. The AODA set out specific standards in five areas. They include:

Customer Service: Providing good customer service; understanding that people with disabilities may have different needs.

Transportation: Making it easier for people with disabilities to get where they need to go.

Information and communications: Ensuring people with disabilities are able to access more of the information we all depend on.

Employment: Expanding Ontario’s labour pool and welcoming people with disabilities into additional workplaces.

Design of Public Spaces: Removing barriers in public spaces and buildings making it easier for all Ontarians including people with disabilities, to access places where they work, travel, shop and play.

The accessibility standard for customer service (Regulation 429/07) came into force in 2008. The information and communications, employment and transportation standards have now been enacted as Ontario Regulation 191/11 – The Integrated Accessibility Standards.

The standard for the design of public spaces followed in 2013.

CMHA, Fort Frances Branch introduced its first accessibility plan in 2013 in compliance with the Ontario with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2001.

This multi-year accessibility plan builds on our previous plan (2017-2021) in creating an accessible environment, highlights our accomplishments to date and outlines the next steps in our efforts to identify and remove barriers for people with disabilities.

CEO Message:

The Accessibility for Ontarians Disability Act (AODA) is ground breaking legislation with an ultimate goal of making the province of Ontario accessible to all by the year 2025. The Act provides clear standards and time frames to address accessibility in areas that most impact the daily lives of people with disabilities.

CMHAFF applauds the intent and breadth of this legislation. As an organization that provides service to a range of disabilities, and particularly “invisible” disabilities, we are sensitive to the barriers faced by individuals living in the community and those working to integrate in the community.

CMHAFF is committed to the reduction of barriers and improving accessibility related to all areas of the legislation affecting this organization on an ongoing basis. This includes customer service, information and communication, employment and the physical and psychological environment. We are proud of the

barriers we have addressed to date and fully realize the need to recognize and address barriers to accessibility within the Association and with our partners. CMHAFF will seriously consider accessibility and work to embed additional access in all areas of our work.

Section C:

Commitment to Accessibility

CMHAFF provides diverse mental health and addiction programs throughout the Kenora and Rainy River Districts. Staff are located and provide service in six communities through the two districts. Although some programs are provided in office and in groups, most are provided in an outreach model of care; most often provided in the individuals home. This may also include LTC and other institutional accommodations. CMHAFF is currently funded for approximately 60 employees and has an annual operating budget of approximately \$5,900,000.

CMHAFF Mission Vision and Values, along with policies, procedures and frameworks provide the direction for programs and services and support the aim to reduce barriers for persons with disabilities.

CMHAFF does not have a formal Accessibility Steering Committee. This is instead everyone's responsibility and is embedded in all programs, services and in client/public feedback mechanisms. Accessibility services/suggestions and feedback is identified from the front line to the Leads and Management groups for resolution/action and reported to the Board for compliance. Most importantly, client and family feedback is obtained through CMHAFF peer support (lived experience) program participants. It is the responsibility of the Management Team to ensure accessibility remains constant and is actioned as appropriate.

Customer Service Achievement

- Compliant with Customer Service Standard.
- All employees trained at orientation and online training annually thereafter.
- Completed first psychiatric service animal accommodation, corresponding IAP, and required reviews.
- Updated all policies – including accommodation, Accessibility Employment, Return to work, Procurement.
- Updated Compliments and Concerns to better reflect access.
- AODA on line customer service training as provided on orientation and refresher training annually. Training is assigned and tracked following completion.
- Provided staff and client training to expanded service delivery option including virtual options.

Information and Communication

CMHAFF has implemented a variety of processes to gather input from individuals supported, employees, peer support members and partner organizations. These include service and session evaluation (OPOC),

specific programs, virtual feedback, feedback included in Client Handbook and suggestions/recommendation accepted at any site. Support is available if assistance is required. Website was evaluated, developed to improve accessibility and ensure compliance.

Employment

CMHAFF ensures all interested candidates for employment are aware of the Association’s willingness to accommodate applicants with disabilities throughout the recruitment process including a declaration on the CMHAFF website, on each job posting, as an active offer of accommodation as part of the interview process and is reaffirmed during the offer process. Employees of CMHAFF are made aware through policy that the association will provide individualized workplace emergency response information for employees with disabilities, as necessary. Employees at all levels, are aware that CMHAFF has a process to identify and accommodate employee needs including an individualized accommodation plan and individual emergency response plan where required.

2021-2023 Multi-Year Accessibility Goals

Goal	Program	Site
Procurement of gender neutral & culturally safe signage that is welcoming & reflective of diversity of client’s, families and community members that we serve	All CMHAFF Programs	All CMHAFF Branch Sites
Procurement of touch screen computers with onboarding of staff	All CMHAFF Programs	All CMHAFF Branch Sites
Procurement of lever handles, additional pocket talkers and accessible virtual devices for client and staff use	All CMHAFF Programs	All CMHAFF Branch Sites
Post accessibility policies in CMHAFF reception Areas		ALL CMHAFF Branch Sites
Increase access to language translation services (develop registry of interpreters throughout districts)	All CMHAFF Programs	All CMHAFF Branch Sites
Collaborate with Kenora District Social Services Board to address accessibility issues in Red Lake	District Mental Health for Older Adults Program	Red Lake
Develop supported referral mechanisms	All CMHAFF Programs	All CMHAFF Branch Sites
Articulate commitment to CMHAFF identified values including Code of Ethics policy update and staff training	All CMHAFF Programs	All CMHAFF Branch Sites

