



Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2024-2027

Starling Community Service's Statement of Commitment to Accessibility

Starling Community Services is committed to providing a barrier-free environment for our clients, students, employees, job applicants, suppliers, visitors, and other stakeholders who enter our premises, access our information, or use our services. As an organization, Starling Community Services respects and upholds the requirements set forth under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005), Customer Service Standard and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.

Starling Community Services has an important responsibility for ensuring a safe, dignified, and welcoming environment for everyone. We are committed to ensuring our organization's compliance with accessibility legislation by incorporating policies, procedures, equipment requirements, training for employees, and best practices. We will review these policies and practices on a regular basis.

Starling Community Services realizes that providing accessible and barrier-free environments for everyone is a shared effort. All businesses and services must work together to make accessibility happen.

Starling's initiatives fall under five key areas:

- 1. General Requirements**
- 2. Accessible Information and Communications**
- 3. Equitable Customer Service**
- 4. Employment**
- 5. Built Environment and Disruption of Service**

2024 – 2027 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Initiatives

1. General Requirements

Starling Community Services works diligently and proactively to embed and advance accessibility through all its policies, programs and services providing a welcome and accessible environment for staff, partners, volunteers, clients and the communities with it serves.

We endeavor to provide training and support for staff that goes beyond the requirements of the AODA and embed these principles to advance program and service design, communication, barrier free employment, customer service and built in requirements

Expected Outcomes: That all activities conducted at Starling Community Services are delivered and performed with an eye towards accessibility.

2. Accessible Information and Communications

Starling Community Services is committed to meeting the communication needs of people with disabilities. We will consult with the individual making the request to assess the suitability of the accessible format or communication support.

Website and Web Content

Starling Community Services will achieve compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, Level A and Level AA to ensure that websites and web content are accessible to people with disabilities.

Expected Outcomes: All individuals who interact with the organization including (but not limited to) service users, staff, and volunteers, are provided with communications and digital information that meet legislative requirements and is supportive of their needs.

3. Equitable Customer Service

Starling Community Services will provide training to all board members, employees, volunteers, and students who work with the public or other third parties that act on behalf of Starling Community Services, or whom have a role in the development and approval of customer service policies, practices, and procedures. Training regarding accessible customer service and the integrated regulation will include the following:

- A review of the purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.
- Integrated Accessibility Standards for Information and Communications, Employment, and Transportation.
- Accessibility standard requirements and the Ontario Human Rights Code.
- Instructions on how to interact with people with disabilities and who:
 - Use assistive devices.

- Require the assistance of a guide dog, service dog or other service animal; or require the use of a support person (including the handling of admission fees).
- Starling Community Services 's relevant policies and procedures regarding accessibility.
- Instructions on how to use equipment or devices that are available at the organizations' various locations or that we provide may help people with disabilities.
- Instructions on what to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing services.
- Identifying and removing barriers in the workplace.
- Notices of service disruptions.

Expected Outcomes: Continue to provide accessible services to all service users that foster dignity, independence and integration.

4. Employment

Starling Community Services is committed to accessible employment practices such as recruitment, assessment, and selection. Starling Community Services has taken the following steps to accommodate people with disabilities during the recruitment, assessment, and selection process:

All internal and external job postings will notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for job applicants who have disabilities.

- Applicants will be informed that these accommodations are available upon request, for the interview process and other candidate selection methods.
- As a part of the on-boarding process, new employees will be notified of organizations' policies and supports for accommodating people with disabilities.

Performance Management, Career Development and Redeployment

Starling Community Services will take the following steps to develop and put in place a process for developing individual accommodation plans and return-to-work policies for employees that have been absent due to a disability:

- Ongoing review and revision of current return to work policies and procedures to consider employees with disabilities.
- Review and revision of current documented processes for developing individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.
- If requested, individual accommodation plans will include any information regarding accessible formats and communication supports provided, individualized emergency response information, and any other accommodation that is to be provided.

Expected Outcomes: Starling Community Services supports candidates and staff of all abilities to be successful in their current and future opportunities within the organization and during the various stages of their careers.

5. Built Environment, Disruption of Service and Accessible Emergency Information

In the event of any temporary disruptions to facilities or services that customers with disabilities rely on to access services, reasonable efforts will be made to provide advance notice. In some circumstances such as in the situation of unplanned temporary disruptions, advance notice may not be possible. In the event that a notification needs to be posted, the following information will be included unless it is not readily available or known:

- Services that are disrupted or unavailable.
- Reason for the disruption.
- Anticipated duration.
- A description of alternative services or options (e.g. meeting at another accessible Starling Community Services site).

When disruptions occur, Starling Community Services will provide posted notices in conspicuous spaces and at the point of disruptions, contact customers with appointments to notify them, and notify customers who may be making appointments or attempting to use services. Starling Community Services may also use other methods that may be reasonable under the circumstances that are suitable based on the customer’s disability

Starling Community Services is also committed to providing accessible emergency information upon request. We will also develop individualized emergency response plans for clients, residents, staff, students, and volunteers with disabilities, when necessary.

Starling Community Services recognizes that environment barriers that have been built can act as a form of discrimination. Starling Community Services continues to design, modify and adapt its facilities, program spaces and workspaces to ensure that they are barrier free. Below is a list of Assistive devices available at each Starling Community Services Location

Assistive Devices at Each Site:

Luther Village on the Park 139 – 141 Father David Bauer Drive Waterloo, ON	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Elevator• Wheelchair• Assistive listening system• Accessible parking spaces• Indoor scooter parking• Accessible printed materials• Screen magnifier• Handrails in common spaces
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Door openers and accessibility buttons through facilities • Single-occupant, universal and accessible washrooms • Ample seating and resting areas • Lever-style door handles • Communication Boards • Accessible seating arrangements • Visual aids for wayfinding • Quiet spaces • Adaptable exercise equipment for residents with varying abilities • Wheelchair accessible vehicle (coming 2025) • Evacuation chairs • Widened doorways • Change tables • Accessible fitness center showers <p>Additional devices are available for residents living in the Sunshine Centre.</p>
<p>Starling Community Services 285 Benjamin Road Waterloo, ON N2J 3Z4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevator • Single-occupant, universal washrooms • Accessible parking spaces • Door openers and accessibility buttons at some entrances • Accessible ramp for cottage
<p>Starling Community Services 165 King Street East Kitchener, ON N2G 2K8</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevator • Door openers and accessibility buttons at front entrance, elevator, and universal washroom • Single-occupant, universal washroom • Change table in some washrooms
<p>Starling Community Services 41 Weber Street West Kitchener, ON N2H 3Z1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevator • Accessible parking spaces • Door openers and accessibility buttons at some entrances • Single-occupant, universal washroom • Accessible ramp

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible showers
Starling Community Services 35 Dickson Street Cambridge, ON N1R 7A6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevator • Door openers and accessibility buttons at main entrance • Single-occupant, universal washrooms • Change table in some washrooms
Starling Community Services 89 Wyndham Street North, 3 rd Floor Guelph, ON N1H 4E9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevator • Door openers and accessibility buttons at main entrance • Single-occupant, universal and accessible washroom • Change table in accessible washroom

Expected Outcome – Starling Community Services incorporates inclusive design practices and technologies are utilized to make service users and stakeholders feel welcome when accessing services and to provide appropriate and timely information in the event of any service disruption.

Feedback Process

Starling Community Services will provide customers with the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the service provided to customers with disabilities. Information about the feedback process will be readily available to all customers and notice of the process will be made available by the Program Manager or designate. Feedback forms along with alternate methods of providing feedback can be provided through:

Telephone: 519-884-1470

Mail: Alison Kulchecki
 Starling Community Services
 285 Benjamin Road
 Waterloo ON N2J 3Z4

Email: akulchecki@starlingcs.ca

Notice of Availability and Format of Documents

Starling Community Services will notify customers that the documents related to the accessibility will be made available upon request and in a format that takes into account the customer's disability. Notification of these documents will be given by posting the information in a conspicuous place at Starling Community Services locations and website, as well as other reasonable methods as necessary.