



WANSTEAD FARMERS MULTI YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN 2024-2027

APRIL 2024

INTRODUCTION

The Accessible Canada Act (ACA) and the Accessible Canada Regulations (ACR) as well as the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA 2005) requires organizations to produce multi-year accessibility plans that include targets and timelines for compliance with multiple requirements. Additionally, the activities for the Customer Service Standard of AODA as well as locally identified barrier by-laws, policies, programs, practices and services must be understood to implement this plan. This Multi-year Accessibility Plan captures our priorities in the area of accessibility over the next three years. Wanstead Farmers Cooperative is committed to providing an accessible environment to all staff, patrons, board members, customers, and visitors to ensure equal treatment to people with disabilities (both visible and non-visible) with respect to the use and benefit of services, programs, goods, and facilities.

This multi-year accessibility plan is intended to support each Wanstead Branch and was created in consultation with our staff, clients, and board members with disabilities.

This plan is available in alternate format, or with communication support, upon request.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this plan, the following definitions apply:

A “**barrier**” is 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 informational or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy, or a practice.

Architectural and physical barriers are features of buildings or spaces that cause problems for people with disabilities. Examples are:

- hallways and doorways that are too narrow for a person using a wheelchair, electric scooter, or walker
- counters that are too high for a person of short stature
- poor lighting for people with low vision

- doorknobs that are difficult for people with arthritis to grasp
- parking spaces that are too narrow for a driver who uses a wheelchair
- telephones that are not equipped with telecommunications devices for people who are deaf, deafened, or hard of hearing

Attitudinal barriers are those that discriminate against persons with disabilities. Examples are:

- thinking that persons with disabilities are inferior
- assuming that a person who has a speech impairment can't understand you

Technological barriers occur when a technology can't be modified to support various assistive devices.

Information or communications barriers happen when a person can't easily understand information. Examples are:

- print is too small to read
- websites can't be accessed by people who are not able to use a mouse

Organizational barriers are an organization's policies, practices or procedures that discriminate against persons with disabilities. Examples are:

- a hiring process that is not open to persons with disabilities
- a practice of announcing important messages over an intercom that persons with hearing impairments cannot hear clearly

A Disability is:

a. 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 impediment, 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,

b. A condition of mental impairment, disorder, or a developmental disability,

c. A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language.

RECENT ACCESSIBILITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Over the last few years, Wanstead Farmers Cooperative has made dedicated efforts in providing an environment that promotes the participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities. While some initiatives were undertaken to include updates and changes to the AODA, Wanstead inherently determined the need to address barriers and implement change or modifications to be inclusive. Some of our more recent initiatives are summarized in the following sections:

- 2022 Wanstead Alvinston Branch located at 3332 Nauvoo Rd, Alvinston Ontario underwent major construction in order to upgrade the facility to be fully accessible.
- In 2016 when the new Wanstead Wyoming branch located at 5322 Wanstead Rd Wyoming Ont.- was originally drafted, many of the current accessible accommodations that are on site were not specifically addressed. With the help of our staff, clients, and board members, we were able to address and improve the new build drawings to be a fully supportive accessible building.
- Wanstead Farmers Cooperative is an equal opportunity employer in recruitment and retention of employees. Orientation for new staff incorporates a component on the diverse workplace and the support services available to address the needs of staff with suspected or identified disabilities.

ACTIONS PLANNED FOR 2024-2027

Wanstead Farmers Cooperative has set forth a four-year plan to bring accessibility and inclusion to the forefront of its operations, while ensuring ongoing legal compliance with the AODA. The following initiatives have been identified to ensure ongoing compliance with accessibility legislation at our facilities.

Customer Service	2024	2025	2026	2027
Update and continue to deliver education/training to staff regarding customer service of individuals with disabilities, including initial orientation upon hire	X	X	X	X
Make improvements to accessibility based on suggestions, training and ongoing consultation with persons experiencing disabilities	X	X	X	X
Information and Communications				
Identify commonly required communications formats and develop a strategy to ensure consistency across our website, publications and promotional material	X	X	X	X
Employment Accommodations				
Include a statement in all staff recruitment/postings confirming commitment to accommodation of applicants with a disability	X	X	X	X
Continue to make new hires aware on orientation of Wanstead Farmers Cooperative commitment to accommodating employees with disabilities	X	X	X	X
Built Environment				
Consider AODA requirements in the selection and design of any new office space	X	X	X	X
Replace all door closures leading to accessible areas with automatic door closers	X	X	X	X
Identify and complete needed accessibility improvements to existing offices and boardroom locations	X	X	X	X

COMMUNICATION OF MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

This plan is the next step in establishing a framework and vision for an inclusive culture at Wanstead Farmers Cooperative, with disabilities in mind. Wanstead Farmers will be transparent in its work and continued progress towards these goals by providing updates on its website, Facebook and Instagram pages. This plan will be posted on all Wanstead Farmers sites as well as copies will be made available upon request.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Questions or comments about Wanstead Farmers Accessibility Plans, Policies and Practices are always welcome. Should you require a copy of our documents in standard or accessible format, please contact Kathleen Pollock-Cayen.

By Email:

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