

POLICY STATEMENT

Sudbury Developmental Services (SDS) is committed to providing an accessible environment for all individuals by identifying, removing, and preventing barriers to participation. This consolidated Accessibility Policy and Multi-Year Plan outlines SDS's strategy to achieve and maintain compliance with Ontario's accessibility legislation while promoting dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity for all.

This policy aligns with the following legislation and standards:

- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)
- Ontario Regulation 191/11 – Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) (Customer Service, Information & Communications, Employment, Transportation, Design of Public Spaces)
- Ontario Human Rights Code (R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19)
- Ontario Building Code (O. Reg. 332/12)
- Employment Standards Act, 2000 (ESA)
- Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)
- French Language Services Act (R.S.O. 1990, c. F.32)
- Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) & Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA)
- Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (s. 15 – Equality Rights)

PROCEDURE

Definitions:

Accessibility: The ability for a person with a disability to obtain, use, and benefit from services or goods.

Barrier: Anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society due to the environment, information, communication, attitudes, technology, or policy.

Disability: As defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code and AODA, includes physical, mental, intellectual, learning, sensory, and mental health disabilities.

Assistive Device: Any device used by a person with a disability to perform daily tasks (e.g., wheelchair, hearing aid, screen reader).

Service Animal: An animal trained to perform tasks for the benefit of a person

with a disability.

Support Person: An individual who accompanies a person with a disability to assist with communication, mobility, or personal care.

CUSTOMER SERVICE AND ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS

SDS provides all goods, services, and supports in a manner that upholds dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity.

Communication: SDS communicates with individuals in ways that consider their disability. Alternative formats (e.g., large print, audio, electronic) are provided upon request.

Assistive Devices: Individuals may use their personal assistive devices on SDS premises. SDS ensures accessibility of its facilities for device users.

Service Animals and Support Persons: Persons with disabilities accompanied by a service animal or support person are permitted in all public areas of SDS facilities. Where service animals are restricted by law, alternate accommodations will be provided.

Notice of Temporary Disruptions: SDS provides timely notice when facilities or services are temporarily unavailable, including the reason, duration, and alternate options.

Training: All employees, volunteers, students, and contractors receive training on AODA, IASR, the Human Rights Code, communication, assistive devices, and feedback processes. Training occurs at onboarding, annually, and when policy changes occur.

Feedback and Complaints: Feedback regarding SDS's accessibility or services can be submitted in person, by mail, email, or telephone. Alternate formats are available upon request. Complaints are addressed per SDS's Feedback and Complaint Policy.

EMPLOYMENT ACCESSIBILITY

SDS provides fair and accessible employment practices in accordance with the AODA and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Recruitment: Job postings notify applicants that accommodations are available upon request. Successful applicants are informed of accommodation policies during onboarding.

Individual Accommodation Plans: Developed collaboratively with employees, including accommodations, communication supports, emergency response information, and review timelines.

Return to Work: SDS maintains documented return-to-work procedures for

employees with disabilities.

Performance Management and Career Development: SDS ensures accessibility needs are considered in performance reviews, advancement, and job changes.

INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY ACCESSIBILITY

Accessible Information: SDS provides publicly available information in accessible formats upon request.

Website Accessibility: SDS's website and online content conform to WCAG 2.1 Level AA standards, with regular accessibility audits.

Feedback Processes: Feedback mechanisms are accessible to all and provided in alternate formats as needed.

Emergency Information: SDS provides accessible emergency procedures and public safety information upon request.

BUILD ENVIRONMENT, PROCUREMENT AND EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Built Environment: All new builds and major renovations comply with the Ontario Building Code and IASR Design of Public Spaces Standards.

Procurement: Accessibility is considered when procuring goods, services, or facilities, in accordance with IASR Section 5.

Accessible Emergency Procedures: Employees with disabilities receive individualized emergency response information as part of their accommodation plan.

GOVERNANCE, REPORTING AND MULTI-YEAR PLAN

Accountability: The Executive Director serves as the Accessibility and Privacy Officer responsible for implementation, compliance, and monitoring. The Board of Directors provides governance oversight, approves the Multi-Year Plan, and receives annual updates.

Review and Reporting: SDS reviews this plan annually and updates it every five years. Accessibility Compliance Reports are filed with the Government of Ontario as required.

Publication: This policy and plan are posted on the SDS website and made available in accessible formats upon request.

Appendix A – Accessibility Goals and Barriers (2025–2028)

Barrier Identified	Planned Action	Completion Timeline	Status
Limited accessibility in some program locations	Build environment audits. Perform accessibility audit of all facilities(parking, washrooms, entrances,etc)	2026–2028	In progress
Website WCAG 2.1 upgrade	Conduct web audit and implement accessibility enhancements	2026-28	
Staff awareness and training	Maintain annual training completion at 100%	Ongoing	Active
Inclusive Hiring Practices	Enhance representation and inclusive hiring.	2027-2028	
Community Feedback Expansion	Create focus groups to gather lived experience input on barriers and solutions.	2027-2028	