

CVNQuinte 1.1.0 Accessibility Policy and Plan 2023

ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

Community Visions and Networking Quinte Association (CVNQuinte) is committed to providing, both individually and systematically, its services in a manner that is accessible to all persons with disabilities. CVNQuinte recognizes the core principles of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (“AODA”)-independence, dignity, integration, equality of opportunity for people with disabilities, all of which align with the core values of our organization.

CVNQuinte supports the goals of the AODA and establishes policies, practices and procedures that are consistent with the accessibility standards established under the AODA, including accessible customer service, information and communication, employment, built environment and transportation.

CVNQuinte is committed to achieving the overall goal of this policy Statement of identifying, removing and preventing the establishment of barriers to persons with disabilities.



Terri Korkush
Executive Director

POLICY STATEMENT

Community Visions & Networking Quinte Association (CVNQuinte) is committed to ensuring accessibility for people with disabilities. We provide services to all in a manner centered on our principles of respect, inclusivity, diversity, independence, and equal opportunities for all.

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) is a statute enacted in 2005 by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, Canada with the purpose of removing barriers and improving accessibility standards for Ontarians with physical and mental disabilities for all public establishments by 2025.

The AODA established standards under the following five key areas:

- Information and Communication Standard
- Employment Standard
- Transportation Standard
- Design of Public Spaces Standard
- Customer Service Standard

CVNQuinte is committed to achieving complete compliance with current standards of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) Policy, Regulation 191/11, under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA).

The following Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines the policies, procedures, and actions CVNQuinte has taken or are currently in progress to remove barriers and improve opportunities for people with disabilities. The purpose of this plan is to assist us in moving towards the goal of complete accessibility and full participation for persons with disabilities in regard to services, facilities and employment by identifying existing barriers and defining steps to remove barriers.

OBJECTIVE

CVNQuinte’s goal is to implement our multi-year accessibility plan that:

- Identifies and removes barriers to people with disabilities who are employed with or use CVNQuinte services;
- Identifies steps to be taken to remove identified barriers;
- Proactively identifies potential barriers to people receiving services and employees;
- Effectively responds to issues presented by people receiving services and/or staff in a timely manner;
- Maintains compliance with current provincial legislation;
- Ensures the multi-year accessibility plan is accessible to the public; and
- Reviews and revises the multi-year accessibility plan every five (5) years, or as required.

PROCEDURES

CVNQuinte provides accessible services to employees and people receiving services related to accessibility annually and regularly evaluates strategies to ensure accessibility is provided to all.

BARRIER DEFINITIONS

CVNQuinte is committed to maintaining and reporting an Accessibility Plan containing strategy that seeks to remove ten types of barriers.

An **architectural** barrier is any physical factor that makes accessibility difficult for an individual. This may include narrow doorways, bathrooms that might need to be made more accessible, alarms that are not able to be heard by individuals with hearing impairments, or even something as simple as the location of furniture.

An **environmental** barrier is a characteristic of a setting that compromises service delivery and benefits to be gained. This may include items such as flickering lighting, noise levels, and troublesome fragrances.

An **attitudinal** barrier is a preconceived (usually negative) attitude that people have towards the persons served. Examples of this may include attitudes of neighbours or other community members, or the lack of “person first” language used by agency personnel.

A **financial** barrier is anything that may mean that a service is restricted because of a lack of sufficient financial resources. Financial barriers may exist at the organizational level or may be specific to funds possessed by the people served.

An **employment** barrier is an indication that a workplace does not provide sufficient flexibility or equipment to ensure a productive and satisfying workplace for employees. An employment barrier may also speak to measures that are in place to promote successful employment for persons with disabilities.

A **communication** barrier looks at anything that inhibits information being accessible and understandable to all. Examples may include the possible absence of devices available to people served or personnel to be able to be understood by others, or promotional materials that are not present in formats that are easily understandable.

A **transportation** barrier speaks to situations in which service recipients are unable to reach or participate fully in services because of the lack of suitable and available transportation.

A **community integration** barrier is anything that may limit an individual’s ability to fully access their community in a way of their choosing.

A **technology** barrier is related to a need of a stakeholder to access technology to ensure communication or inclusion into services.

In addition to these barriers, other barriers that are not easily categorized may also be identified.



INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS REGULATIONS

Information & Communication standard

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

CVNQuinte is committed to ensuring the information and communication systems are accessible for those with disabilities. In consultation with people with disabilities, CVNQuinte will determine an accessible format suitable to communicate and share information.



When requested, CVNQuinte will arrange and provide publicly available information relevant to goods, services or facilities by taking the following steps:

- Determine the appropriate accessible format or communication required in consultation with the person making the request.
- Provide the accessible format or communication support in a timely manner, considering the persons' disability at no additional cost to the person; and
- Notify the public through our public website about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

NOTE: All contractors/interpreters who are engaged to provide services for CVNQuinte are required to sign off that they are willing to adhere to the legislated customer service requirements.

Feedback

CVNQuinte has taken the necessary steps to ensure the feedback process for those with disabilities is accessible by providing various methods for feedback including telephone, email, fax, writing or in person.

Emergency Procedures, Plans & Public Safety Information

CVNQuinte will provide emergency procedures and plans to people receiving services in an accessible format upon request. Employees with disabilities are provided with individualized emergency response information and plans based on their known accommodation needs as required.

When a request is received, CVNQuinte will put a plan in place to meet the needs within a reasonable timeframe.

Accessible Website & Website Content

CVNQuinte will take the necessary steps to ensure all its internet website and content posted from April 1, 2021, are aligned with the WCAG 2.0, Level AA. CVNQUINTE will review all website content regularly for Level AA compliance and will implement necessary changes and web content that follow all applicable Level AA standards.

Employment Standard

Recruitment, Assessment, and Selection

CVNQuinte is an equal opportunity employer committed to ensuring employment is fair and accessible for all. All interested applicants are aware of the accommodation process by including information of the accommodation request availability on all job postings. On request, accommodation is available for people with disabilities during the recruitment, application, interview, and assessment phase, both externally and within internal applicants. CVNQUINTE will work with applicants and candidates to identify suitable accommodations to support people with disabilities throughout the recruitment and selection process.

Documented Individualized Accommodation Plans

CVNQuinte works with employees in developing accommodation plans. In accordance with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) Policy, Regulation 191/11, all accommodation plans will be documented, and the process will include:



- the way the employee can participate in the development of the individual accommodation plan.
- that the employee will be assessed on an individual basis.
- that CVNQuinte can request an evaluation by an outside medical or other expert, at no expense to the employee, to assist in determining if accommodation can be achieved and how accommodation can be achieved.
- the steps CVNQuinte will take to ensure the employee's personal information is private and confidential.
- the frequency with which the individual accommodation plan will be reviewed and updated.
- Reasons for which accommodation is denied, if applicable.
- the means of providing the accommodation plan in a format that considers the employee's accessibility needs due to disability; and
- Individual accommodation plans will include the following, as required:
 - Information on the accessible formats and communication support provided.
 - Workplace emergency response information
 - Any other accommodation will be provided.

Workplace emergency response information

Upon learning of an employee's accessibility requirements, CVNQuinte will work with the employee to develop an individualized emergency response plan. With the employee's consent, the emergency response plan will be shared with all relevant parties to ensure the plan may be carried out in the event of an emergency. Individualized emergency response plans will be reviewed when the:

employee moves to a different location within the organization.
employee's accommodation needs or plans are reviewed; and
CVNQuinte review's our emergency response policy.

Return to work

CVNQuinte has a return-to-work process in place to facilitate a safe return for employees who have been absent from work as a result of a disability and who require accommodation in order to return to work.

The return-to-work process outlines steps to be taken to facilitate the employees' return to work. This process includes the completion of a Non-Occupational Functional Abilities Form by the employee's attending physician to understand the employee's abilities and limitations in developing the employee's accommodation plan. As required, CVNQuinte may also work with a third-party disability management provider to assist in the return-to-work process.

Performance Management, Career Development and Advancement

CVNQuinte will consider the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as any accommodation plans in place during the performance management process, career development opportunities and advancement. This includes development of goals and employee evaluation to ensure the performance management process is fair and focused on employee success.

Individual accessibility needs will also be considered when providing employees with disabilities with opportunities for career development and advancement.

Redeployment

In the event of employee redeployment as a result of job transfer, job elimination or re-organization, CVNQuinte will take into account the accessibility requirements of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans.

Design of Public Spaces Standard

CVNQuinte is committed to meeting all Accessibility Standards as they apply to the Design of Public Spaces. CVNQuinte will ensure any redesign aspects to buildings or major modifications meet the necessary accessibility requirements. CVNQuinte will take all necessary measures to prevent service disruptions to accessible areas of its public spaces. CVNQuinte will inspect accessible areas periodically to ensure spaces are accessible and to reduce the risk of service disruptions. In the event areas are not accessible or any deficits are found to impact accessibility, CVNQuinte will take all necessary steps to remedy the deficit within a reasonable time frame and notify the public of the service disruption.

Customer Service

CVNQuinte is committed to providing customer service that meets or exceeds the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for people receiving services with disabilities, CVNQuinte will take reasonable steps to advise people receiving services with disabilities who may be impacted by the disruption regarding the disruption cause and duration. Formats for informing people receiving services of service disruptions may include website notifications, on-site postings, phone calls to people receiving services etc. Additionally, CVNQuinte will attempt to identify alternative methods for service delivery.

Training

All employees, students and volunteers receive mandatory online training on the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) which includes information on the Integrated Accessibility Standards. Training is to be completed within two weeks of the start date. Training will be provided in an accessible format based on the needs of the individual.

CVNQuinte provides training to all its employees and volunteers regarding the provisions and ways to ensure accessible programs, goods, services, and workplace.

All employees, volunteers, students, and others who deal with the public or third parties, as well as those involved in developing service policies, practices and procedures, receive Accessibility Training. The organization keeps records of the training. The training is delivered in a variety of formats and is provided for employees, volunteers, and students in order to stay current with changes in policies, practices, and procedures. Level One training for employees who have direct contact with the public receive training which includes a test. Level Two training is provided for employees, volunteers and students who do not have direct contact with the public.

The training includes:

- The purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard.
- How to interact and communicate with people in a manner that considers their disability.
- How to provide goods and services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- The process to provide feedback to the organization about the provision of services to persons with disabilities in any department and how the organization responds to feedback and acts on any complaint.
- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use assistive devices or require the assistance of a guide dog, service animal or a support person to access goods or services.
- How to use equipment or devices available on the organization's premises or provided by the organization that may help with the provision of Goods and services.
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty accessing the organization's programs, goods, or services.

Feedback process

CVNQuinte welcomes feedback regarding services provided to people with disabilities. All feedback provided will be directed to the appropriate personnel. CVNQuinte will respond to feedback received within 3-5 business days. Any complaints regarding services provided to persons with disabilities will be addressed through our standard complaint management procedures. Feedback regarding services is confidential and may be provided by:

Phone: 613-966-8484
Fax: 613-966-0724
TTY: 613-966-8547
Email: cvision@cvnquinte.org
Mail: Community Visions & Networking Quinte Association (CVNQuinte)
265 Charles Street, Belleville, ON, K8N 3M7

Availability of customer services documents:

Policies and procedures including our accessibility policy as well as all related customer service documents are available upon request.

Use of service animals and support persons:

CVNQuinte permits persons with a disability who are accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal to enter the premises and to keep the animal with the owner, unless the animal is excluded by law from the premises. In accordance with the Health Promotion and Protection Act (1990), guide dogs or service animals may be prohibited from entering areas when sterile procedures occur including but not limited to:

- food preparation and food storage areas;
- medication preparation or storage areas; and/ or
- clean or sterile supply storage areas;

In the event an animal is excluded by law, CVNQuinte will ensure alternate measures are available to ensure a person with a disability is able to obtain services. Similarly, in the event a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, CVNQuinte will ensure both the client and support persons are permitted to enter the premises together and that the person with a disability is able to have access to the support persons at all times while on the premises.

Assistive devices:

Persons with disabilities are encouraged to obtain, use, or benefit from goods or services using their own assistive devices. It is noted that it is the responsibility of the person with a disability to ensure that their assistive device is always operated in a safe and controlled manner. When available, CVNQuinte provides assistive technology when needed so that people with disabilities can access services while on the premises conducting agency business.



Accessibility Plan

CVNQuinte's Accessibility Plan addresses accessibility issues at our services, locations and in the community at large. CVNQuinte is committed to identifying and removing barriers that reduce the ability of persons served to fully access both our programs and the community as a whole. CVNQuinte's Accessibility Plan is designed to summarize the following:



- Those barriers that were removed or otherwise addressed by the agency in the past, specifically over the course of the past year.
- Those items that the organization still intends to address, as well as new items that have been brought to the agency's attention. Some of these items contain firm deadlines for completion, while others do not.

Identification of Barriers

In preparing this year's Accessibility Plan, CVNQuinte utilized several methods in which to identify accessibility barriers:

- Individual persons served and personnel were consulted by the quality improvement lead and contributed to the identification of issues and potential ideas on how to rectify them.
- The organization's leadership routinely identifies issues throughout the agency. This information was used to identify property issues that negatively impact the accessibility needs of the people served by the agency.
- The organization's leadership is informed on accessibility issues by personnel and by persons served on an ongoing basis. The issues anecdotally identified in this manner were also useful in the creation of this plan.

Review of Accessibility Plan

Progress around the plan will be completed in six-month intervals, with a progress report being posted on the agency website. A full review of the organization's Accessibility Plan will be completed at least annually. A member of the Management team will take the lead around updates of the Accessibility Plan.

Communication of Accessibility Plan

The accessibility plan will be posted on the agency website. Paper copies will be made to all those who request the plan.

Items completed prior to 2017.

Service Area	Barrier Identified	Action Completed	Completion Date
Design of Public Spaces	Entrance not accessible	Ramp constructed Accessible doors installed Audible entry bells installed	Unknown Unknown Unknown
Design of Public Spaces	Washroom not accessible	Accessible washroom installed	Unknown
Communication	Phone system not accessible	Separate TTY phone line installed	Unknown
Communication		Individual TTYs at Reception, Coordinator and Supervisor desk	Unknown
Design of Public Spaces	Access to kitchen and dining area limited	Portable ramp built	Unknown
Communication	Provide service to people who are Deaf	Sign language required and training provided to employees	Unknown

Items completed between 2017 to 2023

Service Area	Barrier Identified	Action Completed	Completion Date
Information and Communication	Policy required for Accessibility	New policy created	2018
Information and Communication	Policy required for privacy	New policy created	2018
Design of Public Spaces Standard	Required shower/washroom in lower level of home	Install semi-accessible washroom in lower level	2018
Design of Public Spaces Standard	Entrance not accessible	Ramp repaired. Accessible doors maintained. Audible entry bells maintained	2019 2020 and ongoing Ongoing
Design of Public Spaces	Stairs required grips	Installed grips	2019
Design of Public Spaces Standard	People wanted more access to backyard area and around property	Installed second ramp off desk to backyard and wrap around walkway	2019
Training	Accessibility training required	Accessibility training annual expectation of all employees	2019 Ongoing
Design of Public Spaces	Required grab bars in washroom	Installed	2021
Design of Public Spaces Standard	Driveway has several potholes and hard to push wheelchair	Paved driveway	2020
Design of Public Spaces	Person supported required easier access to bath/shower	Removed tub unit and installed walk in shower unit.	2022
Design of Public Spaces	People living in supported home wished to have more privacy and more accessible living quarters	Developed partnership with local developer in 2019 and moved people into four units that are accessible on main floor of apartment complex	2022

Design of Public Spaces	Phone system not accessible	Separate TTY phone line maintained	Ongoing
Design of Public Spaces		Individual TTYs at Reception, Coordinator and Supervisor desk	Purchased more 2022 and ongoing expectation
Design of Public Spaces	Access to kitchen and dining area limited	Portable ramp	Ongoing
Information and Communication	Provide service to people who are Deaf	Sign language required and training provided to employees	Ongoing training offered. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21 employees use American Sign Language • 2 Deaf employees
Information and Communication	Website not accessible	New website created 2021	Ongoing maintenance
Financial	Some people supported have very limited funds	Enrichment fundraising efforts created to help when people need additional purchases	2018
Systemic	Policies can be restrictive to people with injuries or change in circumstances	Policy exemption policy created remove barriers due to disability	2018

Items to be completed 2023-2028

Service Area	Barrier Identified	Action Completed	Start Date
Information and Communication	Need to review website features	Ensure maximum options are available on website	2024
Information and Communication	Need to further explore methods of communication options	Review communication options for materials	2024
Information and Communication	Unsure of policies that could be improved	Further examine policies recommendations	2024
Information and Communication	Documents written at a higher level of understanding	Continue to produce material using plain language and visuals	2024
Information and Communication	Require more employees who understand Sign Language	Provide more training	2024

Requests for Reasonable Accommodations

There were no requests for reasonable accommodations by stakeholders in the past year. Future requests will be identified, noted, and responded to.

Follow-Up

The Accessibility Plan will be reviewed by the Management team at least twice a year. An update to the Accessibility Plan will be distributed to stakeholders during intake for service meeting, planning sessions and posted online. Employees will receive upon hire, posted in employee training portal and discussed during performance appraisals.

APPENDIX 1

The Ontario Human Rights Code defines “Disability” as:

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, a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language, a mental disorder, or an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.