

**MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN
(2024-2028)**

Blue Door Support Services

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CEO's STATEMENT

I am pleased to share Blue Door's commitment to fostering accessibility and inclusivity for everyone in our community. As we navigate the challenges and opportunities in our emergency housing initiatives, it is our sincere belief that creating an inclusive environment is not just a goal but a fundamental aspect of our vision for the future.

Our commitment to accessibility is grounded in the belief that everyone, regardless of their abilities, should have equal access to our programs and services. It goes beyond compliance; it is a moral imperative that aligns with our mission to serve the diverse needs of our community.

Looking ahead, we are dedicated to actively working towards enhancing accessibility. This involves addressing physical and architectural barriers in our facilities, adopting technologies that support various assistive devices, and fostering a culture that eliminates attitudinal barriers. We understand that accessibility is a nuanced concept, and our goal is to tailor our approaches to meet the unique challenges faced by individuals with different abilities.

Our Multi-year Accessibility Plan (2024-2028) serves as a strategic roadmap, outlining our goals, targets, and timelines. This plan is a reflection of our commitment to building a future where accessibility is seamlessly woven into the fabric of Blue Door.

By working together, we can make Blue Door a model of accessibility and inclusivity in emergency housing organizations. Let us embark on this path with enthusiasm, recognizing that our commitment to accessibility is a testament to our values and a catalyst for positive change in the lives of those we serve.

Thank you for being a part of our vision for a more inclusive future.

Michael Braithwaite
CEO, Blue Door Support Services



INTRODUCTION

Blue Door recognizes the importance of complying with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). As an organization committed to inclusion, Blue Door is dedicated to fostering an accessible environment for all individuals, including staff, tenants, and visitors.

In accordance with the IASR, Blue Door has developed a comprehensive multi-year accessibility plan that outlines targets and timelines for compliance with the various requirements of the regulation. This plan also addresses activities related to the Customer Service Standard of AODA and addresses locally-identified barriers in our organization's by-laws, policies, programs, practices, and services.

Over the next five years, Blue Door's priorities in the realm of accessibility will be reflected in this plan, demonstrating our commitment to providing equal treatment to individuals with both visible and non-visible disabilities. Our goal is to ensure that all individuals have equal access to our services, programs, and facilities.

This multi-year accessibility plan is designed to align with Blue Door's overarching vision of creating dignified facilities for everyone.

We emphasize our commitment to accessibility by making this plan available in alternate formats or with communication support upon request, recognizing the diverse needs of our community.

ACCESSIBILITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS (2019-2023)

Accessible Digital Presence: New Websites

Blue Door has recently achieved a significant milestone by launching a new, accessible website for both Blue Door and its social enterprise, Construct. In collaboration with web development professionals, this initiative prioritized user-friendly design and adherence to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0). Notable features, such as alt text for images, keyboard navigation, and adjustable text sizes, have been implemented to ensure a seamless online experience for individuals with diverse disabilities.

Comprehensive AODA Policies

In alignment with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), Blue Door has successfully developed and implemented comprehensive accessibility policies. These policies, covering customer service, information and communication, employment, and the built environment, serve as a guiding framework for fostering a culture of accessibility within the organization.

Thorough Accessibility Audit: Identifying and Removing Barriers

Another accomplishment for Blue Door involves the thorough accessibility audit across all areas. The JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) Manager continues to assess physical spaces, information systems, and communication methods. The findings from the audit continues to be instrumental in developing targeted plans to remove barriers and enhance accessibility throughout the organization.

Inclusive Infrastructure: Accessible New Construction

Blue Door has consistently incorporated universal design principles into new construction projects. Working closely with architects and builders, the organization ensures that all new physical spaces are thoughtfully designed to accommodate the diverse mobility and sensory needs of individuals with disabilities.

Continuous Improvement: Structured Feedback Process

Demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement, Blue Door has established a structured feedback process that actively seeks input from individuals with disabilities regarding their experiences with the organization's services. Accessible channels for feedback, such as online forms, email, and phone options, have been implemented, and the organization uses this valuable input to make ongoing enhancements to its services.

Inclusive Recruitment: Accessible Processes for Equal Opportunities

Addressing the specifics of recruitment, Blue Door has revamped its process to be inclusive and accessible. Providing alternative formats for application and ensuring accessibility at all stages of recruitment, the organization aims to continue offering equal opportunities to individuals with disabilities.

Workplace Safety: Individualized Emergency Response Plans

In the realm of workplace safety, Blue Door has developed individualized plans for employees with disabilities, specifically tailored to emergency response situations. This proactive approach ensures the safety and well-being of all staff members, considering their unique needs during emergencies. These achievements collectively reflect Blue Door's dedication to creating an inclusive and accessible environment for all.

ACCESSIBILITY ACTION PLAN 2024-2028

Customer Service	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Update and continue to deliver education/training to staff and volunteers regarding customer service of individuals with disabilities, including initial orientation upon hire					
Make improvements to accessibility based on suggestions, training, and ongoing consultation with persons experiencing disabilities					
Information and Communications	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Identify commonly required communication formats and develop a strategy to ensure consistency across our website, publications and marketing material					
Provide information in accessible formats, including languages					
Employment Accommodations	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Continue to include a statement in all staff and volunteer recruitment/postings confirming commitment to accommodation of applicants with a disability					
Continue to make new hires aware on orientation of Blue Door's commitment to accommodating employees with disabilities					
Infrastructure and Environment	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Consider AODA requirements in the selection and design of any new program space					
Replace all fire safety devices with sound/strobe combo units					
Replace all door closers leading to accessible areas with automatic door closers					
Consider adding stair elevators in areas, where possible					
Ensure at least one (1) accessible entrance at all our locations including ramp, handrails and automatic door openers					
Ensure at least one (1) accessible bathroom at all our locations					
Identify and complete needed accessibility improvements to existing offices and programming locations					
Establish procedure for preventative and emergency maintenance of the accessible elements in the programs and office spaces					

DEFINITIONS:

- **Accessibility:**
The extent to which facilities, products, services, and information are easily approachable and usable by individuals with disabilities.
- **Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR):**
A set of regulations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) in Ontario, Canada. It outlines standards for accessibility in various areas, including information and communication, employment, and transportation.
- **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA):**
Provincial legislation in Ontario, Canada, aimed at achieving accessibility standards for people with disabilities across various domains, including employment, transportation, and services.
- **Multi-year Accessibility Plan:**
A strategic document that outlines an organization's commitments, priorities, and actions related to improving accessibility over a specific period, typically covering a span of several years.
- **Customer Service Standard:**
A component of accessibility standards that focuses on ensuring that goods and services are provided to people with disabilities in a manner that is integrated, respectful, and barrier-free.
- **Visible Disabilities:**
Disabilities that are apparent or observable, such as mobility impairments or vision loss.
- **Non-visible Disabilities:**
Disabilities that may not be immediately apparent, including mental health conditions, chronic illnesses, or cognitive impairments.
- **Barrier:**
Any obstacle or hindrance that limits or prevents the full and equal participation of individuals with disabilities in various aspects of life, including physical, informational, and attitudinal barriers.
- **Alternative Formats:**
Information presented in formats other than the standard print or visual format, such as Braille, large print, audio, or electronic formats, to accommodate diverse needs.
- **Communication Support:**
Assistance provided to individuals with communication barriers to ensure effective and meaningful interaction. This can include sign language interpretation, captioning, or assistive communication devices.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For inquiries or requests related to accessibility at Blue Door, or if you require this multi-year accessibility plan in an alternate format or need communication support, please feel free to contacting us using the following information:

By Email:

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By Phone:

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By Mail:

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