

SAHO Inc. Accessibility Plan 2025-2028

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To request an alternate format, please contact the SAHO office
by email at info@saho.ca or by phone at **306.347.1740**.

Introduction

The Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations, Inc. (SAHO) is committed to identifying, removing, and preventing accessibility barriers for individuals who work at or access SAHO's facilities, programs, and services. The Government of Saskatchewan introduced *The Accessible Saskatchewan Act*, which came into force on December 3, 2023. The *Act* requires SAHO to publicly post an accessibility plan to remove and prevent accessibility barriers for persons with disabilities.

In the spirit of 'Nothing about us, without us', SAHO consulted with the employees, leaders, visitors and clients who access SAHO's facilities, programs, and services to inform the actions outlined in the organization's first accessibility plan. A public survey was conducted between December 5, 2024, and January 31, 2025, to seek feedback from individuals, including persons with disabilities, to assess accessibility barriers at SAHO.

During this engagement, we heard some limited comments about physical accessibility barriers that people experience related to entrances, parking, and navigation when accessing SAHO's building. We also heard some comments about information and communication barriers related to finding and understanding information about SAHO's programs and services.

SAHO considered the feedback received and identified actions that the organization will take over the next three years to improve the accessibility of SAHO's facilities, programs, and services.

Accessibility barriers

The Accessible Saskatchewan Act defines a barrier as anything that hinders or challenges the full and equal participation in society of persons with disabilities.

There are many types of barriers that persons with disabilities may experience, including physical barriers, information and communications barriers, attitudinal barriers and technology barriers. Definitions and examples of each barrier type are outlined below to help people understand the experiences of persons with disabilities.

Physical barriers

Physical barriers exist when spaces are designed in ways that prevent or limit mobility or access.

For example:

- Hosting public events at a venue that is only accessible by stairs.
- Parking lots with no curb cuts that make it difficult to access sidewalks.
- Washrooms that lack accessible stalls or automatic door openers.

Information and communications barriers

Information and communications barriers exist when information or material is shared in a way that is not accessible to all people.

For example:

- Using small print that is hard to read.
- Websites and documents that are not accessible for screen readers.
- Videos that do not have closed captioning.

Attitudinal barriers

Attitudinal barriers exist when people act or think based on false assumptions.

For example:

- Not including persons with disabilities in decisions that impact them.
- Making assumptions about a person's ability to communicate or do things for themselves.
- Avoiding a person with a disability for fear of offending them.

Technology barriers

Technology barriers exist when technology is designed in a way that cannot be used by a variety of people.

For example:

- Inaccessible phone menus or messaging systems.
- Website that is not compatible with assistive devices (for example, screen reader, speech-to-text, etc.).
- Mobile apps that are not accessible.

Accessibility goals and actions

SAHO has taken some steps to improve the accessibility of its facilities, programs, and services. However, we recognize that progress will be ongoing as we aim to become a more inclusive organization. This plan outlines the actions that SAHO will prioritize over the next three years to remove accessibility barriers that persons with disabilities experience. SAHO will work to complete the actions outlined in this plan and raise awareness about accessibility across SAHO.

Goal 1 – Improve employee knowledge and awareness of accessibility

Increasing employee awareness about accessibility and understanding the importance of inclusion are key to improving the quality of services provided to all individuals, including persons with disabilities.

Actions for 2025-2028:

- Ensuring that leaders and employees are well-versed in these areas will contribute to a culture of inclusivity and support for individuals with disabilities. This focus will help employees identify and remove accessibility barriers, more confidently interact with persons with disabilities, and create more inclusive spaces for all.

Goal 2 – Improve Physical Accessibility

SAHO recognizes that accessible buildings are an important part of improving the accessibility of SAHO's services. SAHO aims to create barrier-free physical spaces by addressing issues related to parking, entrances, and walkways.

Achievements to date:

SAHO has made accessibility improvements to its office space during its move to a new leased office space at the Delta Hotel in November 2023. These improvements include all new leasehold improvements constructed according to the most recent building code requirements. Offices and meeting rooms were designed to accommodate visitors who use a wheelchair or a walker.

Actions for 2025-2028:

- Evaluate SAHO's office space to better understand current accessibility barriers and to identify areas for improvement. Assessments will help pinpoint barriers and prioritize upgrades.
- Develop strategies to increase braille signage and make accessibility improvements to reception areas in SAHO's office space.
- Engage and collaborate with landlord and property owners to identify and remove accessibility barriers and encourage accessibility improvements. Some comments noted concerns for ensuring safe all-weather access to the building, and SAHO will continue to raise these issues with the landlord.

Goal 3 – Enhance Information and Communication Accessibility

To ensure that all individuals can easily access and understand information, SAHO will continue to improve the clarity and accessibility of communications across all platforms. As many individuals access information through digital platforms like websites it is important to make sure that digital content is understandable and accessible on the devices that people use.

Actions for 2025-2028:

- SAHO will continue to review and improve the accessibility of its websites and web-based services.

- SAHO will work with our provider and update, where necessary, its website to comply with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), ensuring it is accessible to individuals with disabilities. This may include adding text alternatives for images, ensuring sufficient color contrast, enabling keyboard navigation, and making digital content more user-friendly for those using assistive technologies such as screen readers and will make digital content easier to navigate for individuals with disabilities.

Goal 4 – Address Attitudinal Barriers

SAHO seeks to foster an inclusive workplace culture by increasing awareness and understanding of accessibility challenges.

Actions for 2025-28:

- SAHO's Senior Leadership Team will be responsible to provide ongoing feedback on accessibility matters. This will include assessing and improving accessibility efforts by gathering feedback from employees, clients, and visitors. Their role will include identifying new accessibility barriers, recommend practical solutions, and ensure that initiatives are informed by those directly affected, fostering a more inclusive and responsive work environment. Employee input will help identify new barriers and recommend actionable solutions.

Goal 5 – Improve Technology Accessibility

Ensuring that digital platforms and tools are accessible to all users is a key priority for SAHO.

Achievements to date:

As part of our new leased office space, SAHO upgraded its network and internet infrastructure. SAHO also provides free Wi-Fi for visitors to help them access information. This ensures persons who are D/deaf and Hard of Hearing can use internet-based sign language interpretation services and allows visitors to access information on their mobile devices without impacting their mobile data usage.

Actions for 2025-2028:

- Evaluate the provision of alternative digital communication options for employees and clients. Expanding digital communication channels, such as chatbots and video conferencing with captioning, will improve access for individuals with diverse needs.

Conclusion

SAHO remains committed to fostering an inclusive and accessible environment. This plan will be reviewed and updated every three years to ensure continuous improvement. We welcome ongoing feedback from our community about accessibility barriers that impact the lives of persons with disabilities.

Contact us

Please contact the SAHO Office to share any feedback, questions, or comments you have on our accessibility plan, or to request an alternate format of this document.

SAHO

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