



Homes First Society – Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Introduction

Homes First strives to meet the needs of its employees and customers with disabilities and is working hard to remove and prevent barriers to accessibility.

Our organization is committed to fulfilling our requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

This accessibility plan outlines the steps Homes First is taking to meet those requirements established by the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) and to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.

Our plan shows how Homes First will play its role in making Ontario an accessible province for all Ontarians.

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan:

Accessibility Requirement	Status	Compliance Deadline	Responsibility
<i>Customer Service</i>			
Accessible Customer Service Policy <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and implement an Accessible Customer Service Policy addressing all requirements under the regulation. 2. Develop and deliver training to all staff, volunteers, and individuals completing work on behalf of Homes First that may provide assistance to the public. Provide training to all new staff. 3. Develop and make public a process for receiving and responding to feedback from customers with disabilities. 	Completed/ Ongoing	01/01/12	Human Resources (HR)/Department
<i>Homes First's Action Plan</i>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Homes First has developed and implemented an Accessible Customer Service Policy specific to the organization. This policy is updated and maintained by the HR department. 2. Online training as well as refresher courses have been developed and delivered to HFS 			



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staff. All new staff are required to participate in and complete an online AODA Customer Service Training within their first two weeks of employment with HFS. A record of completed training is retained by the HR department.

3. Homes First has developed and made public a process for receiving and responding to feedback from customers with disabilities. The feedback process is inclusive of multiple means by which feedback can be received, including by phone, in-person, by E-mail and by written correspondence. Client-facing employees have been informed of and trained on the company's feedback process.

Part 1 - General Requirements

Accessibility Policies

1. Create and make public a statement of commitment.
2. Develop and implement company-specific accessibility policies.

Completed/
Ongoing

01/01/14

HR Department

Homes First's Action Plan

1. Homes First has created and made public a statement of commitment. The statement of commitment is located on the company's website.
2. Homes First has created the *HFS Accessibility Policy*. The Policy is located on the HFS website and included in our employee orientation package. An additional *Early and Safe Return to Work/Accommodation Plan Procedure* has been created for internal use to communicate how Homes First will meet its requirements under the IASR, and to address employee responsibilities and expectations. The *Early and Safe Return to Work/Accommodation Plan Procedure* has been provided to all employees and will be provided to all new hires as part of their orientation package.

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

1. Create and make public a multi-year accessibility plan.
2. Provide the plan in accessible formats upon request.
3. Review the plan every five (5) years.

Completed/
Ongoing

01/01/14

HR Department

Homes First's Action Plan



1. An accessibility plan has been created to include training, procedures and policy development to ensure the identification and removal of barriers. The plan has been approved and is available to the public via the HFS website.
2. Requests for accessible formats of this document will be forwarded to the HR Department who will work with the individual to determine the most suitable format as applicable.

<p><i>Training</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train all employees, including volunteers on applicable IASR requirements and the organization's responsibilities under the Human Rights Code (as it pertains to persons with disabilities). 	<p>Completed/ Ongoing</p>	<p>01/01/15</p>	<p>HR Department – HR Administrators</p>
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<p><i>Homes First's Action Plan</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Training for employees and volunteers will be delivered within one month of hire and every 5 years as a refresher. 2. A record of completed training will be retained via the HR Department.
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Part II - Information and Communication Standard

<p><i>Accessible Websites and Web Content</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure website and web content published after January 1, 2012 conforms to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, level A. 	<p>Completed/ Ongoing</p>	<p>01/01/14</p>	<p>IT Department/ Communications Team</p>
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<p><i>Homes First's Action Plan</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To date, Homes First's website and its content meet 89% of the requirements under the WCAG 2.0 level A. 2. Homes First is working to re-develop our website and in doing so will ensure that our IT/Communications department is fully aware of WCAG requirements and will ensure all new content and/or any substantial refreshes to the site conform to established



guidelines.			
<p><i>Feedback</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upon request, be able to receive and respond to feedback from clients, individuals inquiring about HFS, our employees and members of the public who have a disability. 	Completed	01/01/15	HR/Department – HR Administrators
<p><i>Homes First's Action Plan</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A process for receiving and responding to accessible feedback requests has been developed and communicated to all relevant employees. Currently Homes First can facilitate requests via the phone, fax, E-mail and mail (enlarged text available). 2. As feedback may be received by various departments and personnel at Homes First, including reception and customer service; training on how to receive and respond to accessible feedback requests has been developed and delivered based on the different positions within the company. 3. Receiving and responding to feedback will be included in all new hire orientations where the position frequently receives and responds to requests. 4. All other employees will be notified as to the internal party to whom they should direct any accessible feedback requests. 			
<p><i>Accessible Formats and Communication Supports</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Upon request, provide accessible formats and communication supports to individuals with disabilities. 2. Notify the public of the availability of accessible formats and communication supports. 3. Where a communication support or accessible format cannot be provided, consult with the client to arrange for a suitable format as soon as possible, or explain why it cannot be provided. 	Ongoing	01/01/16	HR/Department Managers
<p><i>Homes First's Action Plan</i></p>			



1. Develop guidelines/processes for responding to various requests. Currently, clients and the public may submit a complaint or inquiry through the company Feedback Form.
2. Train employees on guidelines/processes and ensure they are aware that requests that cannot be met immediately must be responded to stating why the request cannot be made. Training to include typical requests that may be encountered, how the request may be facilitated and will be department-specific.
3. Make public Homes First's ability to provide for or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports by posting a statement on the company website.

Part III - Employment Standard

Workplace Emergency Response Information

1. Create and implement individualized plans to assist employees with disabilities during an emergency.
2. Obtain consent from employees with individualized plans to disclose emergency response or evacuations plans to the person responsible for assisting the employee in situations where the plan requires the assistance of a colleague.
3. Create and provide emergency information formatted in such a way that the employee with the disability can understand its contents/direction as soon as practicable following the receipt of the request and/or becoming aware of the need for an individualized plan.
4. Review the individualized plan/information:
 - When the employee moves to a different location in the office;
 - When the employee's overall accommodation needs and plan are reviewed; and
 - When the company reviews its general emergency response

Ongoing
(based on
employee
needs)

01/01/12

HR/Department



policies.			
<p><i>Homes First's Action Plan</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Emergency planning information and directions are included in the <i>HFS Accessibility Policy</i> which has been provided and communicated to all employees and provided to all new hires as a part of their orientation package. 2. The process/policy used by the HR department to develop an individualized emergency response plan includes the requirement that consent is obtained from the requesting employee to disclose the contents of the plan to the individual required to provide assistance when responding to the emergency or evacuation. The process for obtaining consent also includes obtaining the acknowledgement of the employee designated to provide the assistance that the confidentiality of the individualized plan will be maintained, unless the health and safety of either party is potentially compromised. 3. Individualized emergency plans include the requirement that the plan be reviewed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o If the employee moves to another location within the office that would affect that person's ability to respond to the emergency or evacuation (the ability of the individual designated to provide assistance, where needed, will also be considered); o On a recurring timeline, to be established during the creation of the individualized emergency response plan. Factors that are taken into consideration when developing the recurring timeline (i.e. once every six (6) months, annually, etc.) include the nature and severity of the disability as well as its classification of permanent or temporary. A review of the plan will also be initiated if requested by the employee; and o When the company amends its emergency response and/or evacuation procedures. 			
<p><i>Documented Individual Accommodation Plans</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and Ontario's Accessibility Laws. 	Ongoing	01/01/16	HR/Department
<p><i>Homes First's Action Plan</i></p>			



1. Homes First will develop and implement a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and Ontario's Accessibility Laws.

Recruitment, Assessment and Selection

1. Notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in the company's recruitment processes.
2. During the recruitment process, notify applicants selected to participate in our selection and assessment processes that accommodations are available upon request.
3. Should a job applicant request accommodation, consult with the individual and make adjustments to best suit their needs.
4. Notify successful applicants of the company's policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

Ongoing

01/01/16

HR/Department Managers

Homes First's Action Plan

1. Homes First has an accessibility statement included on all job postings to ensure it is communicated to all potential applicants.
2. Successful applicants will be informed of the availability of accommodations relating to Homes First's selection/hiring processes upon initial contact from the HR Recruiter.
3. When scheduling interviews, Homes First will include a statement in all e-mail confirmations indicating to the applicant that accommodations are available and inviting the applicant to inform the HR Recruiter of any necessary accommodations.
4. The HFS Accessibility Policy will be provided to all new hires as part of their orientation package.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees

1. Where an employee with a disability

Ongoing

01/01/15

HR/Department Managers



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<p>requests it, work with that individual to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job; and ○ Information that is generally available to employees in the workplace. <p>2. Where a request is made, work with the requesting employee to determine the suitability of the proposed accessible format/communication support.</p>			
<p><i>Homes First's Action Plan</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The availability of accessible formats and communication supports has been communicated to all employees through the company's Accessibility Policy. All future employees will be made aware of their availability through the same policy which is provided with the new hire orientation package. Information that is needed to perform an employee's job is generally provided via one-on-one or group training sessions whereas information that is generally available in the workplace is typically provided in written policy format available in hardcopy or electronically. Prior to providing the information needed to perform one's job or information generally available in the workplace, employees requiring accessible formats or communication supports will be requested to notify the HR department so that alternate arrangements may be made. 2. Upon receiving a request, the HR department will work with the employee and any individuals responsible for providing the information (for example the employee's manager, supervisor or team lead) to deliver a suitable accessible format or communication support. Examples include – providing documents in larger fonts, or different formats (PDF, Word). 			
<p><i>Information for Employees</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communicate the company's policy on accommodating employees with disabilities to all staff members. 2. Ensure that all new hires are informed of the company's policy on accommodating employees with 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>01/01/16</p>	<p>HR</p>



disabilities.			
<p><i>Homes First's Action Plan</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide all new hires with the HFS Accessibility Policy in their new hire package. The policy addresses all of the means by which Homes First will support employees with disabilities, including emergency planning/responses, accessible formats and communication supports. 2. Ensure that all employees are informed of changes to the HFS Accessibility Policy as they occur. Changes will be communicated via E-mail and/or group information sessions. 			
<p><i>Processes to Accommodate Employees/Return to Work Process</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a process to develop accommodation plans and return to work plans for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and who require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work. 	Ongoing	01/01/16	HR
<p><i>Homes First's Action Plan</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess IASR requirements and develop a template accommodation form and a return to work form that both address all applicable requirements. Use of these updated forms will ensure that all accommodation and RTW plans are properly recorded and retained on file. For consistency, the accommodation plan template will be used in conjunction with RTW processes. 			

Conclusion

Homes First is committed to the prevention, identification and removal of accessibility barriers. Homes First Society's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every five years.

Created: June 2021