

# WACOSA

## Organizational Accessibility Plan 2018

### Architectural Access

**Barrier:** The small outside ramp of Door E at the 321 Sundial Drive location is in need of repair or replacement to prevent falls.

**Solution:** We will have the ramp repaired or replaced at the earliest possible time and educate staff and clients on safe exit and entry as well.

**Due date:** Spring 2018

**Responsible persons:** Vice President of Quality Assurance & Programs and Facilities & Fleet Maintenance Manager.

**Progress/Year End Report 2018:** *The ramp was repaired with an aluminum diamond plate cover in April 2018 and continues to function properly.*

### Environmental Access:

**Barrier:** WACOSA is required to have annual Workforce Innovation & Opportunities Act (WIOA) meeting documentation in client files to continue to pay clients under the FLSA Section 14c certificate.

**Solution:** WACOSA will work with the Vocational Rehab provider to schedule required annual meetings with all our clients and maintain the required documentation in each client file.

**Due date:** Ongoing during 2018

**Responsible person:** Vice President of Quality Assurance & Programs and team

**Progress/Year End Report 2018:** *Our AccStats database was updated to capture all required WIOA information for each affected client and reporting processes were established. The WIOA process was centralized within the Program Department and is currently in compliance with legal requirements.*

### Attitudinal Access and Financial Access

**1 Barrier:** Some clients have had difficulty sustaining employment due to soft skill issues. WACOSA has been very successful teaching soft skills. We have determined over time that, soft skills development is instrumental in helping individuals obtain and retain their employment. At this time we continue to believe that investing in quality training for staff and clients will lead to increased employment success.

**Solution:** WACOSA will continue to focus on social and emotional intelligence coaching for all staff to increase our collective skills at supporting all clients to be successful in the soft skills related to community employment settings. We have formed a Top 20 committee of staff to work throughout the year on developing and implementing new activities and curriculum that promote the concepts and skills learned from Top 20 and The WACOSA WAY with all staff and clients.

**Due date:** Ongoing throughout 2018 with staff and clients.

**Responsible person:** Vice President of Quality Assurance & Programs/ASD Specialist

**Progress/Year End Report 2018:** *The Top 20 committee continued to plan and implement new training activities for both staff and clients. Top 20 training was completed March 2018 for new staff and clients. We again celebrated our annual Top 20 month with a dunk tank and fun games and activities in August. Will recommend continuing this training.*

**2. Barrier:** Funding cuts continue to result in restrictions to days of service and, in some cases, clients are told they are not eligible for services or need to be on a waiting list for services. Funding both Extended Employment and DTH services continues to be a struggle for Stearns County.

**Solution:** WACOSA is a member of MOHR, an association of community rehabilitation programs and day training and habilitation providers throughout the state. Their goals are to influence legislation for our services and to work cooperatively with DHS around service related standards. In addition to maintaining our membership in MOHR, Steve Howard will maintain his role on the various committees that are specialized in guiding legislative changes for our industries benefit.

WACOSA will also continue to engage local and state legislators by extending invitations to tour and visit with clients and staff at our facilities. We also will continue to engage in self-advocacy activities.

**Due date:** Throughout legislative session and ongoing throughout 2018.

**Responsible person:** Executive Director & Vice President of Quality Assurance & Programs

**Progress/Year End Report 2018:** WACOSA continued to invite our legislators and candidates to tour WACOSA and learn about our programs. In January Representative Tom Emmer, Representative Tama Theis, Representative Joe Perske toured WACOSA and had lunch with staff and 2 clients who told their personal stories of how WACOSA's support is important in their lives. Throughout the year we have hosted a number of other candidates and elected officials on learning tours including Heidi Everett, Senator Jeff Howe, Representative Dan Wolgamott.

Steve Howard continues was elected secretary on the MOHR Board of Directors; continuing to influence and advocate statewide for legislation that benefits WACOSA's mission. WACOSA clients also went to MOHR's Day at the Capital and advocated for themselves with our local legislators in March. We will continue these efforts in 2019.

## Employment and Community Integration Access

**Barrier:** There is a continued need for employment, particularly center-based contract work.

**Solution:** WACOSA sales staff will attempt to increase center-based work opportunities by 10%; including existing and new customers. Community crew and Individual Placement opportunities will be increased by 10%; including new and existing customers.

**Due date:** Development of new options is continuous.

**Responsible person:** Executive Director

**Progress/Year End Report 2018:** We did not increase our center-based work by 10% in 2018. WACOSA found out the one of our largest employers, Electrolux, will be leaving our community in 2019. To combat these center-based job losses Steve Howard put together a team that meets monthly to develop and act on new business opportunities to replace Electrolux losses. The team has met with Greater St Cloud Development Corporation, Career Solutions, and Mn DEED staff to further strengthen and develop existing and new job opportunities with our area businesses. The brainstorming team follows up with ideas and leads that have led to some new job opportunities and new sales consultations with current customers. We will continue this process in 2019.

## Communication access

**Barrier:** We do not have clients who are unable to use our services due to communication barriers. We have worked at increasing staff language skills to assist in growing our Somali population to be able to communicate with staff. We have hired native Somali speaking staff to help train other staff some basic words and cultural expectations. Paperwork is also translated into other languages upon request.

**Solution:** WACOSA will continue to train non-Somali speaking staff on the basics of the language to better enable them to communicate with our Somali clients.

**Due Date:** On going through 2018

**Person Responsible:** Vice President of Quality Assurance & Programs

**Progress/Year End Report 2018:** WACOSA continues to invest in language interpretation services for our clients when needed. We continue to train staff in the Somali language as well as train Somali clients to learn English words and phrases so we can build on everyone's communication skill sets.

## Technology Access

**Barrier:** Computers and/or iPads with appropriate communication apps are available at all sites and shifts. All staff and clients have access to computers while at WACOSA in order to complete their work and/or goals. At this time there are no known technology barriers.

**Due Date:** Ongoing assessment of needs

**Person Responsible:** Vice President of Quality Assurance & Programs

**Progress/Year End Report 2018:** WACOSA continues to provide computer and tablet access to staff and clients for work exploration and life skill activities.

## Transportation Access

**Barrier:** We do not have anyone on a waiting list for transportation or accessible transportation. We do have an increase in clients needing supervised transportation from within our service area.

**Solution:** WACOSA continues to strategize to maximize our transportation resources and will continue to address individual transportation needs as they relate to community employment, self-regulation of behavior needs, access to community activities and other recognized needs.

**Due Date:** Ongoing as assessed

**Person Responsible:** Vice President of Quality Assurance & Programs/Transportation Coordinator

**Progress/Year End Report 2018:** WACOSA continues to assess and adjust transportation routes as needed and can be accommodated.

**Other Identified Needs:** There are no other identified needs at this time.

This progress report was completed by Nancy Betts, Vice President of Quality Assurance & Programs and has been reviewed and approved by:

Steve Howard, Executive Director: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_