

WACOSA

Organizational Accessibility Plan 2023

Architectural Access

Barrier: There are no known architectural access barriers at this time. WACOSA continues to assess and act on any known or discovered barriers.

Solution: N/A

Due date: N/A

Responsible persons: Program Director and Facilities & Fleet Maintenance Manager.

Progress/Year End Report 2023: N/A

Environmental Access:

Barrier: After COVID reopening WACOSA's staffing remains inadequate to bring back clients previously prohibited from attending as well as do intakes for those waiting for services.

Solution: WACOSA continues to monitor salary and benefits for DSP's and adjusting as resources allow. WACOSA continues to recruit, retain, and create opportunities for advancement at WACOSA; thereby creating a career path for our workforce. Continued engagement with staff to be able to be agile in finding the right fit within the organization for both the staff and WACOSA needs.

Due date: Ongoing during 2023 or until restrictions are lifted.

Responsible person: Program Director, Human Resources Manager

Progress/Year End Report 2023: *In October 2023, WACOSA provided a wage increase to all staff.*

Following the employee satisfaction survey, WACOSA explored an alternative medical insurance and are continuing to provide the NICE program at no cost to employees. The goal is to attract and retain new employees.

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, 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. At our June 2023 in-service, we will have Willow Sweeny do a Top 20 training for all staff.

Due date: Ongoing throughout 2023 with staff and clients.

Responsible person: Program Director/ASD Specialist

Progress/Year End Report 2023: *All new staff are trained in Top 20 thinking. In June 2023, WACOSA staff participated in Willow Sweeny's Top 20 training to learn and implement these skills with WACOSA shareholders, coworkers, and clients. There has not been any in-person Top 20 committee meetings due to staffing shortages. We will continue this goal in 2024.*

2. Barrier: Funding cuts continue to result in restrictions on 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.

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, Nancy Betts will maintain her 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 2023.

Responsible person: Executive Director & Program Director

Progress/Year End Report 2023: *Nancy Betts, Executive Director, represented WACOSA's financial interests as a member of MOHR and as a MOHR board member. She also participated on various MOHR subcommittees to advocate for funding stabilization. Nancy also collaborated with MN Senator Aric Putnam, and a client from Sauk Centre, testifying in front of the MN Legislature resulting in an increase in Extended Employment funding state-wide.*

WACOSA clients are involved in their own advocacy efforts by participating in Day at the Capital on March 28, 2023, Self-Advocacy classes on-site at WACOSA with outside facilitators, and through our "Right On" Connect Academy virtual classes held weekly, as they choose to do so.

Employment and Community Integration Access

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

Solution: WACOSA sales staff will continue to develop new and existing job opportunities with our area business partners in 2023.

Due date: Development of new options is continuous.

Responsible person: Executive Director & Sales and Marketing Director

Progress/Year End Report 2023: *WACOSA maintains center-based work contracts with multiple business partners as well as community-based work sites. At this point we do not have the staff or client resources to increase our work capacity at all WACOSA sites; this is especially true for community-based worksites.*

Communication access

Barrier: We do not have clients who are unable to use our services due to communication barriers. WACOSA continues to assess and act on any known or discovered communication barriers. this time

Solution: N/A

Due Date: N/A

Person Responsible: Program Director

Progress/Year End Report 2023: *N/A. WACOSA will continue to assess communication barriers at all program sites as they arise.*

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 to complete their work and/or goals. Remote services are implemented for those who choose them, and additional technology infrastructure is needed to sustain these efforts.

Solution: All staff are trained at least annually on how to assist clients develop their technology access and skills

Due Date: Ongoing training and implementation of technology through 2023.

Person Responsible: Executive Director and Program Manager of Day Supports

Progress/Year End Report 2023: All sites and shifts continue to be updated with adaptive technology hardware, including computers, tablets, cameras, and other equipment necessary to continue to offer virtual classes. Media staff and clients completed various projects over the year including a promotional video for the local Art Crawl, videotaping/ interviewing participants at a variety of WACOSA-sponsored community events, etc. All staff are trained in the basic use of the equipment with additional media training for WACOSA staff that was completed at the January 2023 in-service. WACOSA clients had opportunities to work with WACOSA's media staff to continue to increase their access and skills with various technologies.

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. We have received 5310 Grants for vehicles but are unable to purchase vehicles with grant dollars due to vehicle shortages. WACOSA will explore the idea of obtaining smaller vehicles and electric vehicles for small groups of people to take into the community for activities.

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 assessment of needs through 2023

Person Responsible: Program Director & Building and Fleet Manager

Progress/Year End Report 2023: WACOSA continues to offer various transportation options for those individuals attending our facilities.

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

This progress report was completed by Lynn Welle, Program Director and has been reviewed and approved by:

Nancy Betts, Executive Director: _____

Date: _____