

WACOSA

Organizational Accessibility Plan Year End Report 2025

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 Directors and Facilities & Fleet Maintenance Manager.

Progress/ Year End Report 2025: N/A

Environmental Access:

Barrier: WACOSA's staffing remains inadequate to admit potential clients that want to receive WACOSA services.

Solution: WACOSA continues to monitor salary and benefits for DSP's and making adjustments 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 2025.

Responsible person: Program Directors, Human Resources Manager

Progress/ Year End Report 2025: *In October 2025, WACOSA provided a wage increase to all staff. Following the employee satisfaction survey, WACOSA continued with the current medical insurance; WACOSA contracted with a new EAP company with overall positive feedback; and WACOSA continued to provide the NICE program at no cost to employees. WACOSA applied for and received the MN Care Force Incentive Grant through MN DHS which would provided \$385/\$770 to DSPs that met the designated criteria. The continued goal is to attract and retain new employees.*

Attitudinal Access and Financial Access

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. In June 2025, Willow Sweeny is scheduled to provide Top 20 training to staff; and staff at all levels will continue 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. The focus of our June 2025 in-service will strive to focus on providing additional support and training to staff to provide the needed soft skills support to our clients.

Due date: Ongoing throughout 2025 with staff and clients.

Responsible person: Program Directors/ASD Specialist

Progress/Year End Report 2025: *All new staff continue to be trained in Top 20 thinking. In June 2025, WACOSA staff participated in Team Building Training which included a review of Top 20 training presented by Willow Sweeney to both new and seasoned staff. The ongoing focus is 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 2026.*

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.

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, along with Lynn Welle and Mary Rothstein (Program Directors), will maintain their roles 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 2025.

Responsible person: Executive Director & Program Directors

Progress/Year End Report 2025: *Nancy Betts, Executive Director, represented WACOSA's financial interests as a member of MOHR and as a MOHR board member. Nancy, along with Program Directors, Lynn Welle and Mary Rothstein, also participated on various MOHR subcommittees to advocate for funding stabilization.*

WACOSA clients are involved in their own advocacy efforts by participating in the annual Day at the Capital on March 25, 2025 and April 29, 2025, 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 2025. When paid work opportunities are not available to all clients, staff will focus on increasing access to meaningful community activities.

Due date: Development of new options is continuous.

Responsible person: Executive Director, Sales and Marketing Director & Program Directors

Progress/Year End Report 2025: *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. Throughout 2025, WACOSA Leadership staff continued to explore and implement meaningful community activities for clients that wish to participate .. WACOSA provided support to clients with Ambassadors for Respect, Paramount Theatre production, etc. In 2025, WACOSA Leadership staff began meeting and planning with Stearns County Human Services personnel on a Grant to increase clients' participation and skills in learning about securing and maintaining competitive employment in the community. This Grant will continue into 2026 and 2027.*

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 Directors

Progress/Year End Report 2025: 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: WACOSA will continue to enhance our technological equipment. All staff are trained at least annually on how to assist clients to develop their technology access and skills. Senior Leadership staff will continue to brainstorm and implement ways to increase technology access and classes for both staff and clients.

Due Date: Ongoing training and implementation of technology through 2025.

Person Responsible: Executive Director, Program Directors & Senior Leadership

Progress/Year End Report 2025: 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 videos, videotaping/ interviewing participants at a variety of WACOSA-sponsored community events, etc. Throughout the year, all staff are trained in the basic use of the equipment with additional media training for WACOSA staff. WACOSA clients had opportunities to work with WACOSA's media staff to continue to increase their access and skills with various technologies; having access to WACOSA's computer lab as they desire. On a regular basis, Senior Leadership meet to update and discuss new and ongoing technology accessibility for both DSPs and clients.

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. 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 2025.

Person Responsible: Program Directors & Building and Fleet Manager

Progress/Year End Report 2025: 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 and Mary Rothstein, Program Directors and has been reviewed and approved by:

Nancy Betts, Executive Director: _____

Date: _____