

1 General

1.1 Statement of Commitment

Swift-Net.ca is committed to providing an inclusive and accessible environment for all employees, clients, and stakeholders in alignment with the Accessible Canada Act (ACA). Our Accessibility Plan is based on consultations with our employees and key stakeholders regarding reducing barriers. Their input and feedback to ensure that the plan remains responsive to changes within our organization, emerging accessibility challenges, and updates in regulations or best practices. This will enable us to continually improve and enhance our accessibility initiatives. This Accessibility Plan outlines the strategies and actions Swift-Net.ca will take to identify, prevent, and remove barriers to accessibility, ensuring equal opportunity and participation for everyone.

1.2 Contact Information & Feedback Process

You can submit feedback about accessibility or this plan by contacting:

Darren Elder – President
darren@swift-net.ca
306-825-7111
Box 40, Marshall, SK S0M – 1R0

1.3 Alternative Formats

You can request alternative formats of this plan, and a description of our feedback process by contacting:

Darren Elder – President
darren@swift-net.ca
306-825-7111
Box 40, Marshall, SK S0M – 1R0

We will provide the following alternative formats within 15 days of the initial request:

- Print
- Large print (increased font size)

We will provide the following alternative formats within 45 days of the initial request:

- Braille (a system of raised dots for people who are blind or who have low vision so can read with their fingers)
- Audio (a recording of someone reading the text out loud)

2. Areas Described under Section 5 of the ACA (Accessible Canada Act)

2.1 The Built Environment

The built environment priority area refers to all Swift-Net.ca physical spaces under federal jurisdiction. This includes considering accessibility features, such as accessible washrooms, lighting, signage, and noise.

Swift-Net.ca complies with building codes and requirements for physical accessibility in its office spaces. Swift-Net.ca works hard to ensure that our premises are accessible. We complete repairs and replacements as necessary.

Swift-Net.ca has emergency procedures, plans and public safety information available. We have developed emergency procedures for all employees. These procedures are communicated to the employees' respective managers and safety personnel.

GOALS

- Swift-Net.ca will review and update, as necessary, all required accessible signage at every location to identify what is accessible.
- Swift-Net.ca will review and evaluate feedback and implement improvements to the built environment to remove and prevent barriers.
- Swift-Net.ca will continually review the built environment to identify ways to implement accessibility best practices, where possible.
- Swift-Net.ca will continue to proactively incorporate accessibility considerations into plans for future renovations and/or in acquiring new space.
- Swift-Net.ca will explore the possibility of installing auditory or visual cues in our office in the case of an evacuation.
- Swift-Net.ca's JHSC will ensure adequate training for Managers regarding accessibility.
- Swift-Net.ca will continue to budget for repairs and replacements related to accessibility.

2.2 Employment

The Employment priority area covers an employee's experience at Swift-Net.ca. It starts from the recruitment and onboarding process. It ends when the individual leaves the organization. It also includes accommodation and short and long-term disability absences from work.

Swift-Net.ca has a host of administrative and physical labour type positions. Travel and performance of duties within a client's establishment and yard is required for certain positions. Hybrid work from home may be accommodated for certain positions where workstations in home replicate the organization's internal policy standards.

Swift-Net.ca works hard to promote inclusivity and accessibility in attracting potential employees to our organization. We recruit at in-person career fairs, online, and in print media.

Swift-Net.ca asks for feedback from our staff through regular meetings, 360 feedback surveys and when conducting Employee evaluations.

We regularly review and audit our policies, practices and programs to ensure we are making progress towards inclusion and accessibility.

We have been responsive to the needs of our employees as they arise. Managers have a formal role in the accommodations process as they are the first people to be approached by an employee. We support employees with workplace accommodations in consultation with the employee and any other professional (ie. medical doctor) when necessary.

GOALS

- Swift-Net.ca will conduct a further review of the current state of the accommodations process at Swift-Net.ca, including awareness among team members regarding the process.
- Swift-Net.ca will continue to promote and support accessibility across the organization and ensure that accessibility events, activities, programs, and support resources are promoted and available to all employees.
- Swift-Net.ca will review its recruitment and hiring process to find and remove accessibility barriers for job applicants.
- Swift-Net.ca will publish and share guidelines on how employees and applicants with disabilities can request accommodation.
- Swift-Net.ca will formalize an accessibility feedback process for employees.
- Swift-Net.ca will review accessibility training needs with the organization and work to offer more training based on accessibility best practices.

2.3 Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

The ICT priority area relates to the technologies our employees and customers use. This includes hardware, software, assistive devices and all other aspects of technology. Ensuring that internal and external technology tools, including our internal and external websites, are accessible will help employees and customers have barrier-free access to full and equal participation in society.

Swift-Net.ca works diligently to ensure our website and apps meet the latest accessibility standards.

All team members at Swift-Net.ca use Google Workspace, which provides a range of accessibility features.

GOALS

- Swift-Net.ca will research, evaluate, and review its communication equipment and technologies to identify barriers and make plans to make them accessible.
- Swift-Net.ca will review our key webpages for meeting certain WCAG (Website Content Accessibility Guidelines).

- Swift-Net.ca will provide further training and communications to employees on the accessibility features built into Google Workspace.

2.4 Communication, other than ICT

The Communication priority area relates to communication with employees and customers. It will ensure that all people are treated with dignity and have meaningful options and the freedom to make their own choices, with support if they desire. Our employees and customers communicate in several different ways, from reviewing our internal/external websites, in-person, over the phone, via online chat, SMS and email. A review was done of all internal and external communications, besides ICT, to identify barriers and solutions. This includes print materials and publications. It also includes digital communications such as websites, digital materials and client digital communications (e.g. emails, sms).

Communication is fundamental to the work we do at Swift-Net.ca. We are committed to meeting the communication needs of persons with disabilities.

The Swift-Net.ca website is a great resource for people with disabilities. It provides clear, easy-to-navigate information. We also offer ways for people with disabilities to provide feedback on accessibility.

Our marketing team follows accessibility guidelines. They write social media posts and advertising in plain language. Our marketing team also creates media for various days of significance for accessibility throughout the year.

GOALS

- Swift-Net.ca will work to build awareness among our employees regarding accessible communication practices.
- Swift-Net.ca will work to ensure that documents are offered in accessible formats.
- Swift-Net.ca will continue to ensure our social media content can be accessed by all. They will include alternative text on images and closed video captioning where possible.
- Swift-Net.ca will consider additional accessible ways to market its products and services to persons with disabilities.
- Swift-Net.ca will consult annually with its employees regarding accessibility and disabilities in the workplace.

2.5 The Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities

The Procurement priority area relates to how goods, services, and facilities are purchased by Swift-Net.ca. Swift-Net.ca buys various products and services to support our work and employees. We use a system of rules and guidelines to ensure we buy competitively priced products, and services for the best value for money. We are dedicated to ensuring the products and services we buy are as accessible as possible. The following goals will ensure accessibility is considered when we make a new purchase.

GOALS

- Being a rural ISP, Swift-Net.ca is more limited in having a wide range of available vendors for procuring goods and services that have accessibility in mind. We will review procurement-related documents and review procedures to improve accessibility where possible.
- Swift-Net.ca will learn more about best practices for accessible procurement.

2.6 The Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

This priority area focuses on making all Swift-Net.ca programs and services accessible to all. It involves considering persons with disabilities when creating programs and services and requires us to continuously improve them.

- Swift-Net.ca is committed to providing goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities.
- We train all public-facing employees to provide excellent customer service to all customers, including those with disabilities.
- Swift-Net.ca offers accessible support to customers by telephone. We accommodate customers with support persons.
- We welcome feedback from customers, especially from persons with disabilities.
- Swift-Net.ca has community investment programs for all persons, including those with disabilities, such as Free Wi-Fi hotspots for non-profit organizations.

GOALS

- Swift-Net.ca will investigate additional ways to mark a customer's accessibility needs in their file.
- Swift-Net.ca will continue to engage in ongoing training of customer service and tech support representatives.
- We will continue to promote our community investment programs benefitting persons with disabilities or accessibility concerns.
- Swift-Net.ca will seek and review feedback from disabled customers to improve our services.

2.7 TRANSPORTATION

Swift-Net.ca does not offer transportation services and therefore has nothing to report under this heading.

3. Consultations

Swift-Net.ca consulted with its employees and also garnered feedback from a stakeholders group via CANWISP which we are a member of.

Swift-Net.ca analyzed the feedback results and comments to identify common themes, which were categorized into physical, technological, and attitudinal barriers. This information was used in developing the accessibility plan.

On a go-forward basis, Swift-Net.ca will continue to consult people with disabilities annually.

APPENDIX – The Principles of the ACA

The Principles of the ACA are set out at section 6 of that Act. They are:

- a) all persons must be treated with dignity regardless of their disabilities;
- b) all persons must have the same opportunity to make for themselves the lives that they are able and wish to have regardless of their disabilities;
- c) all persons must have barrier-free access to full and equal participation in society, regardless of their disabilities;
- d) all persons must have meaningful options and be free to make their own choices, with support if they desire, regardless of their disabilities;
- e) laws, policies, programs, services and structures must take into account the disabilities of persons, the different ways that persons interact with their environments and the multiple and intersecting forms of marginalization and discrimination faced by persons;
- f) persons with disabilities must be involved in the development and design of laws, policies, programs, services, and structures; and
- g) the development and revision of accessibility standards and the making of regulations must be done with the objective of achieving the highest level of accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Swift-Net.ca considered these principles in preparing its accessibility plan.