

COTTONWOOD, INC.

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

2022 - 2023

(October 2022 – September 2023)

Updated October 2022

The Cottonwood, Inc. Governing Board reviews and approves the Accessibility Plan annually to ensure the promotion of full accessibility for persons served. Following is a summary of 2021-2022 goals and accomplishments and the Accessibility Goals for 2022-2023.

<p style="text-align: center;">GOALS FOR 2021-2022 (October 2021 – September 2022)</p>
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1. Accessible Toilet Upgrades

Upgrade two accessible toilets (taller models) annually throughout all three Cottonwood, Inc. Buildings to more fully accommodate the aging and physical needs of individuals served, staff, and visitors.

Target Date: 2022 for first pair of upgrades

Completed: Will be carried over to next year

Additional improvements accomplished in 2021-2022 as well as general accessibility features of our services that promote full accessibility for individuals include:

Accessibility:

- Installed Dutch door on Carson staff room.
- Installed handheld shower heads at Trail Road and Carson.
- Installed raised toilets at Trail Road.
- Installed grab handles in vehicles at Rogers and Terrace.
- Added step stools in vehicles for Terrace and SIL.
- Changed vehicle to more accessible minivan at Gold House.
- Purchased two of wedges to aid in propping up consumer's legs to reduce swelling.
- Purchased adaptable trays to fit on consumer's walker to help carry their items.
- Transitional carpet strip repaired, reducing tripping hazard.
- The accessible grab bars in the bathroom were tightened.
- Purchased 10 new chairs with armrests for ease of use.
- Purchased "No Parking" signs for better access to park close to the center.
- Purchased recycle bins by the coat hooks to make it easier for the consumers to access their coats.



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2022 CONSUMER TRANSPORTATION SUMMARY

The majority of consumer rides to and from work are provided by T-Lift/First Transit, an organization hired by the City of Lawrence to provide both fixed route and door-to-door paratransit services. They are following CDC guidelines for mass transit during the COVID-19 pandemic. JobLink works closely with T-Lift to schedule approximately 405 demand rides per week. In addition, there are around 48 rides scheduled each week which have been set up with T-Lift as subscription rides, which guarantees that these individuals will always have their rides available, as opposed to the demand rides, which sometimes cannot be scheduled because the time the ride is needed is booked. Both the demand and the subscription rides are monitored by the Data Manger to ensure accuracy.

Currently, paratransit rides cost \$2.00 each. Purchasing a \$20 punch card, which is good for 10 rides, is one option for paying for paratransit rides. These punch cards may be purchased at the Cottonwood front desk, as well as through the City of Lawrence, the Community Mercantile (the Merc), Dillon's and Hy-Vee. A monthly pass for paratransit and fixed route buses may be purchased through the City, the Merc, Dillon's and Hy-Vee, but not through Cottonwood. The monthly paratransit pass is \$68, and the fixed route is \$34 (\$17 for riders with disabilities). Also, the city sells 10 ride punch cards for the fixed route buses for \$10 (\$5 for riders with disabilities).

Should a JobLink/Cottonwood consumer forget to bring a punch card or money for a paratransit ride, arrangements have been made for the ride to be charged to Cottonwood. The bill then is paid by Cottonwood and reimbursement is collected from the consumer. Through Lawrence Transit Fare Donation, JobLink/Cottonwood consumers who encounter a financial or transportation emergency may access a donated punch pass. In March 2022, Cottonwood was awarded 10 Fixed Route 10 punch passes, 5 T-Lift Paratransit 10 punch passes and 4 single ride passes. Again in August 2022, Cottonwood was awarded 10 Fixed Route 10 punch passes, 5 T-Lift Paratransit 10 punch passes and 17 single ride passes

T-Lift and the "T" (the fixed route bus) run Monday through Saturday from 6:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. The fixed route is in the process of implementing the redesign of bus routes. Routes are simplified, re-aligned and interlined to better serve the community. In August 2022, KU bus routes will begin the new routes. The remainder of the bus routes will begin the new routes and a central station or hub will be constructed early in 2023. Several fixed route buses run until 10:00 p.m. during KU Spring and Fall semesters. Para transit rides can be scheduled no earlier than 6:15 a.m. in order to comply with the mandatory 30 minute "window" (waiting period) which surrounds a ride. Generally, rides are scheduled to be up to 45 minutes in length in order to accommodate routing, although some rides are scheduled up to an hour in advance because of the distance between the pick-up and drop-off location. The final rides for the day can be scheduled no later than 7:45p.m., also to accommodate the "window."

Night Line is a new night/afterhours shared ride bus service. Rides are scheduled in advance through T-lift and are available Monday-Saturday, 8:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. Fare is \$2.00 each way per person and fixed route or T-Lift punch passes are now accepted. There is no reduced fare and fixed route or T-Lift monthly passes are not accepted. Vehicles are accessible for riders with special needs.

Currently, about 15 rides are scheduled through Independence, Inc.'s door-to-door paratransit service. They also are following CDC guidelines for mass transit during the COVID-19 pandemic. The cost per ride for this service is \$3.00 per in-town ride, \$5.00 per ride with in Douglas County, and \$30 fare for out-of-town, round-trip medical appointments. This generally is paid by the consumer's family or support team directly to Independence, Inc. Rides for this service are limited not only by availability, but also are based upon "need." The determination of "need" is made solely by Independence, Inc. Independence, Inc. paratransit rides are available Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

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Target Date: 2023 for first pair of upgrades

Completed:

2. Accessible Laundry Facilities at White House

Build accessible, ground-floor laundry facilities at White House to ensure access and accommodate the aging and physical needs of all consumers living at the site.

Target Date: 2024

Completed:

3. Bathroom Door in the Sewing Room

Consumers are having difficulty entering the bathroom with their walkers because the door is heavy and has an automatic closer that is not on a timer. Resolution: Currently getting quotes to put open button on outside of bathroom and close/lock button on the inside of the bathroom for privacy. Overall the use of the door will be much easier for the consumers to operate.

Target Date: March 31, 2023

Completed:

Ongoing activities to promote full participation & accessibility include:

- All news/media releases and public information requests are carefully reviewed and monitored by the Director of Community Relations/Development and the CEO.
- Staff members will continue to actively participate on local councils, such as parks and recreation, transportation, housing, employment, to promote full community participation for persons with developmental disabilities
- Consumer input will continue to be actively solicited regarding all aspects of their life through informal discussions, Consumer Committee meetings and through individual service planning meetings.
- An annual review of this plan and the Accessibility policy will be conducted by the Management Team, Safety Committee, Consumer Committee, and Cottonwood Board of Trustees to determine progress made and address areas of deficiency.

Colleen Himmelberg
CEO