

Access Plan Somali Museum of Minnesota Fiscal Year 2016



Approved by the Somali Museum of Minnesota Board of Directors on 04/29/2016.

INTRODUCTION:

The Somali Museum is the home of traditional Somali arts in Minnesota. Displaying a collection of over 700 pieces, and offering educational programs about Somali traditional culture that are not offered anywhere else, the Somali Museum offers an unrivaled opportunity for Minnesotans of all backgrounds to encounter and learn about Somali traditional culture. The Somali Museum's mission is to use this collection as a tool for education: making it possible for young Somalis who have grown up in the United States to connect with their culture, as well as Minnesotans of other ethnic heritage to encounter Somali art and traditional culture for the first time. The Museum's programs explore the changing role of traditional arts and culture as the Somali people move across borders and time. By promoting the highest forms of Somali creativity, the Somali Museum believes that it can also help to diminish harmful prejudice and misunderstanding. In keeping with our mission to increase access to Somali culture for all Minnesotans, The Somali Museum embraces the spirit of the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) and is committed to assuring that all members of our community can participate as fully as possible in our arts events, programs, meetings, facilities and communications.

COMMUNICATIONS ACCESSIBILITY:

Current Status: Most communications with board members, staff, volunteers, patrons, and the general public currently involve in-person meetings, telephone, e-mail, print media, mailings, website and Facebook.

Goal: All communications with board members, individual or organization members, non-members and the general public are to be accessible.

Policy: Upon request, our written information and publicity will be made available in alternative formats including email, large print, PDF, and Word document format. Our website and other electronic communication designs will optimize accessibility for people with vision disabilities.

Policy: The Somali Museum of Minnesota will provide notification of meetings, programs and other opportunities for our constituents at least two weeks prior to the announced activity.

Policy: The Somali Museum of Minnesota will pursue accessible communication with Deaf constituents with current technology (email, texting, and document formats such as PDF and Word).

Policy: The Somali Museum of Minnesota website (<http://www.somalimuseum.org>) will be accessible to people who are blind or of low vision via text labels and simple layout formatting.

Policy/Goal: To accommodate patrons or participants with mobility issues who use public transportation (such as Metro Mobility) to be dropped off and picked up safely near the entrance,

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we will endeavor to anticipate the length of meetings or shows and publicize to our office and website so that they can appropriately schedule pick-up times. The address is 1516 E Lake St #011, Minneapolis, MN 55407

Policy/Goal: Any materials generated by our office for Board of Director or Committee meetings will be made available to attendees who are blind or of low vision in appropriate formats at least 24 hours prior to said meeting, based on request 2 weeks in advance.

FACILITIES ACCESSIBILITY:

Current Status:

The Somali Museum of Minnesota does not own any facilities. All meetings, tours, and presentations take place at facilities which are wheelchair-accessible. Our performance venues thus far have been in wheelchair-accessible venues.

The Somali Museum of Minnesota rents a suite at 1516 E Lake St #011, Minneapolis, MN 55407. The museum is located in a building called Plaza Verde. This building is located right on the 14 and 21 Metro Transit bus lines, and can be accessed from Lake Street, 15th Avenue, and an alley behind the building. These entrances are also accessible by Metro Mobility vehicles. A parking lot for the museum is located behind the building. The parking is also in front of the Iglesia De Dios Monte Sinai church. The lot can be accessed from 15th Avenue. The lot has two spots that are reserved for people with disabilities. We provide free parking to patrons. Furthermore, the lot has a ramp that leads to a sidewalk. This sidewalk can be used to navigate to the back door of the museum. The Plaza Verde building has two entrances. Both entrances are wheel chair accessible (confirmed by Craig Dunn and Jon Skaalen from VSA in 2016). Unfortunately, the Plaza Verde building does not have automatic door openers on the restrooms or the entrances. However, the doors are not heavy so they can be opened by people that use wheelchairs. The building has a reliable public elevator as well as a backup utility elevator that can transport people with disabilities to both floors of the museum. The Museum doors are all wide enough for wheelchairs. Most museum meetings, tours, presentations, and events occur at the Plaza Verde location. When meetings occur at a different location, we make accessibility a priority whenever possible.

Goal: We plan to adopt a policy (in arranging for meeting spaces or performance venues) to assure that entrances, rooms, bathrooms, stage, dressing rooms and audience seating areas are physically accessible to persons with mobility impairments. If a site is less than fully accessible, the board and venue owner will make accommodations to assure that all people can enter and exit safely.

Goal: We are pursuing a move to a permanent location in the next 3 years. We will make full considerations for facilities accessibility in building choice, remodeling, meeting space, and gallery space design for the new space. We will hire an Accessibility Consultant to advise on all space renovations for the permanent space, and will include an Accessibility coordinator on all facility planning committees.

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Policy If patrons contact us in regards to accommodating mobility related disabilities, we will make sure that our Gallery Guides can give them personal attention in navigating the museum. We have a chair in each museum room for anyone who cannot stand for long because of a disability. We will add more chairs depending on the needs expressed by our patrons. In 2016 we made the entrance to our traditional Somali houses exhibit wider so they can accommodate anyone that utilizes a wheelchair. These accessibility accommodation are communicated via our website and also by our access coordinator.

Goal: The museum will be made accessible to individuals with Visual Disabilities by providing a museum tour website, containing video content with full audio description, as well as transcripts readable by a screen reader. This website will be accessible on four iPads available in the Museum gallery, and via a URL for off-site access. In-gallery iPads will be equipped with VoiceOver, a screen reader program that will narrate the content of the website.

Goal: The Museum will be made accessible to individuals with Auditory Disabilities by providing a museum tour website, containing video content that is fully subtitled and includes transcripts of audio content. The Museum will also have full artifact labels in the gallery space, beginning with 24 pieces in 2016 and increasing the number of labels in 2017.

OTHER PROGRAM ACCESSIBILITY:

Policy: We appointed Abdirahman Hassan to serve as our “ADA Coordinator” to be the “go-to” person in knowing and addressing accessibility issues and to bring to the board possible updates for consideration each year. He can be contacted at 651-468-4484.

Policy: In seeking a diversity of people, talents and abilities to participate in our organization, staff, board, volunteers, artists, etc., we will include people with disabilities among other groups whom we wish to attract and serve.

Policy: We will use accessibility graphics on <http://www.somalimuseum.org> in advance publicity to make people aware of accommodations that are available. Deadlines will be indicated.

Policy: The general public as well as Somali Museum of Minnesota employees, Board members and volunteers may, at any time, submit comments, complaints or grievances regarding the organization’s efforts to make its programs, events and facilities accessible to people with disabilities. These comments should be in writing, via audio tape or via e-mail. All comments in this regard will be forwarded to Somali Museum of Minnesota Board of Directors for consideration. (SEE Grievance Policy at the end of this Access Plan.)

Policy: When the alternative format access needs of an audience are known prior to a given event or presentation, The Somali Museum will provide all print materials in the requested format and at the same time as the dispersal of regular print materials. No Somali Museum of Minnesota produced materials will be made available in regular format if it is not also available in requested alternative formats. Any materials that need to be accessed during the course of the

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event or presentation will be made accessible in formats that are “immediately usable” either through prior mailing of materials, email, or verbal interaction and personal assistance. It will be posted on the organization website that patrons, volunteers, and staff should request alternative materials or assistance at least 2 weeks in advance of materials’ printing or event dates.

Policy: When Somali Museum is one of many collaborators/funders/sponsors at an event/performance/presentation, even when it is not the main (or largest) of the collaborators, the organization will work to ensure that goals listed in these Access Policy Statements are achieved. The organization will work diligently to implement its policies and use these opportunities to educate and advocate for improved access in future collaborations.

Goal: We will offer training for all instructors, workshop leaders, and presenters on considerations for accessibility, and will anticipate accessibility needs for traditional craft workshops and classes, offering additional assistance to participants based on request.

Goal: The Somali Museum of Minnesota will monitor current technological hardware & software to allow future or current volunteers and employees with disabilities to work in the office. The Executive Director will continue to explore options such as larger computer monitor, voicing software, keyboard adaptations, and other computer hardware or software for purchase or donation.

Policy: An Evacuation Policy & Procedures policy in event of Fire or other Emergency created is available in the Somali Museum of Minnesota office. It will be reviewed with staff and volunteer coordinators each year.

Policy: The Somali Museum of Minnesota has adopted and will follow the attached organizational grievance policy & procedure.

This updated report is presented to the Board of Directors on April 29 2016.
Osman M. Ali, Executive Director

504/ADA Grievance Procedure for Somali Museum of Minnesota

Somali Museum of Minnesota makes every effort to make its programs accessible to all artists, arts organizations, community groups and other constituents. To ensure these programs remain accessible, we set forth this grievance policy and procedures for individuals to file complaints about aspects of our programs or services which they deem inaccessible.

1. Grievances about the accessibility of programs or services must be filed with the agency Executive Director no later than 20 days from the date the grievor attempted to access the program or service.
2. Grievances will be communicated to the Executive Director in written or verbal form, or in a means of communication most appropriate to the person filing the grievance. The individual or organization filing a grievance will bear any costs necessary to prepare and present the grievance to the Executive Director.
3. A grievance will include the following:
 - a. Your full name, address, and telephone number, and the name of the person alleging discrimination, if different;
 - b. The specific program or service involved in the complaint;
 - c. Date of the incident;
 - d. A description of the specific complaint about the accessibility of the program or service;
 - e. Other information that you believe necessary to support your complaint. Do not send original documents or materials. Please send copies and retain originals.
4. The Executive Director will conduct an investigation of the grievance and will respond within 20 days from the date of the grievance in a form of communication most appropriate to the grievor (e.g., Braille, large print, email, etc.). This will be done at the organization's expense.

If additional action is needed, the Executive Director will seek the expertise of other related entities for advice and direction including the Minnesota State Council on Disabilities and the Minnesota State Arts Board.

5. The decision of the Executive Director may be appealed to the Board of Directors by presenting the above materials, the Executive Director's decision, and your reason for appealing the decision within 20 days from the date of the Executive Director's decision.

The appeal will be presented to the Board at its next regularly scheduled Board meeting. The decision of the Board will be set forth by the Board Chair 10 days after the Board meeting and will be the final step in this grievance policy. Such appeal would be sent to the Chairman of the Board with a copy sent to the Executive Director.

6. In all complaint cases, Somali Museum of Minnesota will look for good faith compliance with ADA/504 regulations and gestures of reasonable accommodations toward individuals with

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disabilities. If Somali Museum of Minnesota is unable to resolve the complaint, the Board Chair will refer the complaint to the appropriate state or federal agency.

7. The general public as well as Somali Museum of Minnesota employees, Board members and volunteers may, at any time, submit comments, complaints or grievances regarding the organization's efforts to make its programs, events, and facilities accessible to people with disabilities. These comments should be in writing, via e-mail or an acceptable alternative format. These comments should be directed to the Executive Director, cc the Accessibility Coordinator. All comments in this regard will be forwarded to the Somali Museum of Minnesota Board of Directors for consideration.