

Niagara Peninsula Homes  
Accessibility Plan

## Table of Contents

Message from Director

Introduction

Section One: Past Achievements to Prevent and Remove Barriers

Customer Service

Information and Communications

Employment

Other

Section Two: Strategies and Actions Planned 2021

Customer Service

Information and Communications

Employment

Training

Other

For More Information

## **A Message from the Director**

Niagara Peninsula Homes values accessibility as being a human right. We value our community and we are dedicated to creating an environment that is free from discrimination against people with Disabilities. It is an exciting idea that the contributions of NPH help to create a society that is accessible for all.

Accessible, affordable housing is a growing need within our community and Niagara Peninsula Homes is dedicated to serving people with Disabilities whether visible or invisible to provide them with the necessary goods, services and accommodations so they can fully participate in our society. NPH is dedicated to creating accommodations whenever necessary and being proactive in the accommodation process.

We recognize that we have a very important role in ending ableism and we strive to provide public education about the rights of people with Disabilities. We welcome all feedback about the accessibility of our services.

Thank you for accompanying us on our journey towards a more accessible Ontario.

Betty Ann Baker

## **Introduction**

One of the core values of NPH is the dedication to diversity and respect, ensuring that as a community, mutual respect is shown. NPH is dedicated to promoting an equitable environment for members and employees and opportunities for members of the community to have access to and participate in all aspects. NPH strives to meet the needs of community members and employees with Disabilities and is continuously working diligently to remove and prevent barriers to accessibility.

In accordance with the Accessibility a Standard for Customer Service (CSS) (Regulation 429/07), NPH entrusts to developing policies, practices and procedures in providing goods and services to people with Disabilities in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with Disabilities. NPH is dedicated to providing people with Disabilities the same opportunity to access and in doing so contributes to an accessible Ontario for all.

## **Section One: Past Achievements to Prevent and Remove Barriers**

Niagara Peninsula Homes was created in 1979 and incorporated in 1981. NPH is a non-profit organization with an outside Board of Directors. Throughout NPH's history, accessibility and equal access to services has been made a priority.

NPH has made many changes throughout the years to improve accessibility and equal access. One of these changes was ensuring that buildings meet the Design of

Public Spaces Standard. NPH has also trained our staff to communicate with people with Disabilities. Furthermore, NPH can provide alternative methods for communication if telephone communication is not accessible.

NPH is committed to creating an accessible work environment by providing all required materials and technologies to allow a staff member with a Disability to complete the tasks required of them fully. NPH welcomes all service animals and has trained staff on how to interact with service animals.

Niagara Peninsula Homes has put a process in place to receive feedback about our services to clients with Disabilities. This feedback is given directly to the Director to be successfully implemented.

### **Customer Service**

Niagara Peninsula Homes has remained in compliance with the Customer Service Standard.

The goal of NPH is to meet and surpass client's expectations while serving customers with Disabilities. NPH is always trying to improve services. NPH welcomes comments and feedback on our services regarding how services meet the needs of the clients.

By mail or in person to: 41 Victoria Street, Welland, ON, L3B 4L7

By phone to: 905-788-0166 ext 205

When receiving feedback about services and improving accessibility, it is sent directly to the Director of NPH. The Director then finds opportunities to best implement it and contribute a more accessible Ontario for all. NPH takes accessibility very seriously and aims to provide swift changes to meet the needs of clients.

NPH has also addressed certain barriers that may prevent people with Disabilities from participating fully within the organization. These barriers included allowing employee applicants to submit their employment applications in various ways; providing multiple means of communication; providing application packages to Niagara Regional Housing, providing detailed training on communicating with people with Disabilities; and acting within the Ontario Code of Human Rights to ensure that NPH services do not discriminate against any person.

### **Information and Communications**

NPH is committed to excellence in serving all members, staff and clients and will carry out functions and responsibilities in the following areas:

NPH will also meet internationally-recognized Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA website requirements in accordance with Ontario's accessibility laws.

#### Communication

- NPH is committed to communicating with people with Disabilities in ways that take into consideration their Disability.
- NPH trains employees of NPH in how to interact and communicate with people with Disabilities guided by the principles of dignity, independence and integration of equality.
- NPH provides alternative methods of communication and technology upon request as promptly as feasible.

#### Telephone Service

- NPH has trained staff to communicate with members over the telephone slowly, clearly and plainly.
- NPH offers to communicate with customers by email if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs or is not available.

#### Assistive Devices

- NPH is committed to serving people with Disabilities. NPH will therefore assist a staff member who has a Disability and requires the assistance of an assistive device(s) to perform the duties of their job and to obtain such device(s).
- NPH is committed to informing staff on how to assist a client that might need access to an assistive device(s) and in obtaining such device(s) if required.

#### Use of Service Animals and Support Persons

- NPH is committed to welcoming people with Disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.
- NPH is committed to ensuring our staff and volunteers are properly trained in how to interact with people with Disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal.
- NPH is committed to welcoming people with Disabilities who are accompanied by a support person.
- Any person with a Disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter all areas with their support person. At no time will a person with

a Disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to their support person while on NPH's property.

## **Employment**

NPH is committed to fair and equitable employment. Past initiatives that NPH has created are:

- Removing barriers to employment by allowing applicants to submit their employment application in a variety of ways.
- NPH plans to continue to work with employment organizations to provide employment opportunities to those who are currently unemployed or underemployed.

## **Other**

The Niagara Peninsula Resource Centre which is owned by NPH, is committed to ensuring that all cohorts and staff receive training in AODA

- Niagara Women's Enterprise Centre has accepted participants with Disabilities to attend programs and encouraged success.
- Team E.N.E.R.G.I has accepted participants with Disabilities to attend programs and encouraged success.
- Reach innovation has accepted participants with Disabilities to attend programs and encouraged success.
- AODA training has been provided to all cohorts and staff from NPEC and the Construction Trades program.

## **Section Two: Strategies and Actions**

As NPH continues to move forward into 2021, accessibility is a priority. NPH is committed to continuing to provide high quality of goods and services to people with Disabilities in the same quality and timeliness as others. NPH is committed to communicating with people with Disabilities in ways that are accessible and respectful to their dignity. NPH is committed to continuing to provide equal employment opportunities to people with Disabilities and provide accommodations where necessary. NPH is committed to providing staff with training on communicating, interacting and serving people with Disabilities.

NPH recognizes that moving forward into an anti-ableist society means that everyone must work together to break barriers that prevent people with Disabilities from fully participating in society. NPH recognizes that it has an important role in this process of removing barriers and is committed to continuing this valuable work.

## **Customer Service**

NPH is committed to providing accessible customer service to people with Disabilities. This means that NPH will provide goods and services to people with Disabilities with the same high quality and timeliness as others.

In compliance with the Customer Service Standard, NPH will continue to implement these initiatives:

- Accepting feedback in a variety of forms about Accessibility that will be provided directly to the Director (Continuous).
- Training staff about communicating and interacting with people with Disabilities (Continuous).
- Continuously monitoring all websites to ensure they meet the internationally-recognized Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA website requirements in accordance with Ontario's accessibility laws (Continuous).

## **Information and Communication**

NPH is committed to making our information and communications accessible to people with Disabilities.

NPH plans to continue to implement these initiatives:

### Communication

- NPH is committed to communicating with people with Disabilities in ways that take into consideration their Disability (Continuous).
- NPH trains employees of NPH in how to interact and communicate with people with Disabilities guided by the principles of dignity, independence and integration of equality (Continuous).
- NPH provides alternative methods of communication and technology upon request as promptly as feasible (Continuous).
- NPH will also meet internationally-recognized Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA website requirements in accordance with Ontario's accessibility laws (Continuous).

### Telephone Service

- NPH has trained staff to communicate with members over the telephone slowly, clearly and plainly (Continuous).
- NPH offers to communicate with customers by email if telephone communication is not suitable to their communication needs or is not available (Continuous).

### Assistive Devices

- NPH is committed to serving people with Disabilities. NPH will therefore assist a staff member who has a Disability and requires the assistance of an assistive device(s) to perform the duties of their job and to obtain such device(s) (Continuous).
- NPH is committed to informing staff on how to assist a client that might need access to an assistive device(s) and in obtaining such device(s) if required (Continuous).

### Use of Service Animals and Support Persons

- NPH is committed to welcoming people with Disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal (Continuous).
- NPH is committed to ensuring that staff and volunteers are properly trained in how to interact with people with Disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal (Continuous).
- NPH is committed to welcoming people with Disabilities who are accompanied by a support person (Continuous).
- Any person with a Disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to enter all areas with their support person. At no time will a person with a Disability who is accompanied by a support person be prevented from having access to their support person while on NPH's property (Continuous).

### Employment

NPH is committed to fair and equitable employment. Initiatives to be implemented are:

- NPH will provide accommodations to employees and potential hires. NPH is dedicated to creating individualized accommodation plans for employees with Disabilities (Continuous).
- NPH has created an accessible emergency plan that is available for employees with Disabilities during an emergency (Continuous).



- NPH will notify employees, potential hires and the public that accommodations can be made during recruitment and hiring. This will be made public knowledge on the NPH website (Continuous).
- NPH will notify staff that supports are available for those with Disabilities. NPH will create a process to develop individual accommodation plans for employees (Continuous).
- Our performance management, career development and redeployment processes will take into account the accessibility needs of all employees (Continuous).

## **Training**

Niagara Peninsula Homes is committed to providing training in the requirements of Ontario's accessibility laws and the Ontario Human Rights Code as it applies to people with Disabilities.

Initiatives that provide training about interacting and serving people with Disabilities include:

- Department specific training to be give to employees (2021).
- Many resources for online eLearning available on the NPH staff portal (Continuous).
- Public information about accessibility to be included in newsletters (Continuous).
- Accessibility documents to be included on websites and made publicly available (Continuous).

## **Design of Public Spaces**

NPH will meet accessibility laws when building or making major changes to public spaces. The NPH building was originally designed to be barrier-free.

Initiatives that NPH is planning that will change the building include:

- Adding automatic doors to spaces
- Creating bathrooms that are barrier-free
- Paving the parking lot

NPH will put procedures in place to prevent service disruptions to the accessible parts of our public spaces.

## **Other**

The Niagara Peninsula Resource Centre which is owned by NPH, is committed to ensuring that all cohorts and staff receive training in AODA

- Niagara Women's Enterprise Centre will continue to accept participants with Disabilities to attend programs and encouraged success (Continuous).
- Reach innovation will continue to accept participants with Disabilities to attend programs and encouraged success (Continuous).
- AODA training will be provided to all cohorts and staff from NPEC and the Construction Trades program (Continuous).

### **For more Information**

For more information on this accessibility plan, please contact Betty Ann Baker at

Telephone: (905) 788 0166 ext. 205

Email: [babaker@nphcr.ca](mailto:babaker@nphcr.ca)

Website: <https://www.nphcr.ca/>

Standard and accessible formats of this document are free upon request from Betty Ann Baker.