



Neighbour 2 Neighbour Accessibility Policy

1. Scope

This Policy applies to all operations at Neighbour 2 Neighbour (“N2N”).

2. Purpose

This Policy is intended to comply with the principles and guidelines set out in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA). The content is designed to meet the requirements of the *Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11* (IASR), as well as N2N’s own accessibility and inclusion goals.

This Policy and the Responsibilities described in Section 6 apply to N2N’s operations, with the goal of removing and preventing accessibility barriers for its employees, volunteers, and clients. If any barriers to N2N’s programs, services, goods, or facilities are identified but cannot be removed, we seek to provide alternate ways to access.

3. Statement of Commitment to Accessibility

Neighbour 2 Neighbour (“N2N”) is committed to providing a safe, dignified, and welcoming environment for everyone. We are committed to providing accessible and inclusive services, goods, information, and facilities, wherever possible. N2N is committed to meeting the requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA). We strive to incorporate the principles of dignity, independence, integration, and equality of opportunity in all of our operations.

4. Definitions

The following terms are used in this Policy and have the following meanings:

Accessible, Accessibility: products, services, facilities or environments that can be accessed, used by, or understood by all persons, including those with disabilities

Accessible or Alternate Formats: include but are not limited to large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities

Assistive Devices: any device used to assist persons with disabilities, including:

- Mobility assistive devices, such as a cane, walker, wheelchair, electronic scooter, or similar device used to assist with mobility;
- Communication devices, such as a hearing device, laptop computer, communication board, or similar device used to assist with communication; or
- Medical devices, such as a personal oxygen tank or similar device used to assist with medical requirements of a disability

Barrier: can be anything – including anything physical, architectural, technological, attitudinal, related to information or communications, or anything that is the result of a system, policy or practice – that hinders the full and equal participation in society of persons with a disability or a functional limitation.

Disability: This Policy uses the AODA and *Ontario Human Rights Code* definition of disability, which defines a disability as:

- a) Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- b) A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- c) A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- d) A mental disorder; or
- e) An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*; (“handicap”).

Information: includes data, facts and knowledge that exists in any format, including text, audio, images, digital or print, and that conveys meaning

Kiosk: an interactive electronic terminal, including a point-of-sale device, for public use that allows users to access one or more services or products

Public spaces: As defined by the AODA, public spaces include:

- Recreational trails/beach access routes;
- Outdoor public eating areas like rest stops or picnic areas;
- Outdoor play spaces, like playgrounds in provincial parks and local communities;
- Outdoor paths of travel, like sidewalks, ramps, stairs, curb ramps, rest areas and accessible pedestrian signals;
- Accessible off-street and on-street parking; and
- Service-related elements like service counters, fixed queuing lines and waiting areas

Service Animal: As defined by the AODA, an animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if:

- a) The animal can be readily identified as one that is being used by the person for reasons relating to the person's disability, as a result of visual indicators such as an identifying vest or harness worn by the animal; or
- b) The person provides documentation from one of the following regulated health professionals confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to a disability:
 - i. A member of the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario.
 - ii. A member of the College of Chiropractors of Ontario.
 - iii. A member of the College of Nurses of Ontario.
 - iv. A member of the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario.
 - v. A member of the College of Optometrists of Ontario.
 - vi. A member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario.
 - vii. A member of the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario.
 - viii. A member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario.
 - ix. A member of the College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario. O. Reg. 165/16, s. 16.

Support Person: In relation to a person with a disability, a support person is any person who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, medical needs, or with access to goods, services or facilities.

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines: refers to the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) recommendations entitled Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)

5. Applying the principles of the AODA at Neighbour 2 Neighbour

Dignity: Clients with disabilities will be treated as valued and deserving of effective and full service as any other client.

Independence: Clients with disabilities will have freedom to exercise their choices, control, and independence wherever possible when accessing N2N programs and services.

Integration: Clients with disabilities will be able to benefit from the same N2N programs and services, in the same or similar way as other clients, except where alternate measures are necessary to meet the needs of clients with disabilities.

Equal Opportunity: Clients with disabilities will have the same opportunity to benefit from N2N programs and services as other clients, which may involve taking into account individual needs and accommodations or alternate forms of service. Wherever possible, N2N will work to ensure that clients with disabilities should not have to make significantly more effort to access or benefit from N2N programs and services or receive lesser quality or more inconvenience.

6. Responsibilities

Training

Neighbour 2 Neighbour will provide AODA and accessibility training to all employees, volunteers, and members of the Board of Directors. This training will be provided during the initial onboarding period, when changes are made to N2N's accessibility policies or procedures, or when changes are made to applicable accessibility legislation.

Accessibility training will cover, at minimum:

- Principles, goals, and customer service standards of the AODA;
- An overview of applicable Human Rights Code content that relates to persons with disabilities;
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities;
- How to interact and communicate with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or support person;
- What to do if a person is having difficulty accessing N2N's goods, services, or facilities and wants to communicate a complaint or provide feedback to N2N; and
- Details of N2N's Accessibility Policy and N2N procedures applicable to each person's role.

N2N will also ensure that those who are involved in the development and approval of accessibility-related policies, practices and procedures are trained on applicable accessibility legislation and Human Rights Code content that relates to persons with disabilities.

N2N senior management will maintain training records for all N2N employees and volunteers.

Information and Communication

Neighbour 2 Neighbour will provide information about N2N and its programs and services, including public safety information, in accessible formats or with communication supports, upon request. N2N will also work towards meeting internationally recognized Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA website requirements with any web content that it controls or manages.

Upon request, N2N will provide or arrange for the provision of accessible or alternate formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities, in a timely manner and at no additional cost to the individual. We will communicate with persons with disabilities in formats that take into account their disability and accessibility needs and, whenever possible, in the manner they request.

In the event that we determine information or communications cannot be provided in the format requested, N2N will provide the individual making the request with an explanation. We will also provide a summary version of the information or communication requested.

Assistive Devices

Neighbour 2 Neighbour is committed to serving persons with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from N2N's programs, services, goods, and facilities. Staff and volunteers will be trained on how to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device. In the event that an individual experiences a barrier when attempting to use their assistive device to access N2N's programs or services, staff will work with the client to seek to provide alternate ways to accommodate access.

Service Animals

Neighbour 2 Neighbour is committed to welcoming persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal on N2N premises that are open to the public and other third parties. If a service animal is excluded by law from the premises (for example, in an area where food is being prepared in a commercial kitchen), then N2N will make every effort to enable the person with a disability to access its programs and services in an alternate manner, if possible.

N2N staff and volunteers will be trained on how to interact with persons with disabilities who require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal. Clients accompanied by a service animal are expected to provide documentation upon request to identify the animal as a service animal, and these clients are also expected to be in care and control of the service animal at all times.

Support Persons

Neighbour 2 Neighbour is committed to welcoming persons with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person. N2N staff and volunteers will be trained on how to interact with persons with disabilities who require the assistance of a support person.

Any person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to access N2N premises that are open to the public and other third parties. 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 the premises.

If any admission fees for support persons are to be charged for participation in N2N programs, services, or events, then notice of the fees will be provided as soon as possible, during registration, and at the point of entry for the program, service, or event.

Notice of Temporary Disruption

Neighbour 2 Neighbour will provide notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in accessible services or facilities usually used by persons with disabilities. This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

N2N staff will post the notice at the location of the disruption of programs, services, or facility use and at the front entrance of the facility. For lengthy disruptions, N2N staff will post a notice on its website at <https://n2ncentre.com/accessibility/>. N2N will communicate details of the disruption to employees and the public in means that are appropriate to the service disruption.

Accessibility Feedback

Feedback regarding accessibility to programs and services and the manner in which N2N employees and volunteers interact with others is welcome and appreciated. Customer feedback assists us in identifying and removing barriers to accessibility in our programs, services, and facilities. The N2N Accessibility Feedback Form is available upon request and on the N2N website at <https://n2ncentre.com/accessibility/>.

Establishment of Accessibility Policy

Neighbour 2 Neighbour will post its Accessibility Policy on its website at <https://n2ncentre.com/accessibility/> and will provide the Policy in an alternate format upon request.

Procuring or Acquiring Goods, Services, or Facilities, including Self-Serve Kiosks

Neighbour 2 Neighbour will incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, including self-service kiosks, except where it is not possible or practical to do so. If it is not possible and practical to incorporate accessibility criteria when procuring or acquiring goods, N2N will provide an explanation upon request.

Hiring (for applicants)

Neighbour 2 Neighbour is committed to being inclusive in our hiring policies. We will notify the public that we will accommodate the needs of people with disabilities throughout our selection and hiring process. During the selection process, we will include the following paragraph in print and online job postings:

Neighbour 2 Neighbour is committed to building a diverse team through inclusive recruitment and selection. We welcome and encourage applications from individuals from the variety of backgrounds, perspectives, and communities that we seek to serve. If you require an accommodation during the selection process, please inform us as soon as possible at admin@n2ncentre.com and we will make every effort to fulfill your accommodation request.

When scheduling an interview, we will ask applicants if they have any accommodation requests. If an interview candidate requests an accommodation, we will discuss their request with them and make every effort to fulfill their accommodation requests.

Workplace information (for employees)

N2N will work with employees who request accommodations to determine how best to meet their needs and to provide accessible workplace information in a timely manner.

Upon request by an employee, Neighbour 2 Neighbour will provide workplace information in an accessible or alternate format or offer communication supports when needed. Workplace information includes:

- Any information employees need to perform their jobs (for example, job descriptions and manuals); and
- General information that is available to all employees at work (for example, N2N Human Resources policies and procedures, organizational newsletters, bulletins about health and safety information).

We will work with employees with disabilities to develop individual accommodation plans. Where necessary, these plans will also include individual emergency response plans and information to assist during an emergency or evacuation.

Neighbour 2 Neighbour will take into account any accessibility needs identified by employees during performance management, career development and redeployment processes.

Design of Public Spaces

When building or making major changes to public spaces of its facilities, Neighbour 2 Neighbour will ensure that accessible designs are incorporated wherever possible.

Communicate accessibility policies

Neighbour 2 Neighbour will inform all employees about policies to support people with disabilities. Its Accessibility Policy will be reviewed with new employees when they are hired. If any N2N accessibility policies or procedures are modified, all current employees will be informed.

The current Neighbour 2 Neighbour Accessibility Policy and Accessibility Feedback Form will be posted in an accessible format at <https://n2ncentre.com/accessibility/>.

Changes to existing organization policies

N2N will modify or remove any existing organization policies that do not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

Contact Us

If you have any questions or feedback, accommodation requests, or would like to request a copy of Neighbour 2 Neighbour accessibility policies or procedures in an alternate format, contact us at:

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