

<b>HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES</b>			
Section:	Health and Safety	Issued:	June 2022
Subject:	<b>Accessibility</b>	Effective:	June 2022
Issue to:	All District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board (DNSSAB) except Paramedic Services employees	Page:	1 of 8
		Replaces:	March 2018
Issued by:	Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)	Dated:	June 2022

## **POLICY**

The purpose of this policy is to recognize DNSSAB's obligation to maintain compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA), including Regulation 429/07 (Accessible Customer Service Standard), and 191/11 (the Integrated Accessibility Standard). The policy also provides the framework to guide the review and deployment of policies and procedures to comply with the AODA. DNSSAB is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of people with disabilities. DNSSAB services, programs, and facilities, are to be available to people with disabilities in a manner that:

- Is free from discrimination;
- Provides accessible formats and communication supports;
- Seeks to provide integrated services;
- Removes barriers;
- Provides opportunities equitable to others to obtain, use and benefit from the services, and;
- Takes into consideration a person's individual disability.

This policy applies to all DNSSAB employees, volunteers, and to any individual or organization that provides goods, services or facilities to the public on behalf of the DNSSAB, in accordance with the legislation.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The DNSSAB will use reasonable efforts to ensure that its procedures and best practices are consistent with the Regulations. The Regulations sets out the requirements for each of the standards, as well as general requirements that apply to all, such as:

- Developing accessibility policies and plans;
- Training employees and volunteers;
- Considering accessibility when purchasing goods or services;
- Providing goods, services or facilities either directly to the public or to other businesses or organizations; and

- Incorporating accessibility features when designing or acquiring self-serve kiosks.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **Establishment of Accessibility Plans and Policies**

The DNSSAB has produced a multi-year Accessibility Plan. The plan is posted on the DNSSAB's website and shall be made available in an accessible format and with communication supports, upon request. Progress on the plan will be provided annually to the Board. The Accessibility Plan shall be reviewed and, if necessary, updated at least once every five years.

The DNSSAB maintains policies governing how the DNSSAB shall meet its requirements under the AODA, and the DNSSAB will provide policies in an accessible format, upon request.

### **Accessibility Committee**

The DNSSAB has established an accessibility committee comprised of staff volunteers. The committee shall review and advise the Board about the requirements and implementation of AODA accessibility standards, preparation of accessibility reports, including access for persons with disabilities to a building or premises, and other matters for which the Board may seek advice.

### **Training**

All DNSSAB employees, volunteers and third parties providing goods and services to members of the public on the DNSSAB's behalf, as well as those who develop the policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods or services to members of the public or other third parties will receive accessibility training.

This training shall include a review of the purposes of the AODA, the requirements of the Standards and instruction about the following:

- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disability;
- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal or the assistance of a support person;
- How to use equipment or devices available on the provider's premises or otherwise provided by the provider that may help with the provision of goods or services to a person with a disability;
- What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the provider's goods or services; and,
- A review of the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in the AODA Standards and on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities.

The training provided shall be appropriate to the duties of the employee, volunteer or third party. Training shall take place as soon as is practicable and upon completion, the DNSSAB shall keep a record of the training provided including the dates on which accessibility training took place.

## **Feedback Process:**

The DNSSAB welcomes feedback as it may identify areas where changes can be made to improve our delivery of services. In writing, e-mail, or telephone, submitted to:

District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board  
200 McIntyre Street East  
PO Box 750  
North Bay ON P1B 8J8  
705-474-2151  
[accessibility@dnssab.ca](mailto:accessibility@dnssab.ca)

All feedback will be reviewed and acted upon however personal responses to inquiries can only be provided if the person providing the same includes his or her name, mailing address and/or email address and/or daytime phone number.

The DNSSAB will strive to respond in writing, e-mail or telephone acknowledging receipt of feedback. The complaint will be forwarded to the appropriate department for action.

## **Information and Communication Standard**

The DNSSAB is committed to providing materials in an accessible format or with communication supports to persons with disabilities, upon request.

- **Accessible formats** may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats and Braille; and
- **Communication supports** may include but are not limited to captioning alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language and sign language.

If DNSSAB is unable to convert the requested information or communications, the DNSSAB will provide an explanation about why the materials are not convertible and we will provide a summary of the requested information or communications.

Notice to the public about the DNSSAB's commitment to provide materials in an accessible format or with communications supports, upon request is posted on DNSSAB's website.

## **Requests for Accessible Formats and Communication Supports**

Except as otherwise provided by the AODA, the DNSSAB shall, upon request, and in consultation with the person making the request, provide or make arrangements to provide accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities. When a person with a disability makes a request for information to be provided in an accessible format or with communication supports, staff will consult with the person making the request to determine a suitable format that takes the person's accessibility needs into account. The DNSSAB will make the final decision about the accessible format or communication support to be provided or arranged. Once the decision is made, the information will be provided or arranged for in a timely manner taking into account the person's accessibility needs. If there is a fee normally charged for the information, the person making the request for the information in an accessibility format

or with communication supports, will not be charged more than the standard fee for the information.

### **Accessibility Policies Available to the Public**

The DNSSAB's accessibility policies pertaining to persons with disabilities are available on our website and in hard copy upon request. DNSSAB will provide its accessibility policies to persons with disabilities in an accessible format, upon request.

### **Accessible Websites and Web Content**

Websites and web content controlled directly by DNSSAB or through a contractual relationship that allows for modification of the product shall conform to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, at Level A and AA in accordance with the schedule set out in the AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards.

### **Emergency Procedures, Plans and Information**

The DNSSAB shall provide all existing public emergency procedures, plans and public safety information, upon request in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports in a timely manner.

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### **Accessible Customer Service**

The DNSSAB will use reasonable efforts to ensure that its procedures and best practices are consistent with the following:

- Goods or services are provided in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities;
- Provisions of goods or services to persons with disabilities, and others, will be integrated unless an alternate measure is necessary, whether temporary or on a permanent basis, to enable a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the goods or services;
- People with disabilities may use assistive devices, service animals and support persons as it is necessary to access DNSSAB's goods or services.

a) **Assistive Devices:**

Persons with disabilities may use assistive devices as required in accessing goods or services provided by the DNSSAB, unless the device poses a risk to health and safety of a person with a disability or others on the premises.

b) **Service Animals:**

Persons with disabilities are permitted to be accompanied by their service animal in areas that are open to the public when accessing goods or services. In the event that a service animal is prohibited by law DNSSAB will ensure that other measures are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefits from goods or services.

If it is not readily apparent that the animal is a service animal, DNSSAB may ask the person with a disability for a letter from a qualified medical physician confirming the

person requires the animal for reasons relating to his/her disability, or a certificate of training from a recognized guide dog or service animal training school. Service Animals must be supervised by their owners and kept in control.

c) **Support Persons:**

Persons with disabilities are permitted to be accompanied by their support person in areas / premises that are open to the public when accessing goods or services provided by DNSSAB. DNSSAB may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person while on its premises, but only if a support person is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or others on the premises.

d) **Service Disruptions**

In the event of a planned service disruption to services provided by DNSSAB, notice of the disruption shall be provided in advance. Notices will include the reason for disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities and/or services that may be available. DNSSAB will provide notice by posting the information in visible places, or on the DNSSAB's website, or by any other methods that may be reasonable under the circumstances.

In the event of an unexpected disruption, notice will be provided as soon as possible.

e) **Availability of Documents**

Documents or the information contained in the document when requested will be provided in a format that takes into account the person's disability. DNSSAB will make reasonable efforts to respond to requests for documents in alternate formats in a timely manner.

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## **Employment Standard**

### **Employee Supports**

The DNSSAB will inform employees of the policies used to support employees with disabilities, including policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability. The DNSSAB will provide this information to new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment and provide updated information to all employees whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability.

### **Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employee**

Upon an employee's request, the DNSSAB shall consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for:

- a. information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job; and
- b. information that is generally available to employees in the workplace.

The DNSSAB will consult with the employee making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

## **Recruitment, Assessment, Selection, Hiring**

The DNSSAB shall post information about the availability of accommodations for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment process. Job applicants who are individually selected for an interview and/or testing shall be notified that accommodations are available, upon request. The DNSSAB shall consult with any applicant who requests an accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's disability. Successful applicants shall be notified about the DNSSAB's policies for accommodating employees with disabilities as part of their offer of employment.

If a selected job applicant requests an accommodation, the DNSSAB will consult with the applicant and provide a suitable accommodation that takes the person's accessibility needs into account. The DNSSAB will make the final decision about the accommodation to be provided.

## **Notice to Successful Job Applicants and Employees about Accommodations**

The DNSSAB is committed to the provision of accommodations for job applicants and employees with disabilities in a manner that takes into account the individual's accessibility needs. When the DNSSAB offers an applicant employment, the DNSSAB will provide the person with information about our accommodation policies for employees with disabilities as soon as practicable.

When there are changes or updates regarding job accommodations for persons with disabilities, the DNSSAB will provide this information on its internet and intranet websites.

## **Workplace Emergency Response Information**

If an employee's disability is such that workplace emergency response information is necessary and the DNSSAB is aware of the need for accommodation, this information shall be provided to employees. In addition, this information shall be provided, with the employee's consent, to the person designated to provide assistance. The information shall undergo review when the employee moves to a different location, when the employee's overall accommodation needs or plans are reviewed and when the DNSSAB reviews its general emergency response plan.

## **Documented Individual Accommodation Plans**

A written process for the development and maintenance of documented individual accommodation plans shall be developed for employees with disabilities. If requested, these plans shall include information regarding accessible formats and communications supports. If requested, the plans shall include individualized workplace emergency response information.

## **Return to Work Process**

The DNSSAB shall have in place a documented return to work process for employees returning to work due to disability and requiring disability-related accommodations. This return to work process shall outline the steps that the DNSSAB shall take to facilitate the return to work.

## **Performance Management and Career Development and Redeployment**

The DNSSAB shall take into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities as well as any individual accommodation plans when providing career development, performance management and when considering redeployment.

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### **Transportation Standard**

The DNSSAB does not provide public transportation.

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### **Design of Public Spaces**

The DNSSAB will incorporate accessibility features when designing new or the redevelopment of Public Spaces including Accessible Parking and Service Related Elements such as service counters, fixed queuing guides (width, turn around space, cane detectable) and waiting areas (accessible seating and mobility aid space).

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## **DEFINITIONS**

**Accessibility Standard:** means an accessibility standard made by regulation under section 6 of the AODA.

**Accommodation:** means the special arrangement made or assistance provided so that persons with disabilities can participate in the experiences available to persons without disabilities. Accommodation will vary depending on the person's unique needs.

**Assistive Devices:** means an auxiliary aid such as communication aids, cognition aids, personal mobility aids and medical aids.

**Barrier:** means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, and information or communication barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

**Disability:** as defined by the AODA and the Ontario Human Rights Code, means,

- ✓ 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 coordination, 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 medical appliance or device;
- ✓ A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- ✓ A mental disorder, or
- ✓ An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

**Service Animal:** means and animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability.

**Support Person:** means any person whether a paid professional, volunteer, family member, friend to who accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communications, personal care of medical needs or with access to goods or services.

**Unconvertible:** means information or communications are unconvertible if it is not technologically feasible to convert the information or communications or the technology to convert the information or communications is not readily available.

**WHERE POLICY LANGUAGE CONTRADICTS A DNSSAB COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT,  
THE COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT LANGUAGE SUPERCEDES THE POLICY LANGUAGE.**