

<b>Policy Name: NFMC Accessibility Policy</b>		
<b>Effective Date: June 13, 2016</b>	<b>Revision Date: December 4, 2020</b>	<b>Approved By: NFMC Board of Directors</b>

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

The General Manager will ensure that permanent employees of the Nawiingnokiima Forest Management Corporation (NFMC) adhere to this Policy.

**POLICY STATEMENT**

The NFMC is committed to removing barriers for people with disabilities and treating those with disabilities with respect and dignity by providing equal access to the NFMC’s services. To meet this commitment, the NFMC will adhere to the requirements of three pieces of legislation: the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (the AODA), the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ont. Reg. 429/07), and the Integrated Accessibility Standards (Ont. Reg. 191/11). The NFMC will ensure adherence to this Policy by following the below criteria:

**1-Employee Training and Customer Service**

The NFMC requires that all permanent employees (within a month of hire) complete training on the AODA. Training on the AODA will include the below topics:

1. Compliance requirements;
2. Information and communication standards;
3. Employment standards;
4. Transportation standards;
5. Design of public spaces standards;
6. Rights provided to people;
7. Definitions/terms;
8. Customer service standards including:
  - a. How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disability;
  - b. 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;
  - c. 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 services or facilities to a person with a disability;
  - d. What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the NFMC’s services or office.

Training also requires employees to review this Policy and the NFMC’s Service Standards Policy.

If the NFMC’s Accessibility Policy is amended, changes will be communicated to employees.

## **2-Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and Annual Status Report**

The NFMC will update its multi-year Accessibility Plan every five years. The NFMC will, when reasonable, review and update its Accessibility Plan in consultation with persons with disabilities. This consultation will be documented by the NFMC.

Every December, the NFMC will update its Annual Status Report to report on progress made in meeting the tasks established in its Accessibility Plan. The Accessibility Plan and the Annual Status Report will be posted on the NFMC's website. These documents can also be provided in an accessible format upon request.

## **3-Accessible Employment Practices and Notices to Successful Candidates**

All NFMC job postings will note that the needs of applicants with disabilities can be accommodated. Should an applicant (or successful applicant) request an accommodation, the hiring manager will discuss the applicant's needs and make adjustments to the hiring process to support them. Applicants selected for job interviews will be notified that accommodation can be provided and the hiring manager will provide applicants a copy of this Policy upon request. Additionally, the hiring manager will keep interview formats flexible in an effort to include applicants of all abilities.

The NFMC's offers of employment (i.e. an employment contract) will inform the successful applicant of its ability to accommodate employees with disabilities. Within a week of a permanent employee's start date, the NFMC will provide a copy of this Policy for the employee's consideration.

## **4-Accessible Workplace Information**

The NFMC will provide accessible workplace information when requested by an employee with a disability. The information's format must meet the needs of said employee. Information provided to an employee with a disability may include:

- Information needed by an employee to perform their job duties;
- Agency policies, guidelines, and the NFMC's Health and Safety Program (including emergency response information).

## **5-Workplace Emergency Response Information**

The NFMC will develop and provide, after it becomes aware of the need for accommodation due to an employee's disability, individualized workplace emergency response information. The NFMC will also review the individualized workplace emergency response information when: a) the employee's overall accommodation needs or plans change, and b) the NFMC modifies its general emergency response procedures. Finally, the NFMC will designate an employee to provide assistance to the disabled employee (with their prior consent) during an emergency. The designated employee will be provided with information on the disabled employee's particular needs.

## **6-Individual Accommodation Plans**

The AODA requires written documentation of a process for creating reasonable and appropriate accommodation measures for employees with disabilities. When an employee has indicated a disability requiring accommodation in the workplace the NFMC's process for creating an accommodation plan will include:

- The disabled employee's immediate supervisor will respectfully consult with them to determine their needs. This consultation and process to accommodate the employee will be documented by the NFMC;
- Together, the disabled employee and their immediate supervisor will establish a timeline for the development (and implementation) of an accommodation plan;
- The employer will protect the privacy of the employee's personal information;
- The employer will, if needed, secure outside advice/assistance, to develop the accommodation plan (at the NFMC's expense);
- Describe a process and schedule a periodic review of the accommodation plan;
- Describe how the employee will be informed if their individual accommodation plan has not been accepted and the rationale for the plan's rejection;
- How the accommodation plan will be provided in an accessible format to the employee and;
- At any time, the employee can request the participation of a representative or advocate in the development of the accommodation plan.

## **7-Document Formats and Communication Supports**

If an employee or member of the public request an accessible format or communication support, the NFMC will consult with the person making the request to determine the appropriate format of communication or communication support. There will be no cost to the requestor for the alternate document format. The NFMC will, when reasonable, provide the alternate document format in a timely manner.

NFMC employees will communicate with people with disabilities using a method that best suits the needs of the disabled person. This will include communication in writing, in person, by telephone or email.

## **8-Assistive Devices**

The NFMC will reasonably accommodate people with disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use, or benefit from its services.

## **9-Use of Service Animals and Support Persons**

The NFMC will reasonably accommodate people with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal or a support person to the areas of its office which are open to the public.

## **10-Temporary Disruptions**

The NFMC will provide notifications in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities as soon as reasonably possible. This notice will include the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available. The notice will be posted at the main entrance of the NFMC's office and/or its website.

## **11- Performance Management, Career Development, and Redeployment**

NFMC managers will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities as well as individual accommodation plans, when assessing the performance of said employee's productivity and effectiveness in their job. Managers will also keep in mind the end goals of the employee's success, career development, and advancement.

The NFMC does not currently offer deployment opportunities to its employees.

## **12-Accessible Feedback**

The NFMC welcomes feedback from members of the public regarding the services it provides. All feedback received regarding accessibility will be forwarded to the General Manager for review and response within ten business days.

Feedback may be provided in person, in writing, or by e-mailing: [contact@nfmforestry.ca](mailto:contact@nfmforestry.ca). The NFMC's website also has a section ([nfmforestry.ca/?page\\_id=233](http://nfmforestry.ca/?page_id=233)) outlining methods of contacting the NFMC to provide feedback. Lastly, the NFMC's Conflict Resolution Policy also establishes a process to provide a formal complaint, should it be warranted, to the NFMC's management members.

## **RELATED POLICIES**

NFMC Service Standards Policy  
Conflict Resolution Policy

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Laird Van Damme, Chair  
On behalf of the NFMC Board of Directors

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Date

Next revision date: December 2022