

NORCAT Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Statement of Commitment

NORCAT is committed to creating and maintaining an inclusive, accessible environment for all clients/customers, employees, job applicants, suppliers, visitors and other stakeholders who enter our premises or use our services. We recognize that barriers exist that prevent the full and inclusive participation of people with differing (dis)abilities and strive to ensure that such barriers are identified and removed in a timely and respectful manner. NORCAT will provide services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

NORCAT is committed to fulfilling our requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*, the *Ontario Human Rights Code* and other applicable legislation. This accessibility plan outlines the steps we are taking to meet those requirements and to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.

Accessibility Plan

Customer Service

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

Our Client Service Standards:

- *Information and Communication:*
 - NORCAT will ensure that its process for receiving and responding to feedback are available and accessible to persons with disabilities, including employees, clients, volunteers and members of the public. Clients who wish to provide feedback on the way NORCAT provides services to people with disabilities can reach out to us via NORCAT's AODA Customer Feedback form. Alternatively, clients can direct all feedback to :
Human Resources
NORCAT
1545 Maley Drive
Sudbury, ON, P3A-4R7
(705) 521-8324 ext. 243
Email: sdangelo@norcat.org

Clients can expect to hear back in ten (10) business days from receipt of feedback, or as soon as practicable, if the feedback requires a response.

- NORCAT will take such steps as are necessary in the circumstances to rectify any issues or concerns raised in a manner consistent with the policy. Such steps may include requesting additional information from the individual providing the feedback, investigating specific complaints and/or providing documentation or communications in accessible formats. NORCAT will advise the individual providing the feedback of the results of the feedback review process as appropriate in the circumstances.
- Upon request, NORCAT will endeavor to provide accessible formats and communication supports to improve accessibility of NORCAT's information and communication materials. All reports and other documents distributed to the public are available in alternative format documents upon request.
- *Provision of Services:*

NORCAT will make every reasonable effort to notify clients of the range of accommodations and supports that are available and procedures for requesting such accommodations. Our team will be encouraged to seek solutions that improve accessibility and inclusion, and to do so in a proactive manner, identifying as early as possible the potential barriers to accessibility people may face. Persons with disabilities will be given an opportunity equal to that given to others to obtain, use and benefit from NORCAT's goods, services and facilities.
- *Service Animals:*

Service animals are welcome at NORCAT. The client or member of the public that is accompanied by a guide dog or service animal is responsible for maintaining care and control of the animal at all times and asked to keep the animal with them for the duration of their visit. Service animals are welcome on the parts of NORCAT's premises that are open to the public. NORCAT Staff may request documentation to ensure that the animal brought on to the premises is a certified service animal, in accordance with applicable laws.
- *Support Persons:*

NORCAT will ensure that support persons will have the same access to the NORCAT premises (those areas open to the public) as the client or member of the public whom they are accompanying. Fees will not be charged for support persons for programs that are provided by NORCAT.
- *Communication:*

When communicating with a person with disabilities, NORCAT will do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability. In determining the appropriate method and form of communication, NORCAT will take into

account accessibility needs resulting from disabilities. NORCAT encourages individuals it communicates with to identify any accessibility needs so they can respond appropriately to those needs.

- *Assistive Devices:*

Individuals with disabilities may use their own assistive devices to access goods and services provided by NORCAT. To the extent required, NORCAT will ensure that its staff members are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by individuals when accessing its goods and services.

- *Notice of Disruptions in Service:*

We will provide notice to clients and visitors with disabilities the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities. Where possible, we will promptly post a notification for the general public at critical doors, elevators, and main entrances, including the reason for the disruption, how long the disruption is expected to last, and a description of any alternative facilities or services available (where applicable). The notice will be posted and/or communicated to individuals with disabilities in a manner that is reasonable in the circumstances.

Information and Communications

NORCAT is committed to making our information and communications accessible to people with disabilities. To achieve this, we will provide information in accessible formats, upon request. These formats will be available at no additional cost and in a timely manner.

NORCAT will also provide, upon request, all existing emergency procedures, plans, and public safety information in an accessible format or with communication supports in a timely manner.

NORCAT will ensure that our website, content and applications directly controlled by NORCAT continues to be in accordance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA.

Employment

NORCAT is committed to fair and accessible employment practices including:

- *Recruitment and Hiring:*

NORCAT includes a statement of accommodations in all job postings, articulating our commitment to ensuring accessibility and full participation and providing contact information to request accommodation in the recruitment process.

- *Informing Employees of Supports:*

NORCAT will ensure that employees are informed of all accessibility policies and updates to these policies from the time of job offer throughout the duration of their employment. The information will be provided in our employment offer and onboarding package, Employee Handbook and employee resource pages.

- *Individual Accommodation Plans:*

NORCAT recognizes the value of accommodation in ensuring that employees with disabilities have the tools and supports they need to succeed and feel included in our workplace. In accordance with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, a process has been established for responding to employee requests for individual accommodation, including but not limited to accommodations related to information, workstation, scheduling and work environment.

- *Accessible Formats and Communication Supports:*

NORCAT is committed to making information and feedback processes accessible to people with disabilities. To achieve this, we will provide information in accessible formats, upon request. These formats will be available at no additional cost and in a timely manner. We will also consult with employees who raise requests to determine the most appropriate and suitable accessible format and/or communication support.

- *Return to Work Process:*

NORCAT will maintain a documented return to work process for employees who have taken a leave of absence from work due to a disability and who require disability-related accommodations and support in their return to work. The process will outline the steps NORCAT will take to facilitate an inclusive and accessible return to work and will include documented individual accommodation plans for the individual.

- *Performance Process:*

NORCAT will continue to provide reasonable accommodation to support the advancement, development and success of employees with disabilities. We will consider the accessibility needs of employees when conducting performance management reviews, and when providing career development and advancement opportunities.

Training

NORCAT 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.

Training will be provided to all employees who interact with the public and/or clients as well as to all managers and staff and will be updated in the event of changes to legislation or to NORCAT's policies, practices and procedures as they relate to accessibility. NORCAT will provide training to all employees regarding accessible customer service in accordance with applicable laws.

Training may include, as appropriate:

- An overview of the Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of client service and employment standards
- NORCAT's plan related to client service and employment standards
- How to most inclusively interact and communicate with people with varying disabilities
- How to interact most inclusively with people with disabilities who use an assistive device, communication support and/or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person
- What to do if a person with a disability expresses barriers or faces challenges accessing NORCAT's services or facilities
- Our policies, procedures and practices to ensure accessible customer service to people with disabilities

Design of Public Spaces

NORCAT will meet or exceed accessibility standards when building, renovating, or making significant changes to our public spaces.

Our main entry points are at grade or serviced via ramps in accordance with applicable codes. Where applicable depending on location, we have elevating devices to assist with access between levels. Our public washrooms and key public access doors incorporate power assist doors with touchless control.



SKILLS TRAINING FOR THE FUTURE

We recently completed the construction of a new surface facility at our Underground Centre located in Onaping, Ontario and we acted proactively to ensure the common areas were more accessible.

When renovating or modifying public space, we review our projects and incorporate design attributes to meet, or exceed accessibility requirements, always striving to improve overall. Our goal is to continue to meet or exceed this standard.

For More Information

We welcome feedback on this plan, including any ideas that will help NORCAT to further create and maintain an inclusive and accessible environment for persons with disabilities. Please contact sdangelo@norcat.org with any questions, feedback or to request accessible formats and supports.