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# **Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy**

**NPEHR-246**

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# Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy

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## PURPOSE

The following Policy has been established by Niagara Peninsula Energy Inc. to govern the provision of services within Regulation 191/11, "Integrated Accessibility Standards" ("Regulation") under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

Integrated Accessibility Standards include breaking down barriers with regards to accessibility, in the areas of Information and Communication, Employment, and Transportation. Niagara Peninsula Energy Inc. is governed by this policy as well as the Accessibility for Customer Service Policy and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 in meeting the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities.

Niagara Peninsula Energy Inc. is committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and equal opportunity. We are committed to meeting the needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner, and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

## SCOPE

This policy applies to all persons who deal with members of the public on behalf of Niagara Peninsula Energy Inc. whether the person does so as an employee, contractor, third party or otherwise.

## DEFINITIONS

**Alternative Service:** a service generally intended to be temporary that approaches the desired result until such time as the barrier is removed or an equivalent service is put in place.

**AODA:** Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

**Assistive Device:** a technical aid, communication device, or medical aid modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional abilities of people with disabilities.

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

**NPEI:** for the purpose of this document, reference will be made to Niagara Peninsula Energy Inc. (NPEI), or the Company

**Contractor:** a company or person with a formal or informal contract to do a specific job on behalf of NPEI

**Disability:** is a condition in which

- 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;

**Service Animal:** any animal used by a person with a disability for reasons relating to the disability where it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to his/her disability

**Support Person:** a person who accompanies a person with a disability

## METHOD

This policy will be implemented in accordance with the time frames established by the regulation.

### Accessibility Plan:

NPEI will develop, maintain and document an Accessibility Plan outlining the company's strategy to prevent and remove barriers from its workplace and to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities.

### Training Employees:

NPEI will ensure that training is provided on the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in the Regulation and continue to provide training on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to

persons with disabilities, to:

- All its employees
- All persons who participate in developing NPEI policies; and
- All other persons who provide goods, services, or facilities on behalf of the company.

The training will be appropriate to the duties of employees and other persons. Employees will be trained when changes are made to the accessibility policy. New employees will be trained as required. NPEI will keep a record of the training it provides.

### Feedback:

NPEI allows a variety of opportunities and methods for our customers to provide feedback.

NPEI will continue to ensure that its process for receiving and responding to feedback is accessible to persons with disabilities by providing, or arranging for provision of, accessible formats and communications supports, upon request.

### Accessible Formats and Communication Supports:

Upon request, NPEI will provide, or will arrange for provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs due to disability.

NPEI will consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

NPEI will also notify the public about the availability of accessible formats or communication supports.

## **EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS**

### **Recruitment**

NPEI will notify its employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment process.

### **Recruitment, Assessment or Selection Processes**

NPEI will notify job applicants, when they are individually selected to participate further in an assessment or selection process that accommodations are available upon request in relation to the materials or processes to be used.

If a selected applicant requests for an accommodation, NPEI will consult with the applicant and provide, or arrange for the provision of, a suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability.

### **Notice to Successful Applicants**

When making offers of employment, NPEI will notify the successful applicants of its policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

### **Informing Employees of Supports**

NPEI will continue to inform its employees of its policies (and any updates of these 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. This information will be provided to new employees as soon as practicable after commencing employment.

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

NPEI will provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability, if the disability is such that individualized information is necessary, and, if the Company is aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability. NPEI will provide this information as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation.

Where the employee requires assistance, NPEI will with the consent of the employee, provide the workplace emergency response plan information to the person designated by NPEI to provide assistance to the employee.

NPEI will review the individualized workplace emergency response information when the employee moves to a different location in the organization, when the employee's overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed.

### **Documented Individual Accommodation Plans**

NPEI will maintain a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.

If requested, information regarding accessible formats and communications supports provided will also be included in individual accommodation plans.

In addition, the plans will include individualized workplace emergency response information (where required) and will identify any other accommodation that is to be provided.

### **Return to Work Process**

NPEI maintains a documented return to work process for its employees who have been absent from work due to disability and who require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work. The return to work process administered at NPEI outlines the steps that will be taken by the Company to facilitate the return to work and will include documented individual accommodation plans as part of the process.

The return to work process will not replace or override any other return to work process created by or under any other Statute (i.e. the Workplace Safety Insurance Act, 2007).

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

NPEI will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, when conducting performance management, providing career development and advancement to employees or when redeploying employees.

### **Document Review**

This document will be reviewed every five years or as required.

