

MULTI-YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN FOR WORKPLACE SAFETY NORTH

WSN is an independent not-for-profit health and safety organization, funded by a portion of the premiums our member workplaces pay to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board. Our members are companies in Ontario's mining, forestry, paper, printing and converting sectors. We also provide health and safety services to businesses in all sectors across Northern Ontario.

This 2014-21 accessibility plan outlines the actions that **Workplace Safety North** has/will incorporate to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.

Statement of Commitment

Workplace Safety North 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 people 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.

Accessible Emergency Information

Workplace Safety North is committed to providing our employees, customers, and clients with publicly available emergency information in an accessible format upon request. We have developed a policy regarding individualized Emergency Response Plans and what the roles and responsibilities are for the employee, the employer, support personnel, and the direct supervisor.

- **Completed:** Workplace Safety North developed an inclusive workplace Emergency Response Plan that will be utilized to create an individualized emergency response plan for anyone who requests accommodation.

Training

Workplace Safety North will provide training to employees, volunteers and other staff members on Ontario's accessibility laws and on the Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities. Training will be provided in a way that best suits the duties of employees, volunteers and other staff members. Orientation of new employees will include AODA training.

Workplace Safety North will take the following steps to ensure employees are provided with the training needed to meet Ontario's accessible laws:

- Employees are required to complete an Accessibility for Ontarians Disability Act (AODA) training course (customer service standard) as part of their new hire orientation.
- WSN will notify staff of AODA updates as they occur; the AODA multi-year plan will be available on WSN's public facing website.

Kiosks

Workplace Safety North will take the following steps to ensure employees consider the needs of people with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks by **January 1, 2014**:

- WSN does not own, or typically procure, self-service kiosks. In the event that Workplace Safety North requires a self-service kiosk, we will incorporate accessibility features when designing, or procuring these services.
- **Completed:** An accessibility disclaimer has been added to our template for all procurement tenders.

Information and Communications

Workplace Safety North is committed to meeting the communication needs of people with disabilities. We will consult with people with disabilities to determine their information and communication needs.

Workplace Safety North will take the following steps to ensure existing feedback processes are accessible to people with disabilities upon request by **January 1, 2015**:

- Incorporate three feedback mechanisms that will allow any persons with a disability to make an accommodation request in order to ensure their needs are met.
 - 1) **Completed:** On training registration forms, training participants are encouraged to self-identify if they require any form of accommodation during an upcoming training session. If a training participant self identifies, WSN will contact the person to determine how we can best support their needs.
 - 2) **Completed:** After the training session, an evaluation form is circulated to training participants; one of the questions on the evaluation form will ask participants whether or not the training/material was accessible for their individual needs.
 - 3) **Completed:** Create a general customer service feedback form and make it available on our public website.
- WSN will create an open atmosphere within all work areas and training spaces that will encourage anyone with accessibility needs to feel comfortable to bring forward an accommodation request.

Workplace Safety North will take the following steps to make sure all publicly available information is made accessible upon request by **January 1, 2016**:

- **Completed:** Under the AODA Customer Service Standard, WSN has created an accessibility section on our primary website complete with a feedback form.
- Workplace Safety North has a program and product development team, as well as a communications department, who evaluate accessible templates to guide the



creation of new accessible documents. The teams also examine ways to convert older non-compliant documents into an accessible format, in the event they are requested to do so.

Workplace Safety North will take the following steps to make all new/existing websites and content on those sites conform to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, Level A and AA by **December 31, 2014** and **January 1, 2021**:

- **Completed:** In February 2014, WSN underwent a third-party accessibility audit of WSN’s primary website for WCAG 2.0 compliance. A summary report outlined gaps under WCAG 2.0 Level A and AA.
- By 2021, WSN will ensure that all WSN websites and web content conforms with WCAG 2.0 level AA, other than success criteria 1.2.4 captions (live) and success criteria 1.2.5 audio descriptions (pre-recorded) from the audit review.
 - Ensure ongoing compliance
 - Incorporate level AA WCAG requirements in the next update, redesign or refresh of the website
 - Conduct training for staff as required

Employment

Workplace Safety North is committed to fair and accessible employment practices.

We will take the following steps to notify the public and staff that, upon request, **Workplace Safety North** will accommodate people with disabilities during the recruitment, assessment, and onboarding processes.

- **Completed:** WSN will place a disclaimer under active job postings in our careers section of our website to notify all candidates that they can self-identify if they require accommodation.
- **Completed:** An interview confirmation template will include an accommodation disclaimer:

“If you require any form of accommodation, as it relates to your abilities and the interview, please inform Human Resources so we can make appropriate arrangements.”
- **Completed:** WSN aligns its employment practices to the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC), incorporating accessibility measures into recruitment and selection, accommodation, and



employment policies. A behavioural interview guide has been completed with OHRC components.

Workplace Safety North will take the following steps to develop and put in place a process for developing individual accommodation plans and return-to-work policies for employees that have been absent due to a disability:

- **Completed:** WSN is committed to fair and accessible employment practices. When requested, WSN will accommodate people with disabilities during the recruitment and assessment processes, and throughout the employment lifecycle.
- **Completed:** All job applicants will be notified that WSN is willing to accommodate them during the selection process.
- **Ongoing:** If a job applicant or an employee requests accommodation for an interview, a member from human resources will consult with the applicant/employee to make adjustments that best suit their needs.
- **Ongoing:** During the onboarding process, new employees will be trained on all of our policies and procedures, including our disability, accommodation, AODA, and return to work policies.
- **Completed:** WSN has a Return to Work and Accommodations policy that clearly outlines the duties and responsibilities of the employee, supervisor, and employer. This policy outlines how Workplace Safety North will accommodate any individual that makes a request for accommodation.

We will take the following steps to ensure the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities needs are taken into account if **Workplace Safety North** is using performance management, career development, and redeployment processes:

- Reviewing our employees' accommodation plans regularly to understand their needs, and make adjustments as required to help them succeed
- Make performance management documents, such as performance plans, available upon request, in an accessible format; provide feedback and ongoing coaching to employees in a way that is accessible
- While discussing career development opportunities, the manager will consider what accommodations any employee may need in order to:
 - learn new skills
 - take on more responsibilities in their current position
 - consider what we could do to help our employees with disabilities succeed in other positions in our organization when they change jobs



Workplace Safety North will take the following steps to prevent and remove other accessibility barriers identified:

- create an environment of accessibility awareness through training and staff engagement
- encourage feedback of existing processes to ensure that accessibility barriers are removed

Design of Public Spaces

Workplace Safety North will meet the Accessibility Standards for the Design of Public Spaces when building or making major modifications to public spaces.

In 2015, WSN had a renovation at our head office in North Bay; our architect incorporated accessibility criterion into the plans, some of which include:

- redesigned wheelchair ramp with the appropriate ramp slope
- height appropriate customer service counters
- a universally accessible washroom on our main floor
- counter heights in kitchen to be wheelchair accessible
- counters in the copier room will be adjustable
- all new doorways will be fully accessible

Workplace Safety North will follow the following procedures in the event of a service disruption:

- In accordance with our Customer Service Standard, and in the event of a service disruption, we will notify the public of the disruption on our public facing website.
- The entrance will include a service disruption notice.
- To prevent service disruptions, WSN regularly performs preventative maintenance on our elevator to ensure that it functions properly.

For more information

For more information on this accessibility plan, please contact **Human Resources** at:

- **Phone:** (705) 474-7233
- **Email:** accessible@workplacesafetynorth.ca
- **In person or by mail:** 690 McKeown Avenue, North Bay, ON P1B 7M2

Accessible formats of this document are available free upon request from:
accessible@workplacesafetynorth.ca