



2023 AODA Annual Status Report

Northern AODA Annual Status Report 2023

Northern has established a multi-year accessibility plan to prevent and remove barriers to accessibility and to meet requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and the Integrated Accessibility Standards. This Annual Status Report details the required annual update for 2023 on the progress of measures taken to improve accessibility. The purpose of this report is to track our organization's progress and make the public aware of our initiatives.

General Accomplishments

As a broader public sector organization, Northern is in full compliance with the standards implemented on or before December 30, 2015, including the Customer Service Standards, Information and Communication Standards, , Employment Standards and the Built Environment.

Accomplishments leading up to the 2023 Annual Status Report:

- Training: Northern requires all employees to complete mandatory AODA training upon hire as soon as practicable. All historical training completions are documented and captured in a database of completions. The training modules have been embedded in a new Learning Management System which is easier to access for all employees.
- Employment: Ensures accessibility language at every stage of the recruitment and selection process. Ensures dedicated HR services to support accessibility for employees.
- Customer Service: Northern dedicates staff and resources to student accessibility and success.
- Procurement: Policy and procedure outlining accessible service expectations.
- Information and Communication: Northern invites feedback and supports accessible formats upon request.
- Built Environment: Automatic door openers installed at main entrances.

In 2023, significant updates were identified and implemented in the multi-year accessibility plan, policies, documentation, training and overall integration of accessibility features.

In 2023, AODA polices were combined into an Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation policy and communicated to all senior staff. The revised integrated policy containing all legislated elements will act as a guide to ensure that all obligations for accessibility are effectively integrated into college operations.



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2023 Employment Accomplishments

In 2023, Northern integrated a number of initiatives identified in previous years:

- New accessibility focused questions added to the College surveys.
- Updated onboarding checklist to ensure accommodations are completed as soon as practicable.
- Updated and revised the reasonable accommodation procedure.
- Reviewed and ensured compliance for written individual accommodation plan and emergency plan documentation.
- Ongoing discernment of bona fide job requirements to ensure barrier free selection criteria.
- Increased accessibility content in employee surveys.

2023 Customer Service Accomplishments

As part of an overall digital transformation project, a universal delivery of virtual programming implemented for all faculty. Virtual technology was updated in class rooms and mobile virtual communication stations were made available. This technology enabled transcription and closed captioning.

2023 Information and Communications Accomplishments

There were significant updates made to both the intranet and the public website in 2023 with a focus on accessibility. There is ongoing work to convert all content to a more accessible format.

2023 Education and Training Accomplishments

Northern is proud to report that all full-time faculty have completed the Universal Design Learning training modules covering the three principles of UDL with Multiple Means of Representation, Action or Expression and Engagement. Northern has already begun training for other classifications.

2023 Procurement of Goods and Services Accomplishments

AODA language in contracts for services contracts was updated to ensure that all contractors performing work on college premises were trained in Accessibility Customer Service.



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2023 Design of Public Spaces Accomplishments

The College in collaboration with a third party completed the Northern College Master Plan which identified numerous areas across all campuses for potential accessibility improvements. Construction has already occurred with the redevelopment of the entrance to the Timmins Campus I-Wing including re-grading of surface areas and new barrier free accessible ramp and entrance vestibule. The new Haileybury Veterinary Sciences building was completed including a barrier free accessibility washroom.

Summary of Consultations

In order to continually support the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, Northern will be forming an Accessibility Working Group (AWG) to establish Accessibility governance and ensure that plans are reviewed, implemented and updated. This working group will drive plan initiatives through accountability and commitment.

Next Steps

Northern is focused on integration of accessibility and digital transformation. This will be realized through a renewed focus on how accessibility fits into all areas of operations in an ongoing and systemic manner and by continuing efforts to digitize information to enhance accessibility formatting. The college will also be expanding advanced accessibility training such as but not limited to universal design learning.

Additional details including proposed timelines an updated status reporting can be found in the Northern College Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.