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<b>ACCESSIBILITY POLICY</b>		

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability (AODA) policy is to outline the responsibilities of our personnel and keep compliant with the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Ontario Regulation 191/11*, *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)*, and *The Ontario Human Rights Code*. The policy is based on the following IASR standards:

- *Information and Communication*
- *Employment*
- *Designed of public spaces*
- *Customer Service*

**SCOPE**

This policy applies to all employee’s visitors, customers and contractors.

**STATEMENT AND COMMITMENT**

Great Northern Hydroponics 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.

**TRAINING**

Great Northern Hydroponics will provide training to employees who deal with the public or other third party on our behalf. Individuals in the following positions will be trained: Administrative personnel, Managers and Supervisors.

This training will be provided to staff through a slide show and once completed they must sign off stating they attended training.

Training will include the following:

- An overview of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the requirements of the customer service standard;
- Great Northern Hydroponics plan related to the customer service standard;
- How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities;
- How to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person;
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing our goods and services.


If changes are made to the plan at any time, appropriate staff will be made aware of changes.

**ASSISTIVE DEVICES**

We will ensure that our staffs are trained and familiar with various assistive devices we have on site or that we provide that may be used by customers with disabilities while accessing our goods or services.

**COMMUNICATION**

We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability.

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**SERVICE ANIMALS**

People with disabilities and their service animals will only be allowed to enter the main office, as working with food products animals are not allowed inside the facility.

**SUPPORT PERSONS**

A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them on our premises.

**NOTICE OF TEMPORARY DISRUPTION**

In the event of a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities such as the main office or the packhouse, Great Northern Hydroponics will notify customers promptly. This clearly posted notice will include information about the reason for disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.

The notice will be placed at the main office and on the main entrance of the packhouse at Great Northern Hydroponics.

**FEEDBACK PROCESS**

Customers who wish to provide feedback on the way Great Northern Hydroponics provides goods and services to people with disabilities can send us an e-mail through our website at [www.greatnorthern.farm](http://www.greatnorthern.farm) , e-mail us directly at [info@greatnorthern.farm](mailto:info@greatnorthern.farm) , or come in to our main office and let us know. All feedback, including complaints, will be forwarded onto our Human Resource Manager. Customers can expect to hear back in a weeks' time.


**INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS**

Great Northern Hydroponics 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.

Great Northern Hydroponics will take the following steps to ensure existing feedback processes are accessible to people with disabilities upon request by January 1, 2015.

- Suggestion Box (on site)
- By e-mail ([info@greatnorthern.farm](mailto:info@greatnorthern.farm))

Great Northern Hydroponics will take the following steps to make all new websites and content on those sites conform to WCAG 2.0, Level AA by January 1, 2021.

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**EMPLOYMENT**

Great Northern Hydroponics is committed to fair and accessible employment practices. We will take the following steps to notify the public and staff that, when requested, Great Northern Hydroponics will accommodate people with disabilities during the recruitment and assessment processes and when people are hired.

- Through initial communication; and
- Discussion of advancement goals and the plan in meeting those advancement goals.

Great Northern Hydroponics 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.

- Through initial communication; and
- Discussion of advancement goals and the plan in meeting those advancement goals will be documented and communicated to the necessary Manager/Supervisor.

We will take the following steps to ensure the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities are taken into account if Great Northern Hydroponics is using performance management, career development and redeployment processes.

- Internal job postings; and
- Discussion of advancement goals and the plan in meeting those advancement goals.

Great Northern Hydroponics will take the following steps to prevent and remove accessibility barriers identified.

- During workplace inspections.

**DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES**

Great Northern Hydroponics will meet the Accessibility Standards for the design of Public Spaces when building or making major modifications to public spaces. Public spaces include:

- Outdoor paths of travel, like sidewalks, ramps, stairs, curb ramps;
- Service-related elements like service counters and waiting areas.

Great Northern Hydroponics will put the following procedures in place to prevent service disruptions to its accessible parts of its public spaces. In the event of a service disruption, we will notify the public of the service disruption and alternatives available.

**MODIFICATIONS TO THIS OR OTHER POLICIES**

Any policy of Great Northern Hydroponics that does not respect and promote the dignity and independence of people with disabilities will be modified or removed.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

For more information on this policy, please contact Xiomy Moreno, Human Resources Manager at: 519-322-2000 or [info@greatnorthern.farm](mailto:info@greatnorthern.farm)

Accessible formats of this document are available free upon request from: [info@greatnorthern.farm](mailto:info@greatnorthern.farm)