



**Nova Scotia Provincial
Housing Agency**

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

2026-2029



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Message from our CEO

Interim Chief Executive Officer, Vicki Elliott



On behalf of the Nova Scotia Provincial Housing Agency, we are pleased to share our first Accessibility Plan, guided by Nova Scotia's Accessibility Act.

As the Agency responsible for delivering public housing across the province, we recognize the critical role accessible housing plays in the well-being of the individuals, families and communities we serve. Our work impacts lives where it matters most, at home.

This plan identifies priority actions that will help us remove barriers, strengthen our portfolio and create homes where people can live independently. It focuses on key accessibility standard areas relevant to our mandate, including client services, built environment, information and communication, employment, and goods and services.

Through ongoing collaboration with internal teams and external stakeholders, we will continue to identify, remove and prevent barriers. This includes ongoing collaboration with community partners, clients and accessibility experts, as well as the work of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, regular assessments, updates and ongoing evaluations of our buildings.

We will continue to measure and report on our progress, ensuring that the goals outlined in our Accessibility Plan are being achieved across all key accessibility areas. Our collaborative approach ensures that accessibility improvements are informed, meaningful and responsive, enhancing inclusion and access for those we serve.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'V. Elliott', written in a cursive style.

Vicki Elliott
Interim Chief Executive Officer
Nova Scotia Provincial Housing Agency

About Us

Our Mandate

Nova Scotia Provincial Housing Agency is dedicated to maintaining, managing and operating safe and suitable subsidized housing for low-income Nova Scotians. We are committed to providing exceptional client service and property management.



Our Mission

Improve the delivery of public housing so more Nova Scotians have a place to call home.



Our Vision

Make a difference in the lives of those we serve and be recognized as leaders in how we deliver our services.

Our Values

Quality

We follow consistent processes that reflect feedback, evidence, innovation and best practice.

Respect

We listen and demonstrate empathy, foster inclusion and diversity, welcome our differences and work to ensure everyone feels valued.

Accountability

We have clarity on our roles and responsibilities, enabling us to be accountable to each other, our clients and the public.

Communication

We strive for clear, open, honest communication and foster a safe space for respectful and constructive feedback.

Teamwork and Collaboration

We are better when we work together. We ensure all voices are heard, collaborate with our partners, celebrate wins and support each other to learn and do better if we make mistakes.

Priority Areas and Actions

NSPHA is committed to its obligations under the Province of Nova Scotia's [Accessibility Act](#) and improving the accessibility of our properties, client service and workforce. The NSPHA Accessibility Advisory Committee identified the following five pillars of accessibility for the Agency to focus on:

- Client Service
- Built Environment
- Information and Communication
- Employment
- Goods and Services

Requirements under the education and transportation pillars of the Act do not fall under NSPHA's mandate.

Client Service

Commitment

Deliver exceptional client service by ensuring our housing services are inclusive, accessible and responsive to the diverse needs of tenants. We will work to identify and remove barriers—whether physical, procedural or communication-related—to ensure our clients can access safe, suitable housing and engage with us on maintenance, services and supports with dignity and respect.

Actions

1. **Provide clients with accessible ways to contact us** so they can reach us in the way that works best for them by maintaining phone, email and in-person options and ensuring contact information is easy to find.
2. **Modernize digital services for clients** to improve accessibility and communication by developing a more robust digital platform that includes accessibility features within a tenant portal and mass messaging system.
3. **Apply an equity lens across the NSPHA policy cycle** to identify and remove barriers so policies are fair and accessible for clients, by engaging the Office of Equity and Anti-Racism on Equity Impact Assessments for new policies where appropriate.

Progress Made

- Clients can now apply for public housing through an accessible [online platform](#) that includes built-in accessibility supports and removes the barriers associated with submitting a physical application.
- NSPHA's [plain-language tenant handbook](#) and [plain-language appeals brochure](#) are now available online or in district offices.
- Translation and interpreters are available upon request for appeal hearings.

Built Environment

Commitment

Provide housing that meets established standards and enhance the public housing portfolio to better serve tenants across the province. We will continue to focus on identifying building issues, removing physical barriers and ensuring new construction complies with the Built Environment Accessibility Standard, the Nova Scotia Building Code and the National Building Code of Canada. We also remain committed to meeting the accessibility targets set out in federal bilateral agreements.

Actions

1. **Audit common spaces** across the housing portfolio to document barriers and create a prioritized plan to address them.
2. **Integrate retrofit projects into planned maintenance schedules** to reduce disruption and provide temporary access points during construction.
3. **Enhance fire alarm and communication systems** to include visual and audible alerts and update evacuation procedures to better support persons with mobility and sensory impairments.
4. **Work with Build Nova Scotia on new public housing developments** that include accessible units and units that can be easily adaptable to meet diverse tenant needs while meeting or exceeding building code accessibility standards. This includes making at least 20% of new public housing units barrier-free.

Progress Made

- Completed accessibility audits on 30% of buildings that are 15 units or larger.
- New public housing projects featuring accessible units and common spaces have been completed or are underway in Wedgeport, Digby, Shelburne, Liverpool, Glace Bay and Lower Sackville.
- As of March 31, 2025, NSPHA converted 48 units to barrier-free and continues to incorporate accessibility features where feasible, including widened doorways, ramps, grab bars, accessible showers and paint colours.

Information and Communication

Commitment

We are committed to ensuring digital and print communications follow accessibility best practices and plain language guidelines by embedding accessibility into communication-related policies and procedures. NSPHA is dedicated to creating a culture that values accessibility, inclusion and clear communication with regular reviews of our content and approaches.

Actions

1. **Maintain the NSPHA website to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 AA standards** and regularly audit webpages, forms and the applicant portal to ensure they remain accessible.
2. **Create communications guidelines for plain language and accessibility** that apply to print materials, digital signage, social media and video content.
3. **Provide interpreters at Appeal Hearings to support tenants** in understanding information in their preferred language, or ASL. Update internal templates to ensure all documents use accessible formatting.

Progress Made

- Launched a plain language [NSPHA website](#) developed to WCAG 2.1 AA standards.
- Provided translated tenant announcements regarding major construction projects.
- Translated press releases for predominantly French-speaking areas.
- Provided language interpreters and appeal hearings.

Employment

Commitment

We will identify, remove and prevent barriers to employment for persons with disabilities, ensuring equitable access to meaningful work across all stages of the employment lifecycle.

Actions

1. **Review current employment practices, policies and physical environments** to identify accessibility barriers for applicants and employees.
2. **Ensure job postings, recruitment platforms and interview processes** are inclusive and accessible.
3. **Implement fair and flexible human resources practices** that support recruitment, retention and advancement of persons with disabilities through accessible onboarding, training, performance management and leadership development.
4. **Promote a respectful and inclusive workplace culture** through the peer support program, ongoing accessibility training, employee engagement and leadership accountability.
5. **Promote awareness of equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility** among staff through the Equity Diversity Inclusion and Accessibility Committee.

Progress Made

- Posted job openings on, public platforms such as Career Beacon and LinkedIn.
- Provided accommodations during the recruitment process as needed.
- Introduced a “How’s Work Going?” survey to identify workplace barriers.
- Launched the Peer Support Program to create a safer, more connected and resilient workplace.
- Established an Equity Diversity Inclusion and Accessibility Committee.

Goods and Services

Commitment

Ensure the procurement process is accessible, inclusive and barrier free so all suppliers can participate equitably by embedding accessibility into procurement policies and tools.

Actions

1. **Simplify tender language** by standardizing and using plain language across solicitation documents to improve clarity and understanding.
2. **Implement accessibility features in the new e-procurement platform** to support inclusive use for suppliers and staff.

Progress Made

- Aligned NSPHA's internal Procurement Manual with provincial standards to ensure contractors, suppliers and consultants encounter a consistent set of requirements that reduce confusion and administrative barriers.

Monitoring and Evaluation

1. **Hold regular meetings of the Accessibility Advisory Committee** to review progress on commitments and actions and ensure tenant, staff and community feedback is considered in decision making.
2. **Review the Accessibility Plan annually** to confirm alignment with new policies, provincial frameworks and standards, including the upcoming Employment Accessibility Standard Regulations in 2027.
3. **Deliver an annual progress update** on the plan's actions to NSPHA's Chief Executive Officer.
4. **Conduct a comprehensive review every three years** to ensure the Accessibility Plan remains aligned with the Nova Scotia Accessibility Act and NSPHA's mandate.

Performance Measures

Measure	Objective
Barrier free units	Make at least 20% of new public housing units barrier free.
Modernize digital services	Implement a mass-messaging system and a tenant portal, incorporating accessibility features wherever feasible to support diverse user needs.

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