

True North Climbing Inc. Multi-Year Accessibility Policy - 2024

CEO's Statement on Accessibility

*One of the key messages that I share whenever I talk about the gym is that climbing is for **everyone**. I talk about my mother getting to the top of our walls when she was 89 years old, the adaptive climbing program that has been operating at our facility for almost 7 years now, and our general commitment to facilitating excellent climbing experiences for everybody, regardless of any barriers they may face.*

Beyond being required under the law, making the gym and our business accessible is important to me on principle. Some of our accessibility-focused initiatives have included adapted instruction for blind belayers, installing temporary ramps for people in wheelchairs, changes to our website to support customers with limited vision, and extensive changes made to our flooring that made a substantial portion of the gym more accessible to people with limited mobility.

We are committed to doing everything we reasonably can in order to make climbing accessible, safe and fun for everyone.

John Gross

Introduction

TRUE NORTH CLIMBING, INC. (*hereafter referred to as "TNCI"*) is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities whenever reasonably possible. We are committed to taking accessibility into consideration when making decisions about changes to the facility in the short and long term.

TNCI is committed to providing excellent service and facilitating positive climbing experiences for people from all backgrounds regardless of any barriers they may face, including disability, financial barriers, and marginalization. TNCI has acted on this commitment in a number of ways, including but not limited to:

- Hosting the local chapter of the Canadian Adaptive Climbing Society to help facilitate its weekly climbing programs
- Making temporary (e.g. portable ramp installation) and permanent (e.g. accessible all-gender washroom, flooring alteration) changes to our facility
- Explicitly stating that we accommodate and support trans and gender-diverse individuals
- Providing financial assistance to participants in our programs who would be otherwise unable to participate due to financial barriers
- Mandating training for our staff in the following areas:
 - Respect and inclusion for marginalized peoples
 - LGBTQ2+ diversity and inclusion
 - Unconscious bias

TNCI is committed to ongoing reassessment and improvement of our policies and procedures in order to reach our goal of making our business and facility accessible to as many people as reasonably possible, including staff and customers.

TNCI strives to meet the needs of its employees and customers with disabilities and is working hard to remove and prevent barriers to accessibility. TNCI is committed to fulfilling our requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. This accessibility plan outlines the steps we are taking to meet those requirements and to improve opportunities for people with disabilities. Our plan shows how we will play our role in making Ontario an accessible province.

The plan is reviewed and updated at least once every 5 years. We train every employee as soon as practicable after being hired and provide training in respect of any changes to the policies. We maintain records of the training provided including the dates on which the training was provided and the number of individuals to whom it was provided.

Strategies and Actions

Customer Service

TNCI is committed to providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities. This means that we will provide goods, services and facilities to people with disabilities with the same high quality and timeliness as others.

Newly hired staff are expected to complete training on accessible customer service before they begin interacting with the public in their role(s) at the gym.

Information and Communications

TNCI is committed to making our information and communications accessible to people with disabilities. We are committed to serving our customers in a manner that allows them to access all of the following information:

- Website
- The text of our facility waiver, membership agreements, and other essential forms
- Job postings
- Teaching material

We communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. This may include the following:

- In-person lessons (verbal and visual communication)
- Digital communication (email newsletters, booking confirmations, etc.)

We will work with persons with disabilities to determine what method of communication works best for them. Especially considering the inherent risks involved with rock climbing, we are

dedicated to providing excellent instruction to all people, regardless of their disability or other barriers they may face.

Employment

TNCI is committed to fair and accessible employment practices.

Self-service kiosks

TNCI is committed to considering accessibility for people with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks. We currently use self-serve kiosks for our customers to fill out forms (waivers, membership forms, media release forms, etc.). We are committed to improving the accessibility of these kiosks on a case-by-case basis by, for example, removing them from their cases in order to eliminate barriers to people with limited mobility, or having staff available to interpret the forms for people who are visually impaired or are otherwise unable to understand the information presented.

Training

TNCI is committed to providing training in the requirements of Ontario's accessibility laws and the Ontario Human Rights Code as it applies to people with disabilities. In particular, we require our staff to complete training on how to respectfully and effectively serve customers with disabilities. Staff are expected to complete this training before interacting with the public in their role(s) at the gym.

Design of Public Spaces

TNCI will meet accessibility laws when building or making major changes to public spaces. Recent changes to our facility include:

- Installation of a barrier-free lounge area
- Removal of padded flooring that made areas of the gym difficult to access using mobility devices
- Signage specifically indicating the location of our accessible, all-gender washroom

More Information

For more information on this accessibility plan, please contact us at 416-398-7625 or info@truenorthclimbing.com.

Our accessibility plan is publicly posted at truenorthclimbing.com/accessibility.

Standard and accessible formats of this document are free on request from James Thompson (james@truenorthclimbing.com, 416-398-7625).