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Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2021-2026)

Introduction:

Our mission is to work alongside rural, remote, Indigenous and other communities to support the development of STEAM skills through innovative technology, art and play.

Our name, Pinnguaq, reflects our beginnings over a decade ago as a non-inuit-founded organization in Nunavut that aimed to provide Nunavummiut youth access to technology through games. Although we now operate from coast to coast to coast, the essence of our organization, “Pinnguaq” (Inuktitut for play) is at the heart of all we do.

Our highly diverse team and board of directors prioritizes working with rural, remote, Indigenous and other communities underrepresented in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math). Driven by deeply held values of equity and inclusion for STEAM learning, we participate in the Federal Government’s 50/30 Challenge, with 50% of our team identifying as women. Our staff bring a variety of lived experiences including First Nations, Inuit and Metis people, 2SLGBTQIA+ people and women, Black and People of Colour, people living with disabilities, and youth.

Our Statement of Commitment

Pinnguaq Association is committed to providing an environment which maintains the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. We seek to meet the needs of people living with disabilities who are both employees, and those who use our services. Our policies aim to proactively reduce and remove barriers to accessibility in a timely manner, and by meeting our accessibility requirements under jurisdictional legislation such as the Nunavut Human Rights Act and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005 and any other requirements under relevant accessibility acts for each province and territory in which we operate.

To meet this commitment Pinnguaq Association has established a multi-year accessibility plan that is reviewed and updated at least every five years, outlining policies and actions that have been taken to continue the commitment to improve opportunities and ensure our services are accessible for people with disabilities.

Definitions:

Disability: Includes physical disabilities, as well as vision, hearing, speech, developmental, learning and mental health disabilities. A disability can be temporary or permanent.

Accessibility Standards: As an example, the legal requirements that organizations in Ontario must follow to become more accessible to people with disabilities. They address key areas of daily life, including:

- Information and communications
- Employment Services
- Policies and training
- Customer service
- Design of public spaces

<p>Accessible Customer Service Policy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and implement an Accessible Customer Service Policy addressing all requirements under the Nunavut Human Rights Act and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), 2005. 2. Mandatory AODA training to all staff, volunteers and individuals completing work on behalf of Pinnguaq Association. Providing mandatory training to all new staff. 	<p>Completed/Ongoing</p>
<p>Pinnguaq's Action Plan:</p> <p>Pinnguaq is committed to meeting the needs of persons with disabilities, and this includes the ability to communicate despite barriers. Staff and volunteers are trained to be sensitive to the needs of those they are providing service for, and to directly ask how to communicate with someone if they perceive a barrier.</p> <p>Pinnguaq welcomes service animals in the workplace, including at off-site events.</p> <p>Pinnguaq also invites feedback regarding the manner in which accessible services are provided to those with disabilities. All feedback, including complaints, will be investigated and addressed</p>	

immediately by the CEO. If contact information is included, a follow-up will be provided within ten (10) business days.

- Pinnguaq Association has developed and implemented an Accessible Customer Service Policy. This Policy is updated and maintained by the Director of People and Culture, Kate Eysers.
- All new staff are required to complete AODA training within their first week of employment with Pinnguaq and a record of completion is retained within their employee folder.

Part I - General Requirements

Accessibility Policies

1. Create and make public a Statement of Commitment.
2. Developing and implementing company-specific accessibility policies.

Completed/Ongoing

Pinnguaq's Action Plan:

1. Pinnguaq Association has created and made public a statement of commitment. You can find this attached to our Multi-Year Accessibility Plan as well as our Accessibility Policy.
2. Pinnguaq Association has created policies and procedures that identify current and future barriers to accessibility.
 - a. Individual Accommodation Plan Process - **completed**
 - b. Safe Return to Work Plan - **completed**
 - c. Safety Plan - Mental Health - **completed**
 - d. Accessibility Plan - **completed**
 - e. Digital Accessibility Policy - **in progress**

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan:

1. Creating and updating a multi-year accessibility plan.
2. Provide this plan in accessible formats upon request.
3. Reviewing plan every five (5) years

Completed/Ongoing

Pinnguaq's Action Plan:

1. Pinnguaq Association has created a multi-year accessibility plan to ensure compliance and that all applicable Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) requirements have been reviewed. The Accessibility Plan has been created to include training, procedures and policy development.
2. Accessible formats of this document will be provided upon request.
3. This plan will be reviewed and amended in the year 2026.

Training:

1. Training all employees including contract, placements, volunteers and seasonal staff.

Completed/Ongoing

Pinnguaq's Action Plan:

1. Training for new employees will be delivered via online training modules covering all applicable content as required under the IASR.
2. Certification/record upon completion will be added to the individual employee folder.

**Training will be made available in alternate formats upon request*

Part II - Information and Communication Standard

Accessible Websites and Web Content:

1. Ensure that Pinnguaq Association's website and web content published conforms to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)2.0, level A.

Complete/Ongoing

Pinnguaq's Action Plan:

1. Pinnguaq Association's website is AODA compliant, providing the following Accessibility Features:
 - a. Text Magnification
 - b. Screen Reader
2. Accessibility in Websites & Learning Management Systems (LMS) involves designing and developing digital platforms that can be used by all individuals, regardless of their abilities or disabilities. This includes implementing features and design choices that make content perceivable, operable, understandable, and robust for everyone. Incorporating elements such as proper heading structure, alternative text for images, keyboard navigation, clear and concise content, and compatibility with screen readers ensures that websites and LMS are accessible to diverse users, promoting equal access to information, education, and opportunities for all.

Feedback:

1. Be able to receive and respond to feedback from community/individuals inquiring about Pinnguaq Association, our employees and members of the communities we serve who have a disability.

Completed/Ongoing

Pinnguaq's Action Plan:

1. A process for receiving and responding to accessible feedback requests has been developed and communicated to all relevant employees. These requests can be sent via Slack (communication system), Email or in-person requests from the People and Culture Representatives for specific departments.
2. Receiving and responding to feedback will be included in all new hire orientations.

<p><i>Accessible Formats and Communications Supports:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Upon request, providing accessible formats and communication support to individuals with disabilities. 2. Where a communication support or accessible format is not available immediately, Pinnguaq Association will consult with client/employee to arrange for a suitable format as soon as possible. 	<p>Completed/Ongoing</p>
<p><i>Pinnguaq's Action Plan:</i></p> <p>Currently Pinnguaq Association has created an Individual Accommodation Plan Process to identify accommodation needs.</p>	

Part III - Employment Standard

Workplace Emergency Response Information

1. Create and implement individualized plans to assist employees with disabilities during emergencies.
2. Obtain consent from employees with individualized plans to disclose emergency response or evacuation plans to the person responsible for assisting the employees in situations where the plan requires assistance of the colleague.
3. Create and provide emergency information formatted in such a way that the employee with the disability can understand its content/direction as soon as practicable following the receipt of the request and/or individualized plan.
4. Review the individualized plan/information:
 - a. When the employee moves to a different location in the office;
 - b. When the employee’s overall accommodation needs and plan are reviewed; and
 - c. When the company reviews its general emergency response policies.

Ongoing (Based on Employee Needs)

Pinnguaq’s Action Plan:

Pinnguaq Association recognizes that most disabilities are invisible or episodic and therefore not readily apparent, the Emergency Information Form has been amended to allow employees to identify emergencies and will be reshared with employees in January of 2024 for completion.

Emergency planning information and directions are included in Pinnguaq’s Emergency Response and Preparedness Procedure. This has been provided and will be communicated to all current employees/new hires as a part of their orientation package.

<p>Documented Individual Accommodation Plans:</p> <p>Developing and implementing a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.</p> <p>Also including creating and implementing these individualized plans upon request.</p>	<p>Completed/Ongoing</p>
<p>Pinnguaq's Action Plan:</p> <p>Pinnguaq Association has created a policy and procedure named Individual Accommodation Plan Process as part of our Accessibility Policy in place. This procedure has been developed per the IASR requirements and will be completed per individual needs as requested by the employee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The manner in which the employee requesting the plan can participate in the development plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pinnguaq Association will ensure that the employee will be able to actively participate in the development of the accommodation plan. Any limitations will be identified and clearly communicated to the employee prior to the development of the plan. ● Steps will be taken to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For confidentiality reasons, the plan will only be made available to those required to facilitate the plan, i.e. employee, supervisor and People and Culture representatives. ● The Individual Accommodation plan will be reviewed and updated frequently based on the needs of the employee. ● The format as well as the means in which the accommodation plan will be shared with the employee will be based on the specific needs of the employee. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Individual Accommodation plan will be made available in accessible formats ● The Accommodation Plan template will include a section regarding the provision of accessible formats and communication supports to be completed in the event that such supports are requested and required by the employee. ● A separate form will be attached to the Individual Accommodation Plan that includes an emergency response/evacuation plan if required by the employee. ● The Accommodation Plan will be created to include a section outlining additional accommodations that are required. 	

<p>Recruitment, Assessment, and Selection</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in the company's recruitment process. 2. During the recruitment process, we will notify applicants we have selected to participate in our selection and assessment processes that accommodations will be made available upon request. 3. Should an applicant request accommodation, the Pinnguaq Association, People and Culture recruiter will consult with the individual and make adjustments to best suit their needs. 4. Notify successful applicants of the company's policies for accommodating employees with disabilities. 	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Pinnguaq's Action Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pinnguaq Association has an accessibility statement posted on every individual Job Posting on our website, LinkedIn and Indeed. Pinnguaq Association has also adopted the 50/30 challenge. ● Successful candidates will be informed of the availability of accommodations relating to Pinnguaq Association selection processes upon initial contact from the hiring manager or People and Culture recruiter. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Upon request, all assessment methods will be reviewed and alternates will be developed to facilitate accessibility requests. ○ When updating assessment/selection methods, an assessment will be conducted to identify potential barriers and accessible formats will be developed/accommodated. ○ Any accommodation requests pertaining to the Pinnguaq Association's current alternate formats will be shared with the Director of People and Culture who will work with the individual to develop an acceptable alternative. ● When scheduling interviews, Pinnguaq Association will be including a statement in all email and phone communication that accommodations are available, and inviting the applicant to inform People and Culture recruiter and hiring manager of any necessary accommodations. ● Pinnguaq Association's internal Accommodation Policy will be made available to all newly hired employees, accessible formats will be provided upon request, and individual 	

Accommodation Plan and Emergency Response Plan will be made available in accessible formats upon request.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

1. When an employee with a disability requests it, working with the individual to provide/arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication.
2. When a request is made, we will work with the requesting employee to determine the accessible format/communication support.

Ongoing

Pinnguaq's Action Plan:

The availability of accessible formats and communication supports have been communicated to all employees through an org-wide message as well as part of our Accommodation Policy.

All future employees will be made aware of their availability through the same policy that is provided in our onboarding package.

Information for Employees

1. Communicating the company's policy on accommodating employees with disabilities to all staff members.
2. Ensure all new hires are informed of the company's policy on accommodating employees with disabilities.

Ongoing

Pinnguaq's Action Plan:

- Providing all new hires with the Accommodation Policy in their personal training resources.
 - Pinnguaq Association's policy addresses all of the means by which we will support employees with disabilities, including emergency planning, accessible formats, Individual Accommodation Plans, accessible formats and communication supports as

well as accessible performance management, career development and job change processes.

- Pinnguaq Association will also inform all employees of changes and updates to our Accommodation Policies.

Processes to Accommodate Employees/ Return to Work Process

1. Pinnguaq Association will create a process to develop accommodation plans for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and who require disability-related accommodation in order to return to work.

Completed/Ongoing

Pinnguaq's Action Plan:

- Pinnguaq Association has created a Safe Return to Work Plan, available upon request, this plan is an individualized plan that will be developed with the employee that submitted the request. The use of these forms will ensure that all accommodation and Safe Return to Work Plans are properly recorded and retained in employee folders.

Accessible Performance Management, Career Development and Job Creations

1. Ensure the organization's performance management and career development opportunities account for the accessibility needs and plans of employees and that these processes are inclusive and barrier-free.

Ongoing

Pinnguaq's Action Plan:

- Pinnguaq Association will evaluate our current performance management and career development processes to identify barriers. Develop processes to ensure consistent and clear communication to all employees.