

ACCESSIBLE TOURISM IN NORTHERN BC



What is accessibility? Accessibility refers to creating barrier-reduced access to products, services, experiences, communication channels, environments and infrastructure for all people, regardless of their physical abilities, age, race, religion, etc. Accessibility is largely focused on the needs and barriers of persons with disabilities. Disabilities may include mobility, sensory, cognitive and neurodiverse. The Government of Canada and British Columbia has legislation to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities, including Accessible Canada Act and the Accessible British Columbia Act.



Mobility



Sensory



Cognitive / Neuro-Diverse

Why is accessibility important? The World Health Organization indicates that 15% of the global population has a disability¹, visible or invisible. That equals approximately one billion people, including 926,000 BC residents, who experience barriers while travelling. One in five adults over the age of 55 also have reduced mobility, making travel more challenging. Accessibility is a human right but is not necessarily treated as such. Awareness, education, understanding and action towards greater accessibility can help all businesses increase the quality, safety and enjoyment for all visitors.



What does it mean to be an “Accessible Tourism Provider”? Accessible tourism providers (e.g., accommodations, attractions, tourism operators, transportation, food and beverage, etc.) are those that take deliberate measures to make their products, services, experiences, communication channels, environments and infrastructure more accessible to all people. The goal is to remove barriers, allowing all individuals to research, visit and experience the full scope of the tourism offering independently and with equity and dignity.

Accessible tourism providers are encouraged to go beyond removing barriers to offer universally-designed products, experiences and environments. Becoming a more accessible tourism provider may be achieved by assessing and adapting amenities and experiences, offering training to staff (to approach visitors with more compassion and through a lens of awareness and understanding of the barriers faced by persons with disabilities), website accessibility, etc.

Source 1: World Health Organization > Health Topics > Disability



Northern BC Tourism Association

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Current NBCTA and Destination BC Accessibility Initiatives:

- Northern BC Tourism Association > Access funding for accessibility improvements @ [Accessibility Improvement Program](#)
- Northern BC Tourism Association > Learn more about recent Accessible Tourism Improvement Projects @ [New Accessible Tourism Projected Completed / Accessible Infrastructure Installation](#)
- Destination BC's Toolkits for Accessible Tourism geared towards tourism providers @ [Accessible Tourism Learning Centre](#)
- Accessible tourism itineraries for travellers to BC hosted on Hello BC @ [Accessible Itineraries](#)
- Destination BC and Hello BC Tourism Portal offers business listings for tourism operators posted to the at no cost, as well as useful tools, resources for accessible tourism and the tourism sector broadly @ [Tourism Business Portal](#)

What can I do to improve accessibility as a tourism provider?:



1. Visit the Destination BC website to learn more about accessible tourism.
2. Visit the TravelNBC website to learn about "access and inclusion tourism".
3. Encourage all staff to complete the Go2HR training called "Service for All".
4. Register your business on TripAdvisor.
5. Register and post contact information for your business on Google.
6. Download and complete Destination BC's Accessible Attributes Checklist.
7. Download the AccessNow app and post photos and accessibility information about your business.
8. Work with an Accessibility Specialist from the Northern BC Tourism Association to review the accessibility of your business and visitor experience.

Key Contact Information:

For more information, please contact the Northern BC Tourism team:

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