

Position Statement
HOUSING

We anchor our position on housing that is inclusive in Article 19 and Article 28 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and are guided by the global movement we are part of through Inclusion Canada and Inclusion International.

Everyone has the right to choose where they live and who they live with. Housing and the right to live in a community go beyond simply having a roof over one's head. It means having a **place to live that feels like home**: safe, secure and suitable to one's needs and reflective of our individuality. It means having support, as needed, to live with choice and dignity as a part of a community where everyone belongs and is valued. It means having stability and security as a tenant or a homeowner. Everyone in our neighbourhoods and communities benefit when all are included.

Access to housing that is inclusive IS

- Embedded in a chosen community where there is a sense of belonging
- Accessible and adaptable
- Affordable and supported
- Respectful of personal choice and ensures control over daily life

Nova Scotians with intellectual disabilities have been routinely placed in segregated and congregated housing (ie: large institutions, nursing and seniors' homes, special care and personal care homes, rehabilitation centers, group homes and small options homes). These settings deny people their basic rights of citizenship, personal control, decision making, and independence. In congregate settings, people are isolated and excluded, and are therefore at risk of violence, neglect and abuse. These settings can never be a home. Nova Scotians with intellectual disabilities have been routinely placed in segregated and congregated housing (ie: large institutions, nursing and seniors' homes, special care and personal care homes, rehabilitation centers, group homes and small options homes). These settings deny people their basic rights of citizenship, personal control, decision making, and independence. In congregate settings, people are isolated and excluded, and are therefore at risk of violence, neglect and abuse. These settings can never be a home. Accessible and affordable housing ensures physical access and adaptability. Housing that is inclusive ensures that people can live in homes of their choosing, with the support they need in inclusive communities. Both must work together to uphold rights and foster belonging.

Access to housing that is inclusive IS NOT

- Placement in an institutional setting, large or small
- Forcing people to live with others they did not choose
- Rigid systems that limit choices and ignore individual preferences and needs
- Dismissive of the voices of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities when designing housing programs or policies

A meaningful life is shaped by meaningful decisions about where to live, who to live with and how daily life unfolds. These choices reflect our values, relationships and sense of identity. A true home is more than a physical space; it is a place of belonging, dignity and connection within a welcoming community. When housing is accessible, affordable, safe, and embedded in inclusive communities, it empowers all citizens and our communities to thrive. Everyone benefits from inclusion.

Access to housing that is inclusive leads to inclusive lives.