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**UNITS INCORPORATING BARRIER FREE/VISITABLE DESIGN FEATURES****1. Purpose:**

This Guideline provides assistance to the NWT HC design team in the design of units incorporating features for persons having limited mobility, or disabilities requiring special design considerations.

**2. General:**

All NWT HC designs and construction are required to comply with Federal, Territorial and Municipal codes, standards and regulations. This includes but is not limited to the latest edition of National Building Code of Canada, the National Fire Code, the Canadian Electrical Code, applicable CSA standards, Territorial Regulations, Local Bylaws and applicable Codes.

Territorial and Federal Legislation does not require residential units to be designed or constructed in conformance with the barrier free requirements of the NBC. However, the NWT HC does design and construct units which incorporate many of the aspects of barrier free design in order to meet the needs of the end user. This is typically done when it is deemed that these features may assist the end user in the habitation of their home.

Guidelines and regulations for the implementation of barrier free or visitable design have been evolving for a number of years. Demographics show that our current population is aging and, in recent years, there has been more attention focused in the area of providing of these types of features in homes.

**3. New Units**

New units are being designed to incorporate visitable design features that provide a basic level of accessibility. Visitable homes provide independent access for everyone including people with limited mobility or those with disabilities.

**4. Existing Units**

Based on a request from the local housing authority, an existing unit may be upgraded to accommodate specific features but due to the limitations of the existing home, it may not be physically or feasibly possible to incorporate elements that may be requested.