



# Manitoba's Policy for Recreation Opportunities

Working together to build better recreation opportunities

February 2015

**Manitoba** 



# Message from the Minister

The government of Manitoba, together with our community partners, is working to create strong, healthy and sustainable communities across our province. We are committed to supporting recreation opportunities so Manitobans have access to recreation that will enable them to fully develop their innate capabilities and creatively use their energies, while enriching their lives and improving their health and sense of well-being.

Well-documented research consistently shows that recreation is fundamental to the physical, emotional, social and spiritual well-being of individuals, neighbourhoods and our society as a whole. We believe it is vital that all Manitobans have access to opportunities that allow them to pursue their personal recreation interests.

We asked recreation stakeholders to help us create a policy that would serve as a guide to our decision-making, set future direction and support the alignment of policies and practices both inside and outside the government. The result, Manitoba's Policy for Recreation Opportunities, reflects the shared values expressed by stakeholders, including the importance of recreation and recreation leadership, sustainable investment and accessibility for all.

Through ongoing collaborations with our partners, by aligning our resources, and with investments over time, I am confident we can use this policy as a tool to continue to improve the quality of life of our communities, our families, our friends and ourselves.

Melanie Wight, Minister  
Manitoba Children and Youth Opportunities

Recreation is the experience that results from freely chosen participation in physical, social, intellectual, creative and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community wellbeing.

*National Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015*



The government of Manitoba recognizes recreation for its positive contribution and as a valuable community service vital to the social, health and economic well-being of individuals, families and communities.

The diverse opportunities recreation provides for community engagement and social connectedness are linked to both the health of individuals and the health of communities. For the individual, recreation increases social, mental and physical health and builds new skills and relationships, all while having fun! The contributions to community, from the voluntary hours committed, to the economic benefits, to the sense of community vibrancy and spirit, are incalculable.

### **New Policy Re-affirms Commitment to Recreation**

This Recreation policy re-affirms the government of Manitoba's commitment to recreation and identifies priorities as we continue to support and promote recreation in our province. It reflects the input of stakeholders and outlines the principles and directions needed to ensure provincial investments support quality recreation programs and services that align with local and provincial priorities to improve the health and well-being of communities and individuals.

The policy has been informed by extensive province-wide consultations with varied stakeholders. It has also drawn from knowledge and experience gained through Manitoba's involvement in the development of the National Framework for Recreation in Canada (2015). Moving forward Manitobans will benefit from opportunities to collaborate on shared priorities identified throughout the country.

This policy will provide a framework and direction for provincial government and valued community partners as together we build a stronger recreation delivery system that is responsive to the needs of Manitobans and will serve us all in the years to come.

# Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles reflect the important input and wisdom of our many community-based partners, stakeholders and Manitobans who shared their knowledge or participated in the recreation policy consultations process. These principles are the values that form the foundation that will guide our efforts to support and enhance recreation in the province.

## The Benefits of Recreation

Recreation is a valuable community asset, fundamental to the health and well-being of all Manitobans and communities. The individual and public benefit of recreation is recognized and the Manitoba government will continue to invest in this sector as a means of improving the quality of life in Manitoba.

## Inclusion and Accessibility

All citizens have the right to benefit from Manitoba's recreation opportunities. The government of Manitoba is committed to inclusive practices that encourage participation in recreation by all Manitobans, regardless of where they live, their age, gender, cultural background, sexual identity, physical or mental ability or income.



## Individual and Community Choice

A broad definition of recreation is supported. Organizations, communities and people will be empowered and supported to develop plans and priorities for recreation, recognizing Manitobans' wish to engage in recreation opportunities that reflect individual and community interests and priorities.

## The Volunteer

Volunteers make a significant contribution to recreation delivery and to the wider Manitoba community. The government of Manitoba recognizes the vital role volunteers play in creating opportunities for Manitobans to participate in recreation and will actively strive to support them in their important work.

## Working Together

Responsibility for recreation is shared between individuals, communities, the private and non-profit sectors and all levels of government. The government of Manitoba will seek opportunities to collaborate, build partnerships and engage with external organizations and will provide leadership to develop and sustain these collaborative efforts.

## Maximizing Investment

Investments in recreation are maximized through efficient and effective use of resources. Recreation opportunities that are integrated and co-ordinated across sectors and communities to maximize efficiencies will be encouraged and supported. All opportunities should be guided by well-informed decision-making, clear accountability for public resources, and sustainable policy and program delivery.

## Recreation Leadership

Knowledgeable recreation leadership (paid and volunteer) is essential to successful, sustainable recreation delivery. We are committed to encouraging, training and supporting the volunteers and professionals who play a key role in the delivery of quality recreation programs.

# Actions Moving Forward

## The government of Manitoba will:

- focus efforts on improving recreation delivery through leadership, expertise and resources to support sustained collaboration with key partners including recreation leaders and organizations, local governments, community organizations and the private sector to improve overall health of Manitobans and their communities.
- through Manitoba Children and Youth Opportunities, Recreation and Regional Services Branch, continue to support development and implementation of national initiatives through participation on the Interprovincial Sport and Recreation Council and support of goals arising from the 2015 National Framework for Recreation in Canada.
- continue to provide leadership and resources for ongoing training and to facilitate opportunities for the recreation sector to exchange information and resources, discuss issues and challenges and build the capacity of recreation leaders and organizations.
- establish a working group composed of representatives of recreation professionals, post secondary educators, local government and community organizations to examine education opportunities for recreation professionals and identify potential actions to support improved training for current and future recreation leaders.
- provide support to recreation organizations to improve human resource management practices through sharing and development of best practice guidelines, policies and resources.
- develop a mentoring program for recreation practitioners newly employed in the recreation sector to further develop knowledge and skills.
- work with key partners to identify the needs of community recreation volunteers and explore ways to support and maximize their effectiveness and engagement in supporting the recreation delivery system.

- through Manitoba Children and Youth Opportunities, Recreation and Regional Services Branch, create an inter-departmental committee, as a single coordinating mechanism to develop and coordinate provincial initiatives/investments in recreation.
- provide leadership, expertise and resources to build organizational capacity and sustainability of recreation and community organizations to help them meet the recreation needs of their community.
- develop and/or share resources, best practice guidelines to support informed decision-making, potential policy, and program direction by recreation organizations.
- investigate issues regarding liability insurance coverage for community organizations in support of improving access to recreation opportunities.
- further collaborate with schools and community recreation organizations to increase opportunities for joint use of schools and community facilities for recreation pursuits.
- continue to monitor and adapt the training and examination process for the required certification of refrigeration operators to ensure Manitoba's recreation facilities are operated in a safe and economical manner.
- continue to support initiatives and policies that protect our environment while increasing opportunities for Manitobans to participate in outdoor recreation experiences and ensure the energy efficiency and environmental sustainability of our recreation infrastructure.
- engage key partners in development of initiatives to increase participation of those Manitobans facing barriers that impact their access to participation in recreation opportunities.
- in collaboration with our partners, develop tools to support and improve the leisure education and recreation literacy of Manitobans.

- strengthen the connections and supports to recreation leaders working in group homes, personal care homes and assisted living facilities to enhance quality of life and support improved health outcomes.
- work to increase awareness of the Accessibility for Manitobans Act and support community organizations in their efforts to provide recreation services to persons with disabilities.
- update the funding guidelines for the Recreation Opportunities – Partners in Leisure program to ensure the program continues to meet the needs of program participants.
- review the reporting requirements of funding provided through the Department of Children and Youth Opportunities to ensure they reflect and are consistent with the level of investment and potential risk to the province.
- continue to collaborate on the provincial cross-departmental Non Profit Organization (Reducing Red Tape) Strategy to allow participating non-profit organizations to focus on service delivery.







## Manitoba Children and Youth Opportunities

Recreation and Regional Services

[manitoba.ca/cyo/recreation](http://manitoba.ca/cyo/recreation)

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