



ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES

Responsibility:	<i>Chief Communications Officer</i>
Legal References:	<i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA); Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07; Ontario Human Rights Code.</i>
Related References:	<i>BP1010 – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities</i>
Revisions:	
Reviewed:	<i>January 2016</i>

1. Preamble

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act legislation was passed in 2005. This law allows the government to develop specific standards of accessibility and to enforce them. Businesses and organizations that provide goods and services to people in Ontario will be required to meet certain accessibility standards in five areas:

- 1.1 Customer Service
- 1.2 Transportation
- 1.3 Information and Communications
- 1.4 Built Environment
- 1.5 Employment

2. Definitions

- 2.1 Disability: Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical coordination, blindness or visual impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device.
 - 2.1.1 A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
 - 2.1.2 A learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
 - 2.1.3 A mental disorder, or;
 - 2.1.4 An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.
- 2.2 Barrier: A “barrier” is anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspect of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice.

3. Customer Service Standard

- 3.1 Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429, was released in 2007. This Standard outlined a number of actions that organizations must undertake. These actions include:
- 3.1.1 Establish policies, practices and procedures on providing goods or services to people with disabilities;
 - 3.1.2 Set a policy on allowing people to use their own personal assistive devices to access your goods and use your services and about any other measures your organization offers (assistive devices, services, or methods) to enable them to access your goods and use your services;
 - 3.1.3 Use reasonable efforts to ensure that your policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity;
 - 3.1.4 Communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account his or her disability;
 - 3.1.5 Train staff, volunteers, contractors and any other people who interact with the public or other third parties on your behalf on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard;
 - 3.1.6 Train staff, volunteers, contractors and any other people who are involved in developing your policies, practices and procedures on the provision of goods or services on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard;
 - 3.1.7 Allow people with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal in those areas of the premises you own or operate that are open to the public, unless the animal is excluded by another law. If a service animal is excluded by law, use other measures to provide services to the person with a disability;
 - 3.1.8 Permit people with disabilities who use a support person to bring that person with them while accessing goods or services in premises open to the public or third parties;
 - 3.1.9 Where admission fees are charged, provide notice ahead of time on what admission, if any, would be charged for a support person of a person with a disability;
 - 3.1.10 Provide notice when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on to access or use your goods or services are temporarily disrupted;
 - 3.1.11 Establish a process for people to provide feedback on how you provide goods or services to people with disabilities and how you will respond to any feedback and take action on any complaints. Make the information about your feedback process readily available to the public.
- Public sector organizations with 20 or more employees must also:
- 3.1.12 Document in writing all your policies, practices and procedures for providing accessible customer service and meet other document requirements set out in the standard;
 - 3.1.13 Notify customers that documents required under the customer service standard are available upon request;
 - 3.1.14 When giving documents required under the customer service standard to a person with a disability, provide the information in a format that takes into account the person's disability.

4. Responsibilities of Principals and Managers

- 4.1 Ensure that all staff are trained on an annual basis;
- 4.2 Ensure that all volunteers receive a copy of “Accessibility Awareness: Communicating with People who have Disabilities”;
- 4.3 When a member of the community requires the use of a service animal, refer to the document, “Expectations for Use of Service Animal by General Public”, and follow the direction provided;
- 4.4 When a member of the community requires the use of a support person, refer to the document, “Expectations for Use of Support Person by General Public”, and follow the direction provided;
- 4.5 If a disruption occurs to a service that is normally provided to a person with a disability, refer to the document, “Expectations for Notification of Disruption of Service”, and follow the direction provided.