

AccessForward: Training for an Accessible Ontario

An Evolution

Introduction to the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation and the General Requirements

NARRATOR:

When something is developed for the first time, its design typically reflects the technology advancements or limitations of the time.

As time goes on, through a process of re-thinking... trial and error, we find improvements that benefit even more people.

Improvements that make a thing we've created not only better, but that also make it more useful for us all.

[Captioning that appears on television on screen:] As you can see behind me, traffic lights in the city have undergone a drastic change since

[Audio description of sample video on screen:] "A man in a motorized wheelchair enters a restaurant and moves up to the counter."

To create a province where every person who lives or visits can participate makes good sense — for our people, our businesses and our communities.

That's why we're making Ontario accessible to all.

How do we do that? We do that by striving to remove barriers.

Barriers to accessibility are obstacles that make it difficult – sometimes impossible – for people with disabilities to do the things that most of us take for granted.

Barriers aren't just physical things, such as steps onto a bus or a door without a push button opener.

Information that a person can't easily access or understand can be a barrier. For example, when the print is too small on a brochure for someone with vision loss to read it.

Technology, or lack of it, can prevent access. Even everyday information technology like telephones and computers can present barriers.

Organizational barriers occur when policies, practices or procedures don't take accessibility into account.

Attitudinal barriers are about what we think or assume. For example, assuming someone with a speech impairment can't understand you.

Removing barriers doesn't have to be complicated.

Mostly it takes a slight shift in perspective.

Approximately 1.85 million people in Ontario have a disability. That's 15.5% of Ontario's population.

[text on screen:] 1.85 Million people in Ontario have a disability

[text on screen:] 15.5% of Ontario's population

As the population ages, it's expected that the number of Ontarians with a disability will increase, as will the need for accessibility.

In 2005 the Government of Ontario passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, also known as the AODA.

[text on screen:] Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

[text on screen:] AODA

Its goal is to make Ontario accessible by 2025, by creating and enforcing accessibility standards.

[text on screen:] Accessible by 2025

These standards are rules that businesses and organizations in Ontario have to follow to identify, remove and prevent barriers so that people with disabilities will have more opportunities to participate in everyday life.

Standards address key areas of daily living, such as customer service, information and communications, and employment.

Several accessibility standards are contained in one regulation under the AODA. It's called the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, also known as the IASR, or simply "the regulation".

[text on screen:]
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation

The IASR also includes a section of general requirements that apply to all the standards in the regulation.

[pyramid diagram on screen:]
Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation
General Requirements
Accessibility Standards

This regulation is now law and requirements are being phased in over time to meet the goal of an accessible Ontario by 2025. This gives organizations time to make accessibility a part of their daily business.

It's important to note that the standards do not replace requirements established under the Ontario Human Rights Code to accommodate persons with disabilities to the point of undue hardship. They also do not limit obligations under any other legislation. If two laws conflict with one another, the AODA states that the law that provides the higher level of accessibility is the law that must be followed.

[text on screen:] "...In the event of a conflict between laws, the AODA specifically provides that the higher level of accessibility is the law that governs."

Compliance deadlines for the requirements vary based on the size and type of an organization. So, it's important to know how the regulation defines different types of organizations.

[text on screen:] Every person or organization that provides goods, services, or facilities to the public or other third parties and that has at least one employee in Ontario.

The regulation applies to every person or organization that provides goods, services, or facilities to the public or other third parties and that has at least one employee in Ontario.

[text on screen:] Organizations are grouped into 5 classes

Organizations are grouped into five classes:

1. The Government of Ontario, including every ministry, the Office of the Premier, and the Legislative Assembly including constituency offices of the members of the Assembly.

[text on screen:] Government of Ontario and Legislative Assembly

2. Large designated public sector organizations with 50 or more employees, including municipalities, hospitals, school boards, colleges and universities, and public transportation organizations.

[text on screen:] Large designated public sector organizations

3. Small designated public sector organizations are those with fewer than 50 employees, such as the Ontario Office of the Fairness Commissioner and some municipalities.

[text on screen:] Small designated public sector organizations

4. Large organizations are those with 50 or more employees in Ontario. This includes private sector organizations such as businesses and not-for-profit organizations.

[text on screen:] Large organizations

5. And small organizations are those with one to 49 employees in Ontario.

[text on screen:] Small organizations

In this module you will learn about the General Requirements.

[text on screen:]

General Requirements

- accessibility policies
- accessibility plans
- training for employees
- procurement processes
- self-service kiosks

This section of the regulation outlines the requirements for: accessibility policies, accessibility plans, training for employees and others, procurement processes, and self-service kiosks.

Accessibility improvements benefit us all.

Accessible buses and exterior paths of travel are not only good for people who use wheelchairs or canes, but help people carrying luggage and parents with strollers.

Closed captioning allows both people with hearing loss and the group of friends at a pub to understand what's happening in the game.

Accessible documents and websites not only make using a screen reader possible, but also work better on personal handheld devices.

Greater accessibility means greater opportunity for Ontario. If we become more inclusive, we really will create a province where every person who lives or visits can participate and contribute to the life of our communities.

Doing so makes good sense — for our people, our businesses, and our communities. For all of us.

[text on screen:] Developed by Curriculum Services Canada with support from the Government of Ontario
Copyright 2012