

What Ontario's accessibility laws mean to you

A guide for
people with
disabilities,
their family,
and friends



Ontario has a law called the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). Its goal is to make Ontario accessible for people with disabilities by 2025.

What you can expect

If you are a person with a disability, you can:

Expect businesses and public service organizations, like schools, hospitals and community centres, to provide service in an accessible way

- You must receive service in a way that respects your dignity and independence as a person with a disability.
- You must have an equal chance like others to get, use and benefit from services.

Expect businesses and public service organizations to have accessibility policies

- Accessibility policies let you know how they will make their services accessible.

Expect employees to be trained on accessible customer service

- Employers must train their employees on how to interact and communicate with people who have different disabilities.

Bring your service animal with you almost anywhere, including restaurants, hotels, taxis and public transit

- If your service animal does not wear a vest or harness, you may be asked to show a document from a regulated health professional saying you need the animal because of your disability.
- You don't have to say what your disability is.



What you can expect

Bring your support person with you

- Your support person might be asked to pay an admission fee.
- This information must be given in advance.

Expect to be informed when accessible services are temporarily unavailable

- When services such as elevators, ramps or accessible washrooms are temporarily out of service, organizations must provide public notice.
- The notice should explain how long the service will be unavailable and describe any alternative services.



Ask for information in an accessible format

- This includes printed documents and information on web sites.
- If you are an employee, this includes information you need to do your job, information provided to all employees and emergency procedures.
- If what you need cannot be provided, work with the organization to figure out what can meet your needs. They must provide the information to you as soon as possible.
- You cannot be charged a higher fee for an accessible format.



What you can expect

Ask for accessibility accommodation during the job recruitment process

- You can ask for an accessible format for information about the job or application form (if there is one).
- You can also ask for accessibility accommodation for the interview and any testing.



Expect more accessibility in new developments in your community

- Ontario's Building Code sets the rules for accessibility in buildings. Accessibility must be included in new buildings or when there is major renovation to existing buildings.
- The AODA sets the rules for new and redeveloped outdoor spaces, like recreational trails, play spaces and sidewalks. It also covers indoor and outdoor service counters.



What you can expect

Expect the same fare for specialized transit

- You will not pay more than others to ride an accessible bus or accessible taxi.

Expect stops to be announced electronically

- There will be announcements for destination points or stops on municipal transit buses.

Expect specialized transit services to have the same hours as other transit services

- Specialized transit must operate during the same hours and on the same days as any other public transit.



What you can do

If you are a person with a disability, you can:

Identify your needs

- It may not be obvious what kind of accommodation you need.
- Explain clearly what your needs are.
- If you are attending an event, provide this information in advance as a courtesy. This will help event organizers meet your needs.



What you can do

Get involved in removing barriers in your community

- You can help your municipality be aware of people's accessibility needs by participating in public consultations for:
 - Municipal plans
 - Transportation plans
 - Accessible taxis
 - On-street parking
 - Recreational trails
 - Outdoor rest areas
 - Play spaces



Provide feedback

- Organizations must have an accessible feedback process. You can contact them if you're having accessibility problems because of barriers. They need to let you know how they will help you.



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