# 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

• Accessible taxis

- Recreational trails • Outdoor rest areas
- Transportation plans
- On-street parking
- Play spaces

#### **Provide feedback**

Organizations must have an accessible feedback ٠ 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.





## **Contact Us**

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