



Introduction to Ontario's Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation

About the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

In 2005, the Government of Ontario passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). Its goal is to make Ontario accessible by 2025.

Accessibility standards are being created as part of the AODA. These standards are rules that businesses and organizations in Ontario need to follow to identify, remove and prevent barriers so that people with disabilities will have more opportunities to participate in everyday life.

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service was the first standard to become law as a regulation.

The next three standards — information and communications, employment, and transportation — have been combined under one regulation, the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation. This is now law and the requirements are being phased in between 2011 and 2025.

An accessibility standard for the built environment (buildings and outdoor spaces) is in development and not yet law.

Ontario's Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) builds on the first standard for accessible customer service and moves us closer to the goal of making the province accessible for everyone by 2025.

The three standards contained in the IASR — information and communications, employment, and transportation — should make it easier for more people with disabilities to go about their daily lives.

The IASR also includes a section of general requirements that applies to all three standards.

You can view the entire regulation at www.ontario.ca/e-laws. Search for “Integrated Accessibility Standards” or “Ontario Regulation 191/11”.

Who has to comply with the regulation?

If your organization has at least one employee, and you provide goods, services or facilities to the public or to other organizations, then you are subject to the regulation.

Under the regulation, businesses and organizations are divided into five classes:

1. The Government of Ontario and the Legislative Assembly
2. Large designated public sector organizations with 50+ employees
3. Small designated public sector organizations with 1 to 49 employees
4. Large organizations with 50+ employees
5. Small organizations with 1 to 49 employees

An organization’s requirements and timelines for compliance depends on which of these classes it falls under.

When do organizations have to comply with the regulation?

The requirements in the regulation will be phased in between 2011 and 2025. This will give organizations time to integrate the accessibility standards into the organization’s processes and practices.

For more information:

Contact the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Contact Centre (ServiceOntario) at 1-866-515-2025 (TTY: 1-800-268-7095) or visit our website at ontario.ca/AccesssON



General Requirements

In addition to setting out the requirements for each of the three standards — information and communications, employment, and transportation — the regulation includes general requirements that apply across all three standards.

Here are some of the general requirements.

Accessibility policies and plans

- All obligated organizations must develop, implement and maintain policies that govern how they will achieve accessibility through meeting the requirements of the regulation.
- The Government of Ontario, designated public sector organizations and large organizations must also develop, implement and maintain multi-year accessibility plans. The accessibility plans must outline strategies for removing existing barriers and preventing new ones, and must show how the requirements of the IASR will be met.

Training

- All obligated organizations must train employees and volunteers about the regulation, as well as the Ontario Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities. As well, these organizations must provide this training to those who participate in developing the organization's policies, and all those who provide goods, services or facilities on the organization's behalf.

Procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities

- The Government of Ontario, Legislative Assembly and designated public sector organizations must incorporate accessibility criteria when procuring or acquiring goods, services and facilities except where it is impracticable to do so.

Self-service kiosks

- When designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks, the Government of Ontario and designated public sector organizations must incorporate accessibility features.
- Large and small organizations must consider accessibility for people with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.

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Information and Communications Standard

In the information age, we all rely on easy access to information. The Information and Communications Standard outlines how organizations will be required to create, provide and receive information and communications in ways that are accessible for people with disabilities.

Here are some of the information and communications requirements.

Accessible formats and communication supports

Organizations must provide or make arrangements for accessible formats and communications supports when a person with a disability requests them. The accessible formats and communication supports must be made available in a timely manner and at no additional cost other than the price charged to others who use similar information.

Quick Facts:

What is an accessible format or communications support?

These may include but are not limited to large print, accessible electronic formats, accessible recorded audio, captioning or audio description and exchanging written notes or reading information aloud.

Accessible websites and web content

The Government of Ontario, the Legislative Assembly, designated public sector organizations and organizations with 50 or more employees must conform with the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 as outlined in the Information and Communications Standard.

Quick Facts:

What are the WCAG guidelines?

WCAG guidelines explain how to make web content more accessible to people with disabilities. Web content generally refers to the information on a web page or a web application, including, but not limited to text, images, and forms.

Educational and training resources

- Organizations that are education or training institutions (as defined in the regulation) are required, on request, to provide course and training materials in formats that take into account the accessibility needs of students with disabilities.
- Similarly, student records as well as program information such as course requirements, descriptions and availability must be made available in accessible formats on request.
- Organizations that publish educational and training materials for educational institutions (as defined in the regulation), must make available to the educational or training institutions, textbooks and other documents in accessible or conversion-ready formats on request.
- Public libraries (as defined in the regulation) and libraries of educational and training institutions must provide more of their collections in accessible formats on request where they exist.

Emergency procedures, plans or public safety information

- Organizations that prepare emergency procedures, plans or public safety information and make them available publicly must provide this information in accessible formats or with communications supports on request.

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Employment Standard

This standard will help employers make their employment practices and workplaces more accessible to potential and existing employees with disabilities.

Here are some of the employment requirements.

Recruitment, assessment and selection

- Every employer must notify employees and the public about the availability of accommodations for job applicants who have disabilities.
- Applicants must be informed that accommodations for people with disabilities are available on request for interviews and other selection processes.

Plans and processes

- Employers that use performance management or provide career development to their employees must take into account the accessibility needs of their employees with disabilities in those processes.
- Every employer must provide individualized workplace emergency response information for employees with disabilities if the disability makes it necessary.
- While all employers must accommodate their employees with disabilities under the Ontario Human Rights Code, this regulation requires that employers, other than small organizations, have a written process for developing and documenting individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.

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Transportation Standard

The Transportation Standard will make it easier for everyone to travel in Ontario including people with disabilities, older Ontarians and families traveling with children in strollers.

The standard applies to:

- conventional transportation services, e.g., London Transit and the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC)
- specialized transportation services, e.g., TTC's Wheel-Trans, and DARTS in Hamilton
- other public transportation services, e.g., public school boards that offer transportation services to students and public transportation services offered by hospitals, colleges and universities
- municipalities that licence taxicabs or that provide conventional transportation services
- certain ferries.

The standard is detailed. What follows are a few of the highlights.

Conventional and specialized transit

The Transportation Standard lists several requirements that are common to conventional and specialized transit systems.

For example, both must make information available to the public on accessibility equipment and features of their vehicles, routes and services. Neither service is allowed to charge a fare to a support person when the person with a disability requires a support person.

Conventional transportation services

Requirements for this type of service include:

- addressing technical requirements for such things as lifting devices, steps, grab bars/handrails, floor surfaces, aisles, lighting and route signage
- charging passengers with disabilities the same fare as passengers without disabilities, and not charging for storing mobility aids, e.g., wheelchairs or mobility assistive devices, e.g., canes, walkers.
- providing verbal and visual announcements on vehicles.

Specialized transportation services

Requirements for this type of service include:

- developing an eligibility application process and making it public
- offering fares that are no higher than the fares charged for conventional transit
- providing the same hours and days of service as those offered by conventional transit in the same area.

Other transportation services

School boards

School boards (as defined in the regulation) that provide transportation services for students, must provide integrated accessible school transportation services.

When that is not possible, or it is not the best option for a student because of the nature of their disability or safety concerns, then the school board must provide appropriate alternative accessible transportation services.

Hospitals, colleges and universities

When requested, hospitals, colleges and universities that provide transportation services must provide accessible vehicles or equivalent services.

Municipalities and taxicabs

Municipalities that licence taxicabs must ensure that owners and operators of taxicabs do not charge higher fares or additional fees to a passenger with a disability. They must also consult with the public to determine the proportion of accessible taxis required in the community.

Ferries

Ferries that operate only within Ontario, provide passenger transportation services available to the public, transport passengers only or passengers and motor vehicles, and weigh 1000 gross tonnes or more, must meet the requirements that are outlined in the regulation for ferries.

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Government of Ontario and the Legislative Assembly

	GENERAL REQUIREMENTS	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION	EMPLOYMENT
2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility policies s.3 • Accessibility plans s.4 • Procurement or acquiring good, services or facilities s.5 • Kiosks s.6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency and public safety information s.13 • New Internet and intranet websites and web content on those websites must conform with WCAG 2.0 level AA, excluding live captioning and audio description s.14 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace emergency information s.27
2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training s.7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible feedback processes s.11 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment s.22-24 • Employee accommodation s.25, 26, 28 • Employees returning to work s.29 • Performance management, career development and redeployment s.30-32
2014		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessible formats and communication supports s.12 	
2016		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Internet websites and web content on those websites must conform with WCAG 2.0 level AA, excluding live captioning and audio description s.14 	
2020		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Internet and intranet websites and web content must conform to WCAG 2.0 level AA, including live captioning and audio description. Content published prior to 2012 to be made available in an accessible format upon request s.14 	

* s.X refers to the section number of the requirement for the regulation.

Large designated public sector organizations with 50+ employees

	GENERAL REQUIREMENTS	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION	EMPLOYMENT
2012		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency and public safety information s.13 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplace emergency information s.27
2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessibility policies s.3 Accessibility plans s.4 Procurement or acquiring good, services or facilities s.5 Kiosks s.6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational and training resources and materials s.15 Training to educators s.16 Public libraries s.19 	
2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training s.7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessible feedback processes s.11 All new internet websites and web content on those sites must conform with WCAG 2.0 level A s.14 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment s.22-24 Employee accommodation s.25, 26, 28 Employees returning to work s.29 Performance management, career development and redeployment s.30-32
2015		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessible formats and communication supports s.12 Producers of educational or training material – textbooks s.17 Educational libraries – print-based resources s.18 	
2020		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Producers of educational or training material – supplementary print materials s.17 Educational libraries – multi-media/digital resources s.18 	
2021		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Internet websites and web content must conform with WCAG 2.0 level AA (excluding live captioning and audio description) s.14 	

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Small designated public sector organizations with 1 – 49 employees¹

	GENERAL REQUIREMENTS	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION	EMPLOYMENT
2012		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency and public safety information s.13 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplace emergency information s.27
2013		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public libraries s.19 	
2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessibility policies s.3 Accessibility plans s.4 Procurement or acquiring goods, services or facilities s.5 Kiosks s.6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All new Internet websites and web content on those sites must conform with WCAG 2.0 level A s.14 	
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training s.7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessible feedback processes s.11 Educational and training resources and materials s.15 Training to educators s.16 Producers of educational or training material - textbooks s.17 Educational libraries – print-based resources s.18 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment s.22-24 Employee accommodation s.25, 26, 28 Employees returning to work s.29 Performance management, career development and redeployment s.30-32
2016		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessible formats and communication supports s.12 	
2020		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Producers of educational or training material – supplementary print materials s.17 Educational libraries – multi-media/digital resources s.18 	
2021		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Internet websites and web content conforms with WCAG 2.0 level AA (excluding live captioning and audio description) s.14 	

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Large organizations with 50+ employees

	GENERAL REQUIREMENTS	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION	EMPLOYMENT
2012		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency and public safety information s.13 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplace emergency information s.27
2013		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational and training resources and materials s.15 Training to educators s.16 	
2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessibility policies s.3 Accessibility plans s.4 Kiosks s.6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All new Internet websites and web content on those sites must conform with WCAG 2.0 level A s.14 	
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training s.7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessible feedback processes s.11 Producers of educational or training material - textbooks s.17 Educational libraries – print-based resources s.18 	
2016		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessible formats and communication supports s.12 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment s.22-24 Employee accommodation s.25, 26, 28 Employees returning to work s.29 Performance management, career development and redeployment s.30-32
2020		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Producers of educational or training material – supplementary print materials s.17 Educational libraries - multi-media/digital resources s.18 	
2021		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Internet website and webs content conforms with WCAG 2.0 level AA (excluding live captioning and audio description) s.14 	

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Small organizations with 1 – 49 employees

	GENERAL REQUIREMENTS	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION	EMPLOYMENT
2012		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency and public safety information s.13 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplace emergency information s.27
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessibility policies (not written) s.3 Kiosks s.6 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational and training resources and materials s.15 Training to educators s.16 Producers of educational or training material - textbooks s.17 Educational libraries- print-based resources s.18 	
2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training s.7 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessible feedback processes s.11 	
2017		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessible formats and communication supports s.12 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment s.22-24 Employees and accommodation s.25, 26 Performance management, career development, and redeployment s.30-32
2020		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Producers of educational or training material – supplementary print materials s.17 Educational libraries - multi-media/digital resources s.18 	

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Transportation Standard

TRANSPORTATION	
2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-functioning accessibility equipment s.35 • Technical requirements of vehicles purchased on or after July 1, 2011 s.53–62 • Fares (conventional, cannot charge higher fare for persons with disabilities) s.46 • Storage of mobility aids (no charge) s.48 • Pre-boarding and On-board announcements (verbal) s.51, 52 • Origin to destination services (specialized) s.68 • School transportation (accessible service) s.75 • Public sector organizations (accessible service on request) s.76 • Ferries s.77 • Duties of municipalities that licence taxicabs (equal fares and fees) s.80
2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of information on accessibility equipment s.34 • Emergency preparedness and response policies s.37 • General responsibilities (conventional) s.44 • Transit stops (conventional) s.47 • Storage of mobility aids (location, handling) s.48 • Courtesy seating (conventional) s.49 • Companions and children (specialized) s.74 • Ferries s.77 • Duties of municipalities that licence taxicabs (registration ID and information) s.80
2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility plans s.41-43 • Alternative accessible method of transportation (conventional) s.45 • Fares (conventional with no specialized, alternate fare payment option) s.46, 66 • Service disruptions (conventional) s.50 • Technical requirements of vehicles manufactured on or after Jan 1, 2013 s.53-62 • Fare parity (specialized, where same provider for conventional) s.66 • Visitors (specialized) s.67 • Coordinated services (specialized) s.69 • Hours of service (specialized, where same provider for conventional) s.70 • Service delays (specialized) s.73 • Ferries s.77 • Duties of municipalities (bus stops/shelters) s.78 • Duties of municipalities (accessible taxicabs) s.79
2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility training s.36 • Fares, support persons s.38 • Eligibility application process (specialized) s.64 • Emergency or compassionate grounds (specialized) s.65 • Booking (specialized) s.71 • Trip restrictions (specialized) s.72 • School transportation (individual transportation plans for students) s.75 • Ferries s.77
2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-boarding and on-board announcements (electronic) s.51, 52 • Categories of eligibility (specialized) s.63 • Fare parity (specialized, where separate provider for conventional) s.66 • Hours of service (specialized, where separate provider for conventional) s.70

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