

**Changes to Ontario's
Accessible Customer Service Standard:
Toolkit**

[ontario.ca/accessibility](https://www.ontario.ca/accessibility)

How to use this toolkit

The Ministry of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure will be communicating the changes to the accessible customer service standard as widely as possible to ensure obligated organizations, and the general public, know about them.

Help us spread the word by communicating with your members, constituents, newsletter subscribers and social media followers.

This toolkit provides you with ready-to-use messaging that you can customize as necessary.

What's included

This toolkit includes the following items:

- **Frequently asked questions:** Key information about the changes to the accessible customer service standard including where to find more information.
- **Sample web copy:** Use this information on your website, customizing as necessary.
- **Social media messaging:** Share these messages through your social media channels.
- **Sample article for newsletter:** Communicate the changes to the standard by adding this article to your newsletter. Customize the article if needed.

Frequently asked questions

What are the main changes?

- All employees must be trained on accessible customer service
- More types of regulated health professionals can provide documentation of the need for a service animal.
- More specific information is provided to clarify that an organization can only require a support person to accompany someone with a disability for the purposes of health or safety, and in consultation with the person. If it's determined a support person is required, any fee or fare for the support person must be waived.
- All accessibility standards — including the accessible customer service standard — are now part of one Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation. This means that the requirements are now better aligned to make it easier for organizations to understand their obligations.
- Private sector and not-for-profit organizations with 20-49 employees no longer need to document policies. But this does not remove compliance or reporting requirements.
- Certain terms and definitions have also been updated and **do not** affect your existing requirements.

When do these changes come into effect?

The changes to the standard will come into effect on July 1, 2016.

What is the deadline to comply with these changes?

All organizations in Ontario with one or more employees must comply with the changes from July 1, 2016.

What is the deadline to report compliance with these changes?

All public sector organizations, and businesses and non-profits with 20 or more employees must submit their 2017 accessibility compliance report by December 31, 2017.

The 2017 report will include questions relating to compliance with the updated customer service standard.

Questions?

Contact the AODA Contact Centre (ServiceOntario) at:

Phone: 416-849-8276 or Toll-free 1-866-515-2025

TTY: 416-325-3408 or Toll-free 1-800-268-7095

E-mail: accessibility@ontario.ca

Learn more at ontario.ca/accessibility

Sample web copy

Changes to Ontario's Accessible Customer Service Standard:

Changes to the customer service standard under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act are coming [publication before July 1, 2016]/are in effect [publication on or after July 1, 2016].

As a result of these changes:

- Organizations must train all employees on accessible customer service
- Organizations can only require a support person to accompany someone with a disability for the purposes of health or safety, and in consultation with the person.
- More types of regulated health professionals can certify the need for a service animal.
- The customer service standard is part of the [Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation](#), making it easier for organizations to understand their requirements.

All organizations in Ontario with one or more employees must comply with the changes from July 1, 2016.

All public sector organizations, and businesses and non-profits with 20 or more employees must submit their 2017 accessibility compliance report by December 31, 2017.

Learn more at ontario.ca/accessibility.

Social media messaging

Here are some sample messages for you to send to your Twitter and Facebook followers:

- The Accessible Customer Service Standard has been updated! Visit ontario.ca/accessibility to learn how to comply.
- Changes to the Accessible Customer Service Standard come into effect on July 1/16. Go to ontario.ca/accessibility for more info.
- All orgs in all sectors with 1 or more staff must comply with changes to the Accessible Customer Service Standard from July 1/16. Visit ontario.ca/accessibility.
- Service is important to all organizations. Make sure you read about the changes to the Ontario's Accessible Customer Service Standard. Learn more ontario.ca/accessibility.

If you create your own social media postings, don't forget to include a link to ontario.ca/accessibility

Follow us on twitter at [@ONaccessibility](https://twitter.com/ONaccessibility) and [@ontecconomy](https://twitter.com/ontecconomy) and share our updates.

Sample article for newsletter

If you have a newsletter, include this article to inform your readers. Feel free to customize the article to meet your needs:

Changes to Ontario's Accessible Customer Service Standard

Restaurant owner Greg Boyle says there is a rich and growing market in Ontario any business can tap into if they just follow some simple advice.

"It really is just a matter of listening and talking to your guests," says Boyle, who has made accessibility for customers with disabilities a cornerstone of the three Tim Hortons stores he operates with his partner in Sarnia, Ontario.

"There are improvements that can be achieved at minimal costs to business owners who wish to reach a market that otherwise could be lost to them."

To help you create a more accessible customer service experience, the government has made changes to the [Customer Service Standard](#). Starting July 1, 2016:

- All employees must be trained on accessible customer service
- More types of regulated health professionals can provide documentation of the need for a service animal.
- An organization can only require a support person to accompany someone with a disability for the purposes of health or safety, and in consultation with the person. If it's determined a support person is required, any fee or fare for the support person must be waived.
- All accessibility standards — including the accessible customer service standard — are now part of one [Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation](#), making it easier for organizations to understand their obligations.
- Private sector and non-profit organizations with 20-49 employees no longer need to document policies. But this does not remove compliance or reporting requirements.

Certain terms and definitions have also been updated, but these changes **do not** affect your existing requirements.

The reporting schedule for organizations also remains the same. All public sector organizations, and businesses and non-profits with 20 or more employees must submit their 2017 accessibility compliance report by **December 31, 2017**.

The 2017 report will include questions about complying with these new customer service standard changes. So learn more at ontario.ca/accessibility.

Questions? We're here to help

If you have questions, need more information, or would like to request this toolkit in an alternate format, please contact us:

Telephone: (416) 849-8276

Toll-free: 1 (866) 515-2025

TTY: 1 (800) 268-7095

Fax: 416-325-3407

Email: accessibility@ontario.ca