

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

Summary of Requirements

What you need to know

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07) came into force on January 1, 2008. If you are a provider of goods or services, and have one or more employees in Ontario, you will be required to comply with the regulation.

- If you are a public sector organization designated in the standard, you must comply by January 1, 2010.
- If you are a private business, non-profit organization, or any other service provider with at least one employee in Ontario, you must comply by January 1, 2012.

This document outlines what you must do to ensure you are providing accessible customer service to people with various kinds of disabilities. The following is a summary of requirements:

1. Establish policies, practices and procedures on providing goods or services to people with disabilities.
2. Use reasonable efforts to ensure that your policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity.
3. Set a policy on allowing people to use their own personal assistive devices to access your goods and use your services and about any other measures your organization offers (assistive devices, services, or methods) to enable them to access your goods and use your services.
4. Communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account his or her disability.

5. Allow people with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal in those areas of the premises you own or operate that are open to the public, unless the animal is excluded by another law. If a service animal is excluded by law, use other measures to provide services to the person with a disability.
6. Permit people with disabilities who use a support person to bring that person with them while accessing goods or services in premises open to the public or third parties.
7. Where admission fees are charged, provide notice ahead of time on what admission, if any, would be charged for a support person of a person with a disability.
8. Provide notice when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on to access or use your goods or services are temporarily disrupted.
9. Train staff, volunteers, contractors and any other people who interact with the public or other third parties on your behalf on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard.
10. Train staff, volunteers, contractors and any other people who are involved in developing your policies, practices and procedures on the provision of goods or services on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard.
11. Establish a process for people to provide feedback on how you provide goods or services to people with disabilities and how you will respond to any feedback and take action on any complaints. Make the information about your feedback process readily available to the public.

If you are a designated public sector organization or other provider with 20 or more employees, you must:

1. Document in writing all your policies, practices and procedures for providing accessible customer service and meet other document requirements set out in the standard.
2. Notify customers that documents required under the customer service standard are available upon request.

3. When giving documents required under the customer service standard to a person with a disability, provide the information in a format that takes into account the person's disability.

Some small steps you can take immediately to improve accessibility include:

- treating all customers with dignity and respect
- asking 'How may I help you?'

More Information

At www.AccessON.ca/compliance you'll find information and resources to help you understand how to comply with the regulation.

Please note: This document is for information purposes only.

This is not legal advice and should be read together with the official language of the standard. To view the official wording of the regulation, go to www.e-laws.gov.on.ca, and click on "Current Consolidated Law" to do a keyword search for "429/07". Or contact ServiceOntario (listed below) to order a copy.

For more information or to get this document in an alternate format, contact:

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Contact Centre (*ServiceOntario*)

Toll-free: 1-866-515-2025

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

Fax: 416-325-3407

Website: www.AccessON.ca

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