Making information accessible to the public

To help make Ontario accessible to people with disabilities, the <u>Accessibility Standard for Information and Communications</u> requires all organizations in the province that have at least one employee make information about their goods, services and facilities accessible. This summary will help you find out what you need to do.

When do I need to comply?

This requirement is being phased in over time, to give smaller organizations and private businesses time to prepare.

Government of Ontario		2014
Public sector organizations	50+ employees	2015
	1-49 employees	2016
Private sector & non-profit organizations	50+ employees	2016
	1-49 employees	2017

What do I need to do?

Let the public know that you will make information accessible upon request. Then, if a person with a disability asks for it, work with them to figure out how to meet their needs, as soon as possible.

You don't have to have accessible formats on hand or make information that comes from another organization accessible, and this requirement doesn't apply to products or product labels.

Ontario

How do I do it?

1. **Assess your information**
   Think about how you provide information to the public – for example, your website, email, brochures, menus, videos or presentations – is there anything that would make it hard for someone with a disability to read, see, hear or understand?

   Example

   Safa runs a manufacturing company that makes cardboard boxes. One of Safa's customers is Deaf. Instead of calling to place an order and confirm delivery details, Safa gives them her cell phone number, so they can text her the information instead.

2. **Make it accessible upon request**
   When someone asks for accessible information, work with them to try to meet their needs. The law is flexible, because what you provide will depend on your resources, the type of information, its current format and the person's needs.

   You can make a document accessible by recreating it in a different format; for example, printing it in large print for someone with vision loss. But you can also make information accessible by helping someone to use the original document or resource; for example, by reading it aloud.

3. **Provide it as soon as possible**
   In some cases, you may be able to make the information accessible instantly. In other cases, it may take longer – it depends on the individual's needs, the format and your organization's resources.

   Example

   Sam runs a small family restaurant. A blind customer calls to make a reservation and asks for a Braille menu. Sam doesn't have Braille menus, but after talking with the customer, he finds out that she also uses a screen reader. Sam mentions that the menu is available online in a format that a screen reader can access. The customer says that will work.

4. **Let the public know**

   Tell your customers that you will make information accessible upon request. You could include a note on your website or promotional materials, create a sign or post a notice on a bulletin board. The law is flexible. Use an approach that works for you.

Want more detailed information?

Read Making information accessible to people with disabilities.

Read our policy guidelines.

The Accessibility Standard for Information and Communications is part of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation 191/11. Read the regulation to find out more.