

Steps To AODA Customer Service Compliance

Based on Ontario Human Rights legislation, the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service requires that you:

1. Develop customer service policies and procedures for serving people with disabilities.

Example: A coffee shop might have a policy which states that wait staff should read the bill to a customer who is blind or has low-vision. A florist shop might have small notepad and pen available by the cash register for customers who are Deaf to write notes.

2. Make sure that your policies and procedures are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity.

3. Have a policy on allowing people to use their own assistive devices (e.g., cane, wheelchair, oxygen tank, etc.) to access your goods and services.

- a. Your policy might be very general or may need to be more specific based on your organization's business.

Example: Some people with low vision use magnification devices called monoculars to see large screens or other things at a distance. At a movie theatre that prohibits recording devices, a staff person might assume the monocular is a recording device and restrict a person from using one. A policy could address this.

4. Communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account his or her disability.

Example: A hospital provides sign language interpreters to Deaf patients who use American Sign Language (ASL) or langue des signes Quebecoise (LSQ). When a Deaf patient is admitted who does not understand ASL or LSQ, the hospital learns from her that she is comfortable communicating back and forth in writing or by typing. The hospital is therefore taking into account the patient's disability and preferred method of communicating.

5. Allow people with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal in areas of your business that are open to the public.

6. Permit people with disabilities who rely on a support person to bring that person with them while accessing your goods or services.

Example: A person with a disability goes to meet with her financial advisor along with her support person. Before discussing confidential information in front of the support person, the advisor simply seeks the consent of the person with a disability.

7. **Where admission fees are charged, post information about what your policy is regarding what fee, if any, would be charged for a support person of a person with a disability.**

Example: A dinner theatre posts a notice on its website and at its ticket window stating that support persons will not be charged if they are not consuming food during the show. The notice states that support persons will be charged half of the usual price if they wish to eat the meal provided.

8. **If you offer facilities or services for people with disabilities (such as an elevator or accessible washroom), let people know when they are out of order.**

Example: A shopping mall has scheduled maintenance on one of its elevators, and it will be unavailable for two days. The mall posted the planned disruption on its website a week in advance and posted a sign by the elevator the day before the disruption. These notices explain the reason for the disruption, its expected length and where an alternative elevator is available in another area of the mall.

9. **Train your staff, volunteers and contractors to serve customers with disabilities.**

10. **Let customers with disabilities provide feedback on how you met their needs and establish a process to respond and take action on any complaints.**

If you have 20 or more employees, you must also:

1. Complete an online report on your compliance by the reporting deadline.
2. Document in writing all of your policies and procedures on how you provide accessible customer service.
3. Notify customers that all of the documents required by the standard are available upon request.
4. When providing documents required under the standard, make sure the information is in a format that takes into account the person's disability.