

**Barrie**

15 Sperling Drive  
Barrie, Ontario

Phone: (705) 721-7520

Fax: (705) 721-1495

[www.simcoemuskokahealth.org](http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org)

# **ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT 2005 (AODA)**

*Multi-year Plan to Achieve Compliance with the AODA Standards*

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

INTRODUCTION .....2

SMDHU’s COMMITMENT TO ACCESSIBILITY .....3

SMDHU’s MULTI YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN.....4

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE (ONTARIO REGULATION 429/07) ..4

    Requirements Of The Customer Service Standard ..... 4

    SMDHU Compliance With The Customer Service Standard ..... 4

INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS REGULATION (ONTARIO REGULATION 191/11).5

    General Requirements ..... 5

    Action Plan – General Requirements of The Integrated Accessibilty Standard Regulation ..... 8

    Information and Communication Requirements..... 9

    Action Plan – Information and Communications Requirements of The Integrated Accessibilty Standard Regulation ..... 11

    Employment Standard ..... 11

    Action Plan – Employment Requirements Of The Integrated Accessibilty Standard Regulation..... 15

    Design of Public Spaces Standard (Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment)..... 16

    Action Plan – Design Of Public Spaces Requirements Of The Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation ..... 18

REFERENCES ..... 19

# **ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT 2005 (AODA)**

*Multi-year plan to achieve compliance with the AODA Standards*

## **INTRODUCTION**

In 2005, the Ontario Government passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) to make Ontario accessible by 2025. This act applies to every person or organization in the public and private sector in the Province of Ontario, including the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. This act allows the province to establish standards related to accessibility that apply to both the public and private sector. These standards are rules that businesses and organizations in Ontario must follow to identify, remove and prevent barriers so that people with disabilities have more opportunities to participate in everyday life.

The government of Ontario committed to the establishment of standards in:

- Customer Service
- Information and Communication
- Employment
- Transportation
- Built Environment

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 became law in January 2009. This regulation established accessibility standards relating to customer service and applies to every public sector organization and to every other person or organization that provides goods or services to members of the public or other third parties with at least one employee in Ontario. The compliance dates for organizations to meet this standard spanned from January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2012.

On June 3, 2011, the Province of Ontario released the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11. The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation includes general requirements such as policy development, planning and training and applies to all Ontario organizations with at least one employee and that provide goods, services or facilities to the public or to other organizations. Requirements currently in regulation are being phased in between 2011 and 2021. Three standards – Information and Communications, Employment, and Transportation were combined under this one regulation.

Information and Communications - all sectors were required to start making emergency procedures or public safety information accessible to people with disabilities, upon request, as of January 1, 2012. The other requirements of the standard will be phased in for non-profit organizations starting in 2013 and 2015

Employment – all sectors were required to provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees, when necessary, as of January 1, 2012 with the other requirements of the standard will be phased in for non profit organizations beginning in 2016 and 2017.

The Transportation Standards apply to organizations providing transportation services, and as such do not apply to the Health Unit. The requirements from this regulation are being phased in between 2011 and 2021.

The Design of Public Spaces Standard, as part of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, came into effect as of January 1, 2013. Ontario's Building Code has been amended to include enhancements to accessibility in buildings. As of January 1, 2015, new construction and renovations will be subject to updated accessibility requirements.

The AODA regulations divide organizations into categories. An organization's requirements and timelines for compliance depend on which of the categories it falls under.

## **SMDHU'S COMMITMENT TO ACCESSIBILITY**

As champions of health for all, the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit works with individuals, families, agencies and communities to promote and protect health, and to prevent disease and injury. We value:

**EXCELLENCE** in promoting and protecting health, and providing quality programs and services.

**ACCOUNTABILITY** for our individual and collective actions and outcomes, and for the responsible and effective use of public funds and resources.

**RESPECT** for all people and their right to be treated fairly and with dignity.

**WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP** and collaborating with governments, agencies, communities, families and individuals.

**A POSITIVE WORKING ENVIRONMENT** where employees are engaged, and encouraged to exchange ideas, communicate openly, be innovative, and practice work-life balance.

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITY** for health.

The SMDHU is committed to achieving accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025. The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit will provide programs and services in a manner that is based upon the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity to all health unit clients. Wherever possible, persons with disabilities will benefit from the same services, in the same place and in a similar way as other clients. Services will be integrated with those provided to persons who do not have disabilities unless an alternative measure is necessary to enable a person with a disability an opportunity equal to that of persons without disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from the Health Unit's services.

## **SMDHU'S MULTI YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN**

The AODA regulations divide organizations into categories. An organization's requirements and timelines for compliance depend on which of the categories it falls under. The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit falls into the category of a Non Profit Organization.

Under the legislation, the Health Unit is required to establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organizations' strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the regulations. The plan is to be made available to the public and updated a minimum of once every five years.

A multi-disciplinary workgroup with designated leads from Health Promotion and Communications, Human Resources, Information Technology and Infrastructure was struck to take on the task of reviewing the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and its regulations. This document provides the general framework for action to achieve compliance with the regulations under the Act. More detailed sub plans are under development to address each sub component of the Standard. The plan is dynamic, capturing the legislated requirements as they are phased in and responding to the changing landscape and environment within which the public health organization operates.

## **ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE (ONTARIO REGULATION 429/07)**

### **REQUIREMENTS OF THE CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD**

The Accessibility Standard for Customer Service was the first standard to become law. The Standard applies to all organizations (public, private and non-profit) that provide goods or services either directly to the public or to other organizations in Ontario and that have one or more employees in Ontario and includes the following requirements:

1. Create and put in place an accessibility plan that: considers a person's disability when communicating with them; allows assistive devices such as wheelchairs, walkers and oxygen tanks; allows service animals; welcomes support persons; lets customers know when accessible services aren't available and invites customers to provide feedback.
2. Train staff on accessible customer service.
3. Put the plan in writing and make it available to customers (e.g., on your website). Offer the plan in accessible formats, like large print, if requested.
4. Report progress online.

### **SMDHU COMPLIANCE WITH THE CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD**

As of April 2011 the SMDHU has the following in place in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 429/07:

1. A statement of organizational commitment to meet the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner incorporated into the Client Services Policy PP0108.

2. Client Services Policy PP0108 includes policy statements governing how the organization will achieve accessibility under the accessibility standards and specifically addresses the following:
  - allowance of personal assistive devices in order to access goods or services and measures the organization offers to enable someone to access the services;
  - identifying areas open to service animals, how to serve people with service animals;
  - allowance for a disabled person to bring a support person while receiving services;
  - notification of temporary disruption of facilities or service for people with disabilities;
  - notification that documents are available in accessible formats and, if requested, to provide a copy of a document in a format taking into account the person's disability in consultation with that person.

The statement of commitment and a link to the Accessible Client Service Policy are available to the public on the health unit website and provided in an accessible format upon request.

3. A comprehensive staff training module on the Act and Customer Service Standard completed by all staff within the first three months after hire;
4. A process for receiving and responding to feedback about the manner in which the Health Unit provides goods and services to persons with disabilities. The feedback process is promoted on the health unit website.
5. A compliance report was completed and submitted in 2013 and is available to the public upon request.

## **INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS REGULATION (ONTARIO REGULATION 191/11).**

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation establishes accessibility standards and introduces requirements for Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation and the Design of Public Spaces. The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation also establishes the compliance framework for obligated organizations.

### **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

#### **Establishment of Accessibility Policies**

All public sector organizations, as well as private and not-for-profit organizations with 50 or more employees must develop a statement of commitment. A statement of commitment establishes the vision and the goals for an organization. It is an important first step in the development of accessibility policies as it gives an organization purpose, clarity and direction. Organizations

must make their statement of commitment publicly available and provide their statement of commitment in an accessible format on request. Organizations must also establish accessibility policies describing what they do, or intend to do, to meet the requirements of the regulation consistent with the following principles:

- dignity
- independence
- integration, except when alternate measures are necessary to meet the needs of people with disabilities
- equal opportunity

Policies must be documented and available to the public. If requested, these documents must be made available in accessible formats. Policies should be reviewed and updated regularly to reflect current practices of the organization.

#### Accessibility Plans

A multi-year accessibility plan lays out how organizations will meet their accessibility requirements within required timelines specified in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation; address any current accessibility barriers and prevent and remove future barriers. Organizations that are required to develop an accessibility plan must post a copy on their website. Accessibility plans are living documents. Organizations must review and update their plan every five years. Where feasible, consultations should be undertaken to provide people with disabilities with an opportunity to participate and provide valuable feedback that should help organizations maintain an awareness of people's accessibility needs. All designated public sector organizations must prepare annual public status updates on the progress of the measures they have taken to implement the strategies referred to in their accessibility plans.

#### Procuring or Acquiring Goods, Services or Facilities

Organizations should incorporate accessibility design, criteria and features into their procurement practices so that goods, services, and facilities are more accessible to people with disabilities. Accessibility features include technical features (e.g., software), and structural features (e.g., physical design, including hardware or product specifications).

#### Self-Service Kiosks

A kiosk is used to describe an interactive electronic terminal including a point-of-sale device that the public can use to access one or more services or products, or both. All organizations that offer services and/or products through self-service kiosks take steps to make them accessible, on a go forward-basis, to people with disabilities so they can be used independently and securely.

## Training

Organizations must provide training on the requirements in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation and on the disability-related obligations under the Ontario Human Rights Code (the Code). The training should include information about achieving accessibility by 2025 and highlight the requirements of the standards – Information and Communication, Employment, Transportation and Design of Public Spaces – in the regulation as they apply to the organization’s business. As well, organizations must understand their requirements under the Code and the differences between the Code and Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, and provide training accordingly. The training must be provided to:

- all employees and volunteers, including paid and unpaid positions
- anyone who participates in developing the organization’s policies, which might include managers, senior leaders, boards of directors, business owners and independent operating regulated professionals
- anyone who provides goods, services or facilities on behalf of the organization, which might include outsourced services, such as payroll, facilities management and contact centres.

Individuals should to be trained as needed to perform the duties of their jobs. It is therefore important to assess the requirements in the regulation against the roles or duties of the people within the organization. Organizations must keep records of the number of individuals who were trained, and the dates that the training was provided.



## ACTION PLAN – GENERAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARD REGULATION

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS		
Requirement	Date Due	Status
<p>Accessibility Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statement of commitment</li> <li>• Comprehensive policies in place</li> <li>• Policies publicly available</li> </ul>	January 1, 2014	Complete
<p>Multi-year accessibility plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment of current status</li> <li>• Assessment of requirements</li> <li>• Plan approved and publicly available</li> <li>• Annual report on progress publicly available</li> <li>• Review and updated by January 1, 2019</li> </ul>	January 1, 2014	Pending approval and posting December 2014
<p>Procuring or acquiring goods, services and facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strive to include accessibility features where possible, and consider the accessibility needs, preferences and abilities of the widest range of users</li> <li>• Self-Service Kiosks - an interactive electronic terminal including a point-of-sale device that the public can use to access one or more services or products, or both.</li> </ul>	January 2014	In place
	January 2014	Not applicable in 2014
<p>Staff Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training on the requirements of the AODA and customer service (all staff)</li> <li>• Training on the requirements of the Standards (role specific)</li> <li>• Training on the Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities (all staff)</li> </ul>	January 1, 2013	In place
	January 1, 2015	Under development
	January 1, 2015	Under development

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS**

The Information and Communications Standard requires people and organizations to provide accessible information and communications about the goods, services or facilities offered to customers, clients and others. The standard applies to information or communications an organization can directly control, meaning information an organization creates, owns or where a contractual relationship with a third party provider allows for modification. If an organization has control over the information or communications, they would have to convert it into an accessible format or provide it with appropriate communication supports, upon request.

### **Receiving and Responding to Feedback**

Many organizations have external and/or internal processes in place to receive and respond to feedback from their clients, customers or employees. Those processes must be accessible to individuals with disabilities, on request.

### **Accessible Formats and Communication Supports**

All organizations must provide information and communicate in an accessible manner about their goods, services or facilities to people with disabilities, on request. The information must be provided in a timely manner and at a cost that is no more than the regular price charged to others. Organizations are required to consult with the person to determine their accessibility needs. Consultation is important to make sure the appropriate support is provided.

### **Emergency Procedures, Plans or Public Safety Information**

The intent of this requirement is that publicly available emergency and public safety information is provided in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, on request. This requirement applies to all organizations that prepare public emergency procedures, plans or public safety information and that make them available to the public. Many public sector organizations are required, under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, to have publicly shared emergency plans for a variety of events such as outbreaks of influenza and severe weather such as tornadoes and ice storms. In some situations, organizations may not be legally required to share emergency and/or public safety information with the public but may choose to do so. For example, organizations may develop and implement emergency plans for blackouts and share the information with their customers or clients. Others may prepare emergency plans for chemical spills or natural disasters, such as earthquakes or floods.

Providing emergency and public safety plans in accessible formats or with communications supports, should enable people with disabilities to be prepared in case there is an emergency situation.

Prepared emergency and public safety information refers to the emergency plans and procedures that organizations develop before an emergency occurs. This may include evacuation procedures and floor plans, information about alarms or information about other incidents that may threaten life, property, operations or the environment. It does not include

real-time emergency or real-time public safety information, e.g., a fire evacuation, or an emergency at a large public gathering.

#### Accessible Websites and Web Content

Organizations are required to make their websites accessible to people with disabilities by conforming to international standards for website accessibility. All obligated organizations' websites, and the content on those websites, must conform with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0. This requirement applies to new websites first, and then over the next several years to all websites. WCAG 2.0 is an international standard for making websites and web content accessible to a broader range of users with disabilities.

A new website refers to a site with a new domain name — a brand new web address. The term does not refer to a new page or new link on an existing site. The term also refers to a site with an existing domain name that is undergoing a significant “refresh”. There is not an industry standard definition for significant refresh. In this context, “significant refresh” could include, but is not limited to: a new look and feel to the website; a change in how users navigate around it; a major update and change to the content of the website. Content may include any information that may be found on a web page or web application, including text, images, forms and sounds. Web content, including documents such as Word and PDFs, posted after January 1, 2012 will need to be accessible as per the regulation. Staggered timelines allow organizations to build accessibility into their regular re-fresh cycles and to implement systematic approaches to increase their web accessibility and to meet the compliance dates.

**ACTION PLAN – INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS REQUIREMENTS OF THE INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARD REGULATION**

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION		
Requirement	Date Due	Progress
Receiving and responding to feedback – from staff and public on programs, services, employment related issues etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternatives available on request (email, telephone, written communication, face to face)</li> </ul>	January 1, 2015	In place
Accessible Formats and Communication Supports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standardize processes for accessing alternative formats</li> <li>• Create policies and procedures to support processes</li> <li>• Orient staff to processes</li> <li>• Public notice of availability</li> </ul>	January 1, 2016	Assessment planned for 2015 to develop action plan.
Emergency Procedures, Plans or Public Safety Information	January 1, 2012	In place
Accessible Websites and Web Content <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New internet websites and web content on those sites must conform with WCAG 2.0 Level A.</li> <li>• All internet websites and web content must conform with WCAG 2.0 Level AA, other than success criteria 1.2.4 Captions (Live), and success criteria 1.2.5 Audio Descriptions (Pre-recorded).</li> </ul>	January 1, 2014  January 1, 2021	In place  Needs assessment and detailed planning in 2015.

**EMPLOYMENT STANDARD**

The Employment Standard, under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, requires employers to provide for accessibility across all stages of the employment life cycle. The Standard applies to paid employees. This includes, but is not limited to, full-time, part-time, paid

apprenticeships and seasonal employment. As good business practice, employers may apply the Standard to unpaid staff, volunteers and other forms of unpaid work.

The Ontario Human Rights Code requires organizations to accommodate people with disabilities to the point of undue hardship. The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation does not replace or affect legal rights or obligations that arise under the Ontario Human Rights Code and other laws relating to the accommodation of people with disabilities. This means that the Ontario Human Rights Code or other applicable legislation may require additional accommodation measures that go beyond or are different from the standards established by the regulations of the AODA. The requirements covered in this section are:

- Recruitment, assessment and selection
- Accessible formats and communication supports for employees
- Workplace emergency response information
- Documented individual accommodation plans
- Return to work process
- Performance management
- Career development and advancement
- Redeployment

#### Recruitment General

All employers will notify internal and external job applicants that, where needed, accommodations for disabilities will be provided, on request, to support their participation in all aspects of the recruitment process.

#### Recruitment, Assessment Or Selection Process

All employers will notify job applicants who have been invited to participate in a recruitment, assessment or selection process that, where needed, accommodations for disabilities are available, on request, to support their participation in the process. In addition, employers are required to consult with job applicants who request accommodations to support them during the process.

#### Notice to Successful Applicants

All employers will notify successful applicants of their policies for accommodating employees with disabilities when offering employment.

#### Informing Employees of Supports

Employers are required to inform all employees of their policies for supporting employees with disabilities. This includes their policies on providing employment-related accommodations that take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities.

## Accessible Formats and Communication Supports For Employees

Employers will consult with their employees who have disabilities in order to provide them with the accessible formats and communications supports they require to do their jobs effectively and to be informed of information that is generally available to all employees in that workplace.

Once the employer and employee have determined what the needs are, then the organization must work out how to accommodate the person. This requirement applies to information that employees with disabilities need to perform their jobs effectively. The requirement also applies to information that is generally available in a workplace such as company newsletters, bulletins about company policies and fact sheets.

## Workplace Emergency Response Information

Employers are required to prepare for emergency situations by providing employees with disabilities with individualized workplace emergency response information. This will help employees with disabilities, and the employers that they work for, to prepare for a range of potential emergencies including, but not limited to, the following:

- fire
- power outages
- severe weather
- natural disasters
- security incidents

Employers are required to provide individualized workplace emergency response information when the employee's disability is such that the information is necessary; and when the employer is aware of the need for accommodation because of the employee's disability.

Employers should consult with employees who have disabilities, so that the individualized workplace emergency response information meets the employees' needs. Employers are required to review the individualized workplace emergency response information to make sure it remains effective and up-to-date. If an employee has an individual accommodation plan, then the individualized workplace emergency response information provided to the employee should be included in the plan.

## Documented Individual Accommodation Plans

Employers will develop written individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities. Individual accommodation plans are a formal way of recording and reviewing the workplace-related accommodations that an employer will provide to an employee with a disability. Accommodation plans are living documents. They are reviewed and updated so that they remain effective and up-to-date. By establishing a process for developing individual accommodation plans, employers should have in place a clear and consistent approach for accommodating employees with disabilities within their organization.

Under the Ontario Human Rights Code, employers are already required to accommodate the needs of employees with disabilities to the point of undue hardship. As a result, many employers may already have similar processes in place and can build on them to meet this requirement.

#### Return to Work Process

Employers will have in place a documented process for supporting employees who return to work after being away for reasons related to their disabilities. Obligated employers are required to document their return-to-work processes so that they become part of their business practices and are applied consistently. Employers are required to develop return to work processes that document the steps they will take to help employees to return to work when they have been absent because of their disability; and they need some form of disability-related accommodation to return to work.

#### Performance Management

Employers that have performance management processes in place are required to consider the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities in these processes

#### Career Development and Advancement

Employers that provide career development and advancement opportunities will take into account the accessibility needs of their employees who have disabilities. This may provide employees with disabilities with the opportunities to advance within their organizations. When providing career development and advancement opportunities, employers are required to take into account what accommodations employees with disabilities may need to succeed elsewhere in their organizations or to take on new responsibilities in their current position.

#### Redeployment

Employers that use redeployment are required to take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities. This includes reviewing individual accommodation plans when moving employees with disabilities to other jobs within their organizations. The regulation does not require employers to create new processes for redeployment. It does require employers that redeploy employees to consider the accessibility needs of individuals with disabilities and, if required, adjust their supports to fit their new roles.

**ACTION PLAN – EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS OF THE INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARD REGULATION**

EMPLOYMENT		
Requirement	Date Due	Status
Workplace Emergency Response Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify or respond to the identified need for individualized emergency response plan</li> <li>Document individualized emergency response plans</li> <li>Review individualized emergency response plans.</li> </ul>	January 1, 2012	In place
Recruitment including specific components of the assessment or selection process	January 1, 2016	Needs assessment, detailed planning and implementation in 2015.
Notifying successful candidates of policies for accommodating employees with disabilities	January 1, 2016	Needs assessment, detailed planning and implementation in 2015.
Informing Employees of Supports	January 1, 2016	Needs assessment, detailed planning and implementation in 2015.
Accessible Formats and Communication Supports For Employees	January 1, 2016	Needs assessment, detailed planning and implementation in 2015.
Documented Individual Accommodation Plans	January 1, 2016	Needs assessment, detailed planning and implementation in 2015.
Return to Work Process	January 1, 2016	Needs assessment, detailed planning and implementation in 2015.
Performance Management	January 1, 2016	Needs assessment, detailed planning and implementation in 2015.
Career Development and Advancement	January 1, 2016	Needs assessment,



EMPLOYMENT		
Requirement	Date Due	Status
		detailed planning and implementation in 2015.
Redeployment	January 1, 2016	Needs assessment, detailed planning and implementation in 2015.

**Design of Public Spaces Standard (Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment)**

Accessible public spaces include specific features that make it easier for everyone – people with disabilities, seniors and families – to use public spaces. Some of these features are:

- Sidewalks that are free of barriers and wide enough to move around
- Pedestrian signals at intersections with both audible and visual cues to move people safely across the street
- Gentler ramp slopes
- Wider accessible parking spaces for people with mobility limitations
- Service counters that a person seated in a mobility device can use.

The Design of Public Spaces Standard, as part of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, is now law in Ontario as of January 1, 2013. Accessibility requirements within the context of the Built Environment Standard are found in both the AODA and Ontario’s Building Code. Barrier-free design requirements within buildings have been regulated through Ontario’s Building Code since 1975. Ontario’s Building Code regulates accessibility features inside buildings, such as accessible washrooms, as well as walkways or ramps that connect to building entranceways. Updated Building Code requirements for accessibility in buildings come into effect on January 1, 2015. The Design of Public Spaces Standard primarily regulates outdoor spaces. Some requirements in this standard apply to elements found indoors that are not covered by Ontario’s Building Code (service counters, fixed queuing guides and waiting areas) as well as outdoors.

The requirements under the Design of Public Spaces Standard apply to new construction and the redevelopment of elements in public spaces. Unplanned changes to existing public spaces to meet the standard (retrofits) are not required. Unplanned changes can include emergency repairs or forced changes that were not anticipated or planned for in advance. By applying the standard to new construction and redevelopment of elements, organizations can incorporate these changes into their regular planning practices.

The organization that constructs or redevelops the public space must comply with the requirements. In lease agreement situations, a leaseholder that constructs or redevelops the public space is required to comply.

#### Exterior Paths of Travel

Includes accessibility features for elements associated with exterior paths of travel such as ramps, stairs, curb ramps, accessible pedestrian signals and rest areas. The intent of the requirements for sidewalks and walkways is to provide minimum standards of accessibility to make sure they are safe and useable for all pedestrians, including people using mobility devices and caregivers with strollers.

#### Accessible Parking

The requirements for accessible parking spaces in off-street parking facilities apply to parking spaces that are intended for public use. The intent of accessible parking requirements is to provide minimum province-wide standards that will meet the needs of a diverse and growing population of accessible parking permit holders.

#### Obtaining Services

Thinking about accessibility when designing service counters, fixed queuing guides, and waiting areas is an important part of making services and products available for people with disabilities. The requirements in this section address these customer service features and apply to all new counters and fixed queuing guides. They also apply to all new and redeveloped waiting areas with fixed seating. Any of these features can be located either indoors or outdoors.

#### Maintenance

Maintenance is an important opportunity to retain an accessible environment that is safe and useable by everyone. Poor maintenance can compromise accessibility and safety. Maintenance can involve (but is not limited to): undertaking specific activities to keep existing public spaces in good working order, or restoring spaces or elements within a space to their original condition.

**ACTION PLAN – DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES REQUIREMENTS OF THE INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARD REGULATION**

DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES		
Requirement	Date Due	Status
<p>Paths of travel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• new construction or redevelopment of existing public spaces</li> <li>• accessible public parking</li> </ul>	January 1, 2017 - 2025	Plan for implementation by 2022. Needs assessment and detailed planning in 2015.
<p>Obtaining services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all new service counters and fixed queuing guides and</li> <li>• all new and redeveloped waiting areas with fixed seating</li> </ul>	January 1, 2017 - 2025	To be implemented where applicable when renovations or new builds occur after January 2015.
Maintenance	January 1, 2017 - 2025	Ongoing and as required beginning January 2015.

## REFERENCES

1. A Guide to the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation April 2014  
<http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/documents/en/mcss/accessibility/CombinedEnglishDocumentsIASR-02%20FINAL-s.pdf>