



Kit 4: Barriers

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) is designed to remove barriers in everyday life for people with disabilities. The Employment Standard of the AODA is specifically designed to remove barriers to employment and requires employers to build accessibility into their HR practices.

Quick Facts

- The employment rate of Canadians aged 25 to 64 with disabilities was 49% in 2011, compared to 79% for those without a disability.
- 12% of Canadians have been refused a job recently because of having a disability.
- It is estimated that increased workforce participation among people with disabilities will increase the GDP per capita in Ontario by \$600 per annum.

TIPS: CREATING AN ACCESSIBLE WORKPLACE

Not having a fully accessible workplace shouldn't be a barrier to hiring someone with a disability. Disabilities encompass far more than physical limitations. Here are some tips for accommodating people with a variety of disabilities and generally making your workplace more inclusive.

1. Have a portable ramp on hand to deploy when people using mobility devices, strollers, or carriers need to enter your building.
2. Post information and disclaimers on your organization website, within job postings, and email signatures to make everyone aware that you offer accessible formats and communication supports.
3. Integrate accessible document practices into your everyday process. This can include using [Styles in Word](#) to format documents so that they are easier to read for people using assistive technologies.
4. When repairing or renovating, think about how you could make a space more accessible, such as lowering a light switch for people in mobility devices or lower stature, or moving furniture to increase visibility while reducing obstacles for people using assistive aids to navigate a space.
5. When updating corporate identity programs or branding, consider using fonts and colour schemes that are easy to read in a variety of lighting conditions, such as bright sunlight or a dim room.
6. Include the topic of accessibility at meetings and encourage employees to share success stories and concerns. Not only will this help isolate areas of celebration and improvement, but it will also help people feel more comfortable discussing the subject freely.

CHECKLIST: REMOVING BARRIERS IN THE WORKPLACE

There are many things that businesses can do to remove visible and invisible barriers to employment, many of which are included in the [Employment Standard](#) of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). Here is an overview of the requirements that apply to most businesses in our BIA:

- ✓ Notifying employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in recruitment processes.
- ✓ Provide updated information to employees whenever there is a change to existing policies on accessibility.
- ✓ Provide workplace information in an accessible format if an employee asks for it.
- ✓ Provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability, if the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary.
- ✓ Performance management, redeployment, career development and advancement of employees need to take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, when using each process in respect of employees with disabilities.
- ✓ Organizations with 50 or more employees need to develop and have in place:
 - a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.
 - a return to work process for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work

RESOURCES

- [Accessibility and the Built Environment](#): Webinar on the accessibility requirements for built environments under the AODA, Ontario Human Rights Code, and the Ontario Building Code (Part of the 14/15 Go ON Project)
- [End the Awkward](#): Series of short videos that uses humour to educate the public on workplace etiquette when working with people with disability (Scope UK)
- [StopGap](#): community ramp building project
- [Conducting Accessible Meetings](#): document by OMSSA/ADO