



# **AODA'S Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)**

Under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 (AODA)*.

Accessibility training guide for employees, volunteers and contractors.

**County of Peterborough**

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## **Accessibility**

Did you know that 1.85 million people in Ontario have a disability?

That is 15.5 per cent of Ontario's population. As the population ages these numbers are expected to increase.

A disability is a physical or mental condition that affects a person's movements, senses or activities. Many people have disabilities like difficulty walking, seeing and hearing, or learning, processing and remembering information.

As the people in our community get older, there will be more people with disabilities.

The good news is that the County of Peterborough is committed to making sure that people of all abilities can fully participate in life here in the County.

We have been investing resources to remove and prevent barriers, and will continue to build on this to improve accessibility on-going.

### **What is Accessibility?**

It simply means giving people of all abilities opportunities to participate fully in everyday life. This includes access to information, forms of communication, employment, transportation and public spaces.



## **The AODA**

In 2005, the provincial government passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). Its goal is to have an accessible Ontario by 2025.

### **The AODA and the Human Rights Code**

The Ontario Human Rights Code (the Code) and the AODA work together to promote equality and accessibility. The Code states that people with disabilities must be free from discrimination where they work, live and receive services, and that their needs must be accommodated.

The AODA has accessibility standards organizations must meet. The Code helps guide how these standards are met.

## **The IASR**

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) are standards under the AODA that include general requirements and standards for information and communications, employment and transportation and design of public spaces.

The province requires all municipal staff, volunteers and contractors to be trained on these standards.

## **Training to Assist You in Understanding the Requirements**

This training guide will give you the knowledge you need to plan and meet these standards. This mandatory training is a follow up to the AODA Accessible Customer Service training which you also need to have taken. The training provides you with a general overview of the standards and how it applies to you as a County of Peterborough employee, volunteer or contractor.

## **General Requirements of the IASR**

The IASR has general or overarching requirements that require the County to:

- 1) Develop an accessibility policy.
- 2) Create a multi-year accessibility plan and provide annual status updates.
- 3) Incorporate accessibility into purchasing activities and when designing or purchasing self-service kiosks.
- 4) Provide training (this brochure is one of our tools for training).

The requirements under the IASR have specific compliance dates from 2011 to 2025. We are working to meet and exceed the requirements to help achieve our vision to be a senior's friendly community with accessibility for all.

## **Accessibility Policy**

The County's accessibility policy and supporting procedures outline our commitment to eliminating barriers and improving accessibility across the County. The policy and procedures can be found on the employee Learning & Development portal, as well as via the corporate shared directory:

### **CA-17 Accessible Customer Service Policy**

<https://peterboroughcounty.civicweb.net/document/100689>

### **CA-18 Integrated Accessibility Standards Policy**

<https://peterboroughcounty.civicweb.net/document/135718>

### **Multi-year Plan**

The County created a multi-year accessibility plan in consultation with persons with disabilities. It is our accessibility road map. The plan outlines key actions the County will take to meet AODA requirements, how we will prevent and remove barriers and by when.

The plan is a living document and will be updated at least annually to highlight the progress being made. The plan can be found on the employee Learning & Development portal, and on the corporate shared directory:

### **CA-18 Schedule A – Multi-year Plan**

<https://peterboroughcounty.civicweb.net/document/135719>

### **CA-18 Schedule B – Annual Work Plan**

<https://peterboroughcounty.civicweb.net/document/135720>

### **Purchasing and Procurement**

It is a requirement that our purchasing of goods, services and facilities include accessibility design, criteria and features. The County has established policies and procedures to help employees address these requirements when making purchases or contracting services. The Purchasing policy can be found on the Learning & Development portal and on the corporate shared directory:

### **FI-30 Purchasing of Goods & Services**

<https://peterboroughcounty.civicweb.net/document/273090>

### **AODA Accessibility Standards**

Accessibility standards were created under the AODA to prevent or remove barriers to accessibility. They include:

- Customer Service
- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Transportation
- Design of Public Spaces



### Customer Service Standard

In 2008 the accessible customer service standard was the first accessibility standard to become law in Ontario. It ensures that goods and services are provided in a way that respects persons with disabilities, regarding things like assistive devices, support persons, service animals and service disruption notification. Separate mandatory training on the Customer Service Standard is provided by the County.



### Information & Communications Standard

For people with disabilities, information needs to be provided in an accessible format. What this means is that it must be provided in a format that helps people receive and understand the information. Sometimes this will involve an appropriate communication support (tools to help communication) if a request is made.

Examples of accessible formats are large print or an electronic document formatted to be accessible for use with a screen reader.

Examples of communication supports are sign language interpreters or real-time captioning for persons who are deaf, deafened or hard-of-hearing.

## Feedback

Any time that the County is asking the public for their feedback or comments, whether in writing, in person or by telephone, we have to ensure that alternate formats or communication supports are offered.

It is important to let the public know that accessible formats and communication supports are available upon request.

## Websites

We are working to achieve Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) Level A and AA on the County's websites.

These web guidelines cover things like writing content in plain language, providing alternate text for images, ensuring someone can navigate a website with the use of a keyboard, and that documents on a website can be ready by a screen reader.



## Employment Standard

The County is dedicated to removing and preventing barriers to persons with disabilities when posting and advertising jobs, during the recruitment and selection process, when implementing health and safety programs, and during the return to work or remain at work placement for employees with disabilities.

As you read earlier, the Ontario Human Rights Code requires all employers to meet the accommodation needs of employees with disabilities to the point of undue hardship. The Employment Standard of the IASR builds on this requirement and requires employers to have processes in place to determine an employee's accommodation needs throughout the employment cycle.

The employment section of the IASR addresses 7 main areas:

- **Recruitment** – our job postings and advertisements provide direction to those seeking accommodation in the process;

- **Informing Employees of Supports** – all letters of hire for employee highlight the Return to Work/Request for Accommodation policy at the County and to contact Human Resources for assistance;
- **Accessible Formats and Communication Supports** – employees may request accessible formats and communication supports due to an underlying disability;
- **Individualized Workplace Emergency Response Information or Plans** – this information is available to employees upon hire and a reminder is provided annually; it can help both employees with disabilities and organizations prepare for various emergencies such as fire, power outages or severe weather;
- **Performance Management, Career Development & Redeployment** – employees and supervisors are made aware of the need to ensure that these processes take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities and their individual accommodation plan;
- **Return to Work Process** – an employee with a disability may sometimes need to take time off work for a treatment, recovery or other reason. The County has developed processes that support employees who have been absent due to a disability and who require disability related accommodations when they return to work.



## Transportation Standard

The Transportation Standard of the IASR sets out the requirements to prevent and remove barriers to public transportation so that everyone can travel more easily in Ontario. The standard covers public transit and taxis and also addresses accessibility requirements at bus stops and shelters, providing priority seating on buses, and equal fares for people with disabilities and their support persons.

The County is not currently directly involved in the delivery of transportation services and, therefore, the Transportation Standard is not applicable. The County will review the standards should the service provisions of the County change into the future.





## **Design of Public Spaces Standard**

The new Design of Public Spaces Standards or Built Environment Standards were enacted in December 2012. This standard applies to new construction or major renovations being designed for outdoor elements such as recreational trails, outdoor public eating areas, outdoor play spaces, exterior paths of travel, off-street parking, service counters and wait areas.

The standards require that accessibility elements be included in public spaces that are not covered in the Ontario Building Code such as:

- The need for appropriate clear widths for recreational trails and beach access routes;
- Providing a minimum number of accessible picnic tables in rest stops and picnic areas;
- Consulting with people with disabilities on the accessible design of play spaces;
- Ensuring exterior paths of travel such as sidewalks, ramps, rest areas and accessible pedestrian signals are designed for everyone to use;
- Improving the design of off street accessible parking spaces and increasing the number required;
- Ensuring that customer service areas have lowered counters to serve people using mobility devices; and,
- Ensuring accessibility equipment, spaces and features are maintained in good working order.

These standards need to be applied for new construction and planned redevelopment.

For further information on these standards should your job duties require your detailed knowledge, please contact Human Resources for further training provisions.

## Conclusion

This concludes the County of Peterborough training on the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations for employees, volunteers and contractors. If we all become more inclusive we create a community where every person who lives or visits the County can fully participate and contribute.

Remember ... accessibility is everyone's responsibility and we all play a role in making the County of Peterborough an accessible and welcoming place to live and play.

If we all design and deliver our services to be inclusive and to consider accessibility, we are helping everyone.

If you need a disability related accommodation or any other support, please contact Human Resources for assistance.



## Additional Resources

**Access Forward: Training for an Accessible Ontario** – additional training resources including short videos:

<http://www.accessforward.ca/trainingResources/index>

**Ontario Human Rights Code** – short videos and information for a basic understanding of the Code

<http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/learning/working-together-code-and-aoda>

# Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation

## Employee Sign-off and Acknowledgement

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Please answer the following short quiz and sign and date below:

- True  False  The goal of the AODA is to make Ontario accessible to people with disabilities by 2025.
- True  False  The Human Rights Code has not related to the AODA.
- True  False  The Employment Standard ensures disabilities are taken into consideration in processes such as career planning and performance management .
- True  False  As the population ages the number of people in our community with disabilities will decrease.
- True  False  A large font is an example of an alternative format for communication which could be requested.
- 

### Acknowledgement:

I have read and understood this which is the County's training on the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.

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Print Name

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Signature

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Date

**Please return this page to the Human Resources Department for recording and retention.**