

Has Your Organization Filed An Accessibility Report? This – And Other AODA Requirements – Fast Approaching



If you've listened to the radio at any point over the past several weeks, chances are you've heard the Ontario Government's spot reminding organizations with 20 or more employees in Ontario of their obligation to file an accessibility compliance report by December 31, 2014.

What is an accessibility compliance report?

A compliance report is an online, self-reporting mechanism that tells the government whether your organization is complying with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* ("AODA"),¹ and the regulations thereunder.

In order to be AODA compliant, provincially-regulated private sector organizations in Ontario must be meeting all of the requirements under the Customer Service Standard Regulation to the AODA,² including the requirements regarding policies, practices, procedures and training.³ Further, both private sector and not-for-profit organizations with 50 or more employees in Ontario ("Large Providers") and private sector and not-for-profit organizations with fewer than 50 employees in Ontario ("Small Providers") must be compliant with the requirements to provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees, as well as emergency and public safety information to members of the public (where applicable).

In addition to the foregoing, Large Providers are also specifically required to have:

1. implemented policies, a multi-year accessibility plan and a "statement of commitment" under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation ("IAS Regulation")⁴ to the AODA;
2. made new websites and web content accessible to persons with disabilities by conforming to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines; and
3. made self-service kiosks accessible to persons with disabilities.

To complete your accessibility compliance report, visit ontario.ca/ONeSource, register for accessibility compliance reporting, and answer the questions set out in the report.

Aside from the report, what other requirements loom under the AODA?

Small Providers

By January 1, 2015, Small Providers must develop, implement and maintain policies governing how the organization achieves or will achieve accessibility through meeting its requirements under the IAS Regulation. Small Providers must also take steps to make self-service kiosks accessible to persons with disabilities, where applicable.

Training

By January 1, 2015, Large Providers must train employees, volunteers, those who influence the organization's policies, and all others who provide goods or services on behalf of the organization, about the requirements set out in the IAS Regulation and the Ontario *Human Rights Code* (insofar as it relates to persons with disabilities).⁵ Large Providers are also reminded of their obligation to keep records of the number of individuals who were trained, as well as the dates that training was provided.

Small Providers have until January 1, 2016, to do the same.

Feedback processes

Also by January 1, 2015, Large Providers must make processes for receiving and responding to feedback (e.g., feedback from clients, customers and/or employees) available to persons with disabilities in accessible formats or with appropriate communication supports. As with the IAS Regulation's training requirements, Small Providers have until January 1, 2016 to meet this obligation.

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