

Ontario Pushes Back AODA Compliance Reporting Deadline to June 30, 2021



Employers with 20 to 49 employees get 6 extra months to submit their AODA Compliance Reports.

Ontario employers with 20 to 49 employees that are subject to the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA) compliance reporting requirements are getting a 6-month reprieve. Instead of December 31, 2020, these employers won't have to submit their next AODA compliance report until June 30, 2021. Here's a quick rundown of what you must do to comply by the new June 30 deadline. (**Note:** The reporting deadline for employers with 50+ employees was December 31, 2019).

AODA Compliance Reporting

Adopted in 2005, the AODA establishes a framework designed to make all aspects of public life, including buildings, facilities, businesses and workplaces fully accessible to persons with disabilities by 2025. Among other things, private businesses, non-profits and public organizations must perform a self-assessment and submit an AODA compliance report describing their current status in terms of accessibility.

Step 1. The Self-Assessment

Businesses and non-profits with 20 to 49 employees must perform a self-assessment covering 4 aspects of workplace accessibility:

a. Hiring

You must notify employees and the public that you accommodate the needs of people with disabilities in your hiring process, either by posting the information on your website or including it in job postings. Government guidelines offer the following language as an example:

Sample Notification Wording: [Name of Organization] welcomes and encourages applications from people with disabilities. Accommodations are available on request for candidates taking part in all aspects of the selection process.

During the hiring process, tell job applicants when they're selected for an interview that you'll provide accommodation. If an applicant or successful

candidate requests an accommodation, discuss their needs with them and make adjustments to support them.

b. Workplace Information

You must provide workplace information in an accessible format if an employee with a disability asks for it, including:

- Any information employees need to do their jobs such as job descriptions and manuals; and
- General information that's available to all employees at work such as company newsletters, bulletins about company policies and health and safety information.

c. Talent and Performance Management

You must factor the needs of employees with disabilities into your performance management or career development processes, including formal or informal performance reviews and promoting or moving them to a new job. Examples:

- Making documents available in accessible formats, e.g., large print for people with low vision;
- Providing feedback and coaching in an accessible way, e.g., letting someone with a learning disability record the conversation; and
- Providing the accommodations they need to successfully learn new skills or take on more responsibilities.

d. Communicate Accessibility Policies

You must tell your employees about your policies to support people with disabilities, including new employees when they're hired and all employees if you change your policies. Accepted modes of communication include:

- Newsletters;
- Emails;
- Memos;
- Websites;
- Bulletin boards;
- Staff meetings; and
- One-on-one conversations.

Note: Businesses and non-profits with 50+ employees must also take 2 additional types of accessibility measures:

- Establishment of accommodation plans for employees with disabilities; and
- Implementation of a return to work process for employees who've been absent due to disabilities and need accommodations to return.

Step 2. Completing the AODA Compliance Report

Once you finish your self-assessment, you must download the Compliance Report form from the Ontario government AODA website. In addition to the assessment results, you'll need your organization's:

- Legal name;
- BN9 business number (listed in your federal or provincial tax return);

- Number of employees; and
- Name and contact information of a senior officer with legal authority to certify that the report is complete and accurate.

Once you enter your organization's information, you'll have to work your way through a series of YES/NO questions assessing your current AODA compliance status. The senior officer will then have to read through the completed report to ensure it's complete and accurate.

Phase 3. After Submitting the Report

Once the government receives the report, it will send a confirmation email to the certifying officer and primary contact listed in the report containing a confirmation number and accessible PDF copy of your report. You must then notify the government of any change in your organization's:

- Address;
- Primary contact information;
- Number of employees; and/or
- Status (for example, if your organization is no longer in business or now has fewer than 20 employees).

AODA Website Compliance Deadline Remains December 31, 2020

Although AODA compliance reporting has been pushed back to June 30, 2021, the deadline for organizations with 50+ employees to comply with AODA website accessibility rules remains fixed at December 31, 2020. [Click here](#) to find out how to comply with the website accessibility rules.