

Ontario Launches Accessibility Action Plan

Plan Introduced on the 10 Year Anniversary of Landmark Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Legislation

June 3, 2015 9:00 A.M.

Ontario has released a new action plan to build on the progress made since the introduction of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) in 2005 and to achieve the goal of becoming accessible by 2025.

The AODA has transformed the lives of people with disabilities by establishing standards in key areas of daily life, including customer service, employment, information and communications, transportation and the design of public spaces.

[The Path to 2025: Ontario's Accessibility Action Plan](#) focuses on three key priorities:

Engaging employers to understand the value of hiring people with disabilities, through initiatives like:

- Community Loans - a \$4 million program to provide low-interest commercial loans to businesses that show a commitment to hiring persons with disabilities
- Partnership for Accessible Employment - a \$5 million program that helps small and medium-sized businesses hire and employ persons with disabilities
- Abilities Connect - a \$1.8 million partnership with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce to help employers build more inclusive workplaces and create a network of businesses that promote best practices.

Strengthening the foundation of accessibility in Ontario, by building on the province's accessibility laws and standards by:

- Introducing legislation to address barriers to accessibility identified through a government-wide review of high impact legislation
- Working with the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care to review gaps and in the health care sector, as a first step toward illuminating barriers that will be overcome through education, outreach and new standards.

Promoting Ontario's cultural shift to build awareness of accessibility in innovative ways, so that Ontarians of all abilities can reach their full potential by:

- Consulting with industry disability advocates, certification experts, municipalities and not-for-profits to develop a voluntary, third party certification program, similar to the "LEED" designation in green buildings

- Collaborating with professional audit services to enhance our compliance and audit activities
- Exploring opportunities through social media or online platforms to expand and strengthen the conversation on accessibility between businesses and persons with disabilities.

Supporting an accessible province is part of the government's plan to build Ontario up. The four-part plan includes investing in people's talents and skills, making the largest investment in public infrastructure in Ontario's history, creating a dynamic, innovative environment where business thrives and building a secure retirement savings plan.

QUOTES

" Ontario's leadership in accessibility is something we can all take great pride in, but we know there is more work to do. The action plan gives us a map to continue working together to build a fairer and more diverse province where everyone can live, work and actively participate in their communities."

- Brad Duguid

Minister of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure

" Our province inspires the world because our communities are becoming more accessible every day. With the Pan Am/Parapan Am Games nearly here, these are exciting times for Ontario. We will continue to tear down barriers and ensure people with disabilities have the opportunity to work and contribute to our society. This is a vision for Ontario we all share."

- David C. Onley

Special Advisor, Accessibility; Honorary Chair, 10th Anniversary of the Accessibility for Ontario with Disability Act

QUICK FACTS

- June marks the 10th anniversary of the landmark Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). Ontario also is also responding to the [recommendations made by Mayo Moran](#), following her comprehensive review of the AODA. Many of Moran's recommendations helped to inform the development of the action plan.
- Ontario will host its first Accessibility Innovation Showcase this August, which will promote accessible technology and innovative solutions to accessibility barriers.
- Ontario is reviewing recommendations made by the Partnership Council on Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities to address the province's growing skills shortage by finding opportunities in the workplace for educated and skilled people with disabilities.
- The Accessibility Standards Advisory Council/Standards Development Committee advises government on improving accessibility for people with disabilities. Current membership includes a cross-section of leaders from the disability community and businesses as well as organizations from the not-for-profit and public sectors.

LEARN MORE

- [Read The Path to 2025: Ontario's Accessibility Action Plan](#)
- [Find out more about the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\).](#)

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