

Mental Health Policies & Procedures: A Manager's Toolkit

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Fact Sheet

Source: <http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/en/mcsc/programs/accessibility/>

People with disabilities often don't do many of the activities that most of us take for granted. It's not because they don't want to; it's because they can't- barriers stop them. Some examples include:

TYPE OF BARRIER	EXAMPLES OF BARRIERS
PHYSICAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- too narrow hallways- counters too high- poor lighting
INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- print is too small to read- websites that can't be accessed by people who are not able to use a mouse- signs that are not clear or easily understood
ATTITUDINAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- thinking that people with disabilities are inferior- assuming that a person who has a speech impairment can't understand you
TECHNOLOGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- websites that doesn't support screen-reading software- telephones that are not equipped with telecommunications devices
ORGANIZATIONAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- hiring process that is not open to people with disabilities

And there are many kinds of disabilities. They can be visible, hidden, permanent, or occur only at certain times. Types of disabilities include:

Vision
Hearing
Physical

Intellectual
Developmental
Learning

Mental health
Speech or language
Deaf-blind

The Ontario government implemented the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (2005) to develop, implement and enforce mandatory accessibility standards. It is for all sectors:

- business community
- public sector
- not-for-profit sector
- people with disabilities or their representatives

The first standard to come into effect is the ***Accessibility Standards for Customer Service***.

IMPORTANT: All organizations, including not-for-profit, must comply with the *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Act* by **January 1, 2012**.



To help your organization with the step-by-step process, visit:
Ministry of Community & Social Services, *Meeting the Requirements of the Standards: Customer Service*
<http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/en/mcsc/programs/accessibility/ComplyingStandards/index.aspx>