

# MANAGERS' GUIDE TO ACCESSIBILITY

## Making Ontario Accessible

### Background – What is the AODA?

In 2005, the provincial government passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) with the goal of making Ontario accessible by 2025.

People with disabilities face obstacles that make it difficult, sometimes impossible, to do the things most of us take for granted. Things like going shopping, working, or taking public transit; organizations can remove some of these barriers by doing things differently.

### Ontario Employers must implement Accessible Standards

The purpose of the AODA is to involve Ontario employers in the development and implementation of accessibility standards in their workplaces in key areas that impact daily living. The AODA has 5 components:

- Customer Service
- Communication & Information
- Employment
- Transportation
- Built Environment (public spaces)

### Does the AODA apply to all Ontario Employers?

Employers with 1 or more employee must implement AODA standards.

Accessible standards, requirements and implementation deadlines vary depending on the organization size and for private, non-profit or public sector organizations. Below, see implementation schedule for:

- **Small Private Sector Companies (1 to 49 employees)**

The information provided is an overview. Your situation is unique. Refer to the applicable legislation or contact Fusion Career Services for advice.

## Manage People Better with Fusion

## **IMPLEMENTATION REQUIREMENTS FOR SMALL PRIVATE SECTOR COMPANIES**

### **January 2018 – Accessible Public Spaces**

**2018** – Employers are required to create accessible public spaces such as waiting areas, service counters, walkways and parking. This only applies to new or major renovations to existing public spaces. Changes to other building spaces will be implemented through changes to the Ontario building code.

### **January 2017 – Accessible Employment Practices and Communication Supports**

**2017** – Employers are required to implement accessibility across all stages of the employment relationship (hiring, training, promotion, return to work after illness or injury, and more) and provide accessible formats and communication supports about goods, services or facilities, on request. Employers with 20 or more employees must file an AODA compliance report by December 31, 2017.

### **January 2016 – Train Employees About AODA, Create Accessible Feedback Tools for Customers, Update Customer Service Policy and Train Employees**

**2016** – Employers are required to train employees on the requirements of AODA and to make any feedback tools (customer comment cards, on-line surveys) available in accessible formats, on request. Employers must update Accessible Customer Service Policy and train all employees on accessible customer service.

### **January 2015 – Develop Accessibility Policy.**

**2015** – Employers are required to develop accessibility policies. Employers introducing new or major changes to self-serve kiosks have additional requirements to comply with under AODA.

### **January 2012 – Customer Service Policy, Procedures and Practices and Emergency Plan.**

**2012** – Employers are required to develop a Customer Service policy, procedures and practices for providing goods and services to persons with disabilities. Customer Service Standards apply to businesses serving the public or B2B. Employers with 20 or more employees must file an AODA compliance report on customer service. All organizations are required to implement accessibility in their emergency plans.