

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2013 to 2019

Introduction

In 2005, the government of Ontario passed the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (“the AODA”). It is the goal of the Ontario government to make Ontario accessible by 2025. The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations (“IASR”) under the AODA require that effective January 1, 2013, HQO establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan that outlines the organization’s strategy to prevent and remove barriers for persons with disabilities and to meet its requirements under the IASR.

This multi-year plan outlines HQO’s strategy to prevent and remove barriers to address the current and future requirements of the AODA, and to fulfill HQO’s commitment as outlines in HQO’s Accessibility policy.

Health Quality Ontario

Health Quality Ontario (HQO) is the provincial voice on the quality of Ontario’s health system. We play a unique role reporting on the system’s performance, sharing the best scientific evidence to guide change, and supporting quality improvement.

Health Quality Ontario is the operational name for the Ontario Health Quality Council, an agency of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

Commitment Statement

Health Quality Ontario (HQO) is committed to ensuring equal access and participation for people with disabilities. We are committed to treating people with disabilities in a way that maintains their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and we are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner. We will do so by removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and by meeting our accessibility requirements under the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\), 2005](#) and applicable regulations.

Effective: January 1, 2013

Updated: December 2019

Under the AODA and applicable regulations, the following standards are applicable to HQO:

- Customer Service
- General Requirements
- Information and Communications
- Employment

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Customer Service Standard

General Requirements

- Procuring or Acquiring Goods, Services or Facilities
- Training

Information and Communication Standard

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Employment Standard

- Workplace Emergency Response Information
- Recruitment
- Informing Employees of Supports
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- Performance Management, Career Development and Redeployment

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Customer Service Standard

Since 2010, HQO has been in compliance with the Customer Service Regulation under the AODA and will continue to comply with that regulation.

HQO is committed to excellence in serving all members of the public, including persons with disabilities, and it will carry out its functions in a manner which delivers accessible service to all members of the public.

HQO is committed to providing its goods and services in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. This commitment will be integrated wherever possible and will ensure that persons with disabilities have equitable services and access to our goods and services, in the same place and in a similar way as other members of the public.

Action	Compliance Date	Status
Ensuring all persons who, on behalf of HQO, interact with the public or other third parties, provide services to the public, and all those who are involved in the development and approval of public service policies, practices and procedures, are trained to communicate and provide the best possible service to all members of the public, including persons with disabilities.	January 1, 2010	Completed
Ensuring staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by members of the public with disabilities who are accessing HQO's goods or services.	January 1, 2010	Completed
Ensuring completion of accessibility training is tracked and recorded.	January 1, 2010	Completed
Offering to communicate with members of the public by alternate means and formats if telephone communication is not suitable to their needs.	January 1, 2010	Completed
Ensuring members of the public who use assistive devices or supports, service animals or support persons can use or benefit from our goods and services.	January 1, 2010	Completed
Providing members of the public with notice in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption of service or inaccessibility of facilities used by persons with disabilities, by placing such notices at all public entrances and service counters on HQO premises and, when applicable, publishing on the HQO website.	January 1, 2010	Completed

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Ensuring the design and delivery of events and activities will be accessible to any member of the public and any products related to the event will be provided in an alternate format upon request.	January 1, 2010	Completed
Committing to provide any goods produced by HQO (e.g., reports, learning materials) in alternate formats and media to meet the needs of individuals upon request;	January 1, 2010	Completed
Continuing to welcome and appreciate feedback from persons with disabilities through multiple communication channels;	January 1, 2010	Completed
Providing HQO's Customer Service accessibility policy in an appropriate accessible format upon request; and	January 1, 2010	Completed
Reporting compliance with the members of the Customer Service Standard on the Accessibility Compliance Reporting tool at Service Ontario's One-Source for Business website.	January 1, 2010	Completed

General Requirements

Procuring or Acquiring Goods, Services or Facilities

HQO is committed to incorporating accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so.

HQO considers accessibility requirements when planning its procurements. In accordance with the Procurement Directive, HQO must comply with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 when acquiring goods and services. The Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 requires that "in deciding to purchase goods or services through the procurement process for the use of itself, its employees or the public, the Government of Ontario shall have regard to the accessibility for persons with disabilities to the goods or service." Where applicable, and in accordance with the various procurement user guides, HQO procurement documents specify the desired accessibility standards to be met and provide guidelines for the evaluation of proposals with respect to those standards.

Action	Compliance Date	Status
Use accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so.	January 1, 2013	Completed

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Where HQO has decided that it is not practicable to incorporate accessibility criteria and features, it will provide an explanation upon request.	January 1, 2013	Completed
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Training

HQO is committed to implementing a process to ensure that all employees, volunteers and students who provide goods, services and facilities on HQO's behalf, and persons participating in the development and approval of HQO's policies are provided with appropriate training on the requirements of the IASR and on the Ontario Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities, and are provided with such training as soon as practicable.

Action	Compliance Date	Status
Determine and ensure that appropriate training on the requirements of the IASR and on the Ontario Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities, is provided to all employees and students who provide goods, services and facilities on HQO's behalf, and persons participating in the development and approval of HQO's policies.	January 1, 2014	Completed
Ensure that the training is provided to persons referenced above as soon as practicable.	January 1, 2014	Completed
Keep and maintain records of the training provided; including the dates that the training was completed and the number of individuals to whom it was provided.	January 1, 2014	Completed
Ensure training is updated as changes occur and all individuals listed above are advised of the updates.	January 1, 2014	Completed
Ensure that training is provided on any changes to the prescribed policies on an ongoing basis.	January 1, 2014	Completed

Information and Communication Standard

Feedback, Accessible Formats and Communications Support

HQO is committed to making company information and communications accessible to persons with disabilities. HQO will incorporate new accessibility requirements under the information and communication standard to ensure that its information and communications systems and platforms are accessible and are provided in accessible formats that meet the needs of persons with disabilities.

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Action	Compliance Date	Status
Ensure that existing and new processes for receiving and responding to feedback are accessible to persons with disabilities by providing or arranging for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports, upon request and in a timely manner and at no additional cost.	Feedback: January 1, 2014 Accessible Formats and Communications Supports: January 1, 2015	Completed
More broadly, as a general principle where accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities are requested: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide or arrange for the provision of such accessible formats and communication supports; • Consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of the accessible format or communication support; • Provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports in a timely manner that takes into an account the person's accessibility needs due to disability, and at a cost no more than the regular cost charged to other persons; • Notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports. 	Feedback: January 1, 2014 Accessible Formats and Communications Supports: January 1, 2015	Completed

Accessible Websites and Web Content

Action	Compliance Date	Status
Ensure HQO's public website www.hqontario.ca is compatible with third party accessibility software; accessible alternate versions can be provided if technology permits.	WCAG 2.0 Level A – new websites and web content: January 1, 2014* WCAG 2.0 Level AA – all websites and web content: January 1, 2021*	January 1, 2014 requirements: Completed January 1, 2021 requirements: In progress
Ensure AODA compliance is included as one of the criteria in selecting technology vendors for new website development initiatives.	WCAG 2.0 Level A – new websites and web content: January 1, 2014*	January 1, 2014 requirements: Completed

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	WCAG 2.0 Level AA – all websites and web content: January 1, 2021*	January 1, 2021 requirements: In progress
Make our websites and web content accessible according to the World Wide Web Consortium’s Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0.	WCAG 2.0 Level A – new websites and web content: January 1, 2014* WCAG 2.0 Level AA – all websites and web content: January 1, 2021*	January 1, 2014 requirements: Completed January 1, 2021 requirements: In progress
Make public emergency information accessible when requested.	WCAG 2.0 Level A – new websites and web content: January 1, 2014* WCAG 2.0 Level AA – all websites and web content: January 1, 2021*	January 1, 2014 requirements: Completed January 1, 2021 requirements: In progress

* Except where meeting the above-mentioned requirements is not practicable due to, among other things, (a) the availability of commercial software or tools or both and (b) significant impact on an implementation timeline that was planned or initiated before January 1, 2012.

Employment Standard

Workplace Emergency Response Information

Where HQO is aware that an employee has a disability and that there is a need for accommodation, individualized workplace emergency response information will be provided to the employee as soon as practicable if such information is necessary given the nature of the employee’s disability.

Action	Compliance Date	Status
Individualized workplace emergency response information procedures have been developed for employees with disabilities, as required.	January 1, 2012	Completed
Workplace Emergency Response Information plans have been prepared for employees who have disclosed a disability and who are being accommodated according to their disabilities.	January 1, 2012	Completed

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Where required, HQO provides assistance to specific disabled employees, with the disabled employees' prior consent, to help them evacuate the workplace in case of an emergency or disaster. These plans for providing assistance have been set out in individualized emergency plans for the employees.	January 1, 2012	Completed
These individualized emergency plans have been communicated to the employees' respective managers and appropriate Health and Safety members (i.e., Building Fire Warden), on an "as needed" basis.	January 1, 2012	Completed
On an ongoing and regular basis, and as per the applicable terms of the IASR, HQO will review and assess general workplace emergency response procedures and individualized emergency plans to ensure accessibility issues are addressed.	January 1, 2012	Completed

Recruitment

HQO is committed to fair and accessible employment practices that attract and retain employees with disabilities. This includes providing accessibility across all stages of the employment cycle.

General Recruitment		
Action	Compliance Date	Status
HQO will notify employees and the public of the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in the recruitment process.	January 1, 2014	Completed
Review and modify existing recruitment policies, procedures, and processes, as necessary.	January 1, 2014	Completed
Indicate that accommodation is available for applicants with disabilities on HQO's website and on job postings.	January 1, 2014	Completed
Work with suppliers to ensure external Web pages are compliant with the Information and Communication Standards under the IASR's requirements.	January 1, 2014	Completed
Assessment and Selection		
Action	Compliance Date	Status
HQO will notify job applicants when they are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process that accommodations are available upon request in relation to the materials or processes to be	January 1, 2014	Completed

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<p>used in the assessment/selection process. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of availability of accommodation notices as part of the script in the scheduling of an interview and/or assessment; • Provision of suitable accommodations in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability, if a selected applicant requests an accommodation. 		
Notice to Successful Applicants		
Action	Compliance Date	Status
<p>When making offers of employment, HQO will notify the successful applicant of its practices for accommodating employees with disabilities. When accommodation is required, HQO will develop a workplace accommodation plan in accordance with HQO's Human Resource practices.</p>	January 1, 2014	Completed

Informing Employees of Supports

In accordance with the IASR, HQO will inform all employees of practices that support employees with disabilities including, but not limited to, practices on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to a disability.

Action	Compliance Date	Status
<p>Informing current employees and new hires of HQO's practices supporting employees with disabilities including, but not limited to, practices on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's needs due to disability.</p>	January 1, 2014	Completed
<p>Providing information under this section as soon as practicable after the new employee begins employment, specifically in the orientation process.</p>	January 1, 2014	Completed
<p>Keeping employees up to date on changes to existing practices on job accommodations with respect to disability.</p>	January 1, 2014	Completed
<p>Where an employee with a disability so requests it, HQO will provide or arrange for provision of suitable accessible formats and communications supports for:</p>	January 1, 2014	Completed

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job • Information that is generally available to employees in the workplace. 		
In meeting the obligations to provide the information that is set out in the paragraph above, HQO will consult with the requesting employee in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.	January 1, 2014	Completed

Documented Individual Accommodation Plans/Return-to-Work Process

HQO will incorporate accessibility requirements under the IASR to ensure that barriers in accommodation and return to work processes are eliminated and corporate practices surrounding accommodation and return to work are followed, where applicable.

Action	Compliance Date	Status
HQO's existing practices include steps that HQO will take to accommodate an employee with a disability and to facilitate an employee's return to work after absenteeism due to disability;	January 1, 2014	Completed
HQO will review and assess the existing practices to ensure that they include a process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with a disability, if such plans are required.	January 1, 2014	Completed
<p>HQO will ensure that the process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans includes the following elements, in accordance with the provisions of the IASR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The manner in which the employee requesting accommodation can participate in the development of the plan; • The means by which the employee is assessed on an individual basis; • The manner in which HQO can request an evaluation by an outside medical or other expert, at HQO's expense, to assist HQO in determining if and how accommodation can be achieved; • The manner in which the employee can request participation of a representative from his or her bargaining unit representative where an employee is in the bargaining unit, or the participation of another 	January 1, 2014	Completed

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<p>representative from the workplace where an employee is not in the bargaining unit;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting the privacy of the employee’s personal information; • Outlining the frequency in which individual accommodation plans will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which this will be done; • Including in the process the means of providing the individual accommodation plan in a format that takes into account the employee’s accessibility needs; • If individual accommodation plans are established, ensure that they include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Individualized workplace emergency response information that is required; ○ Any information regarding accessible formats and communication supports that have been provided for or arranged, in order to provide the employee with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Information that is needed in order to perform the employee’s job; ▪ Information that is generally available to employees in the workplace; ▪ Identify any other accommodation to be provided to the employee. 		
<p>HQO will ensure that the return to work process as set out in its existing practices outlines the steps HQO will take to facilitate the employee’s return to work after a disability-related absence, outlines the development of a written individualized return to work plan for such employees, and requires the use of individual accommodation plans, as discussed above, in the return to work process.</p>	<p>January 1, 2014</p>	<p>Completed</p>

Performance Management, Career Development and Redeployment

HQO will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans:

- When using its performance management process in respect of employees with disabilities;
- When providing career development and advancement to its employees with disabilities; and
- When redeploying employees with disabilities.

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Updated: December 2019

Action	Compliance Date	Status
Review, assess and, as necessary, modify existing practices, procedures, and training to ensure compliance with the IASR.	January 1, 2014	Completed
Take the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities and, as applicable, their individualized accommodation plans, into account when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing performance; • Managing career development and advancement; • Redeployment is required. 	January 1, 2014	Completed
Take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities when providing career development and advancement to its employees with disabilities, including notification of the ability to provide accommodations on internal job postings.	January 1, 2014	Completed

Effective: January 1, 2013
Updated: December 2019