

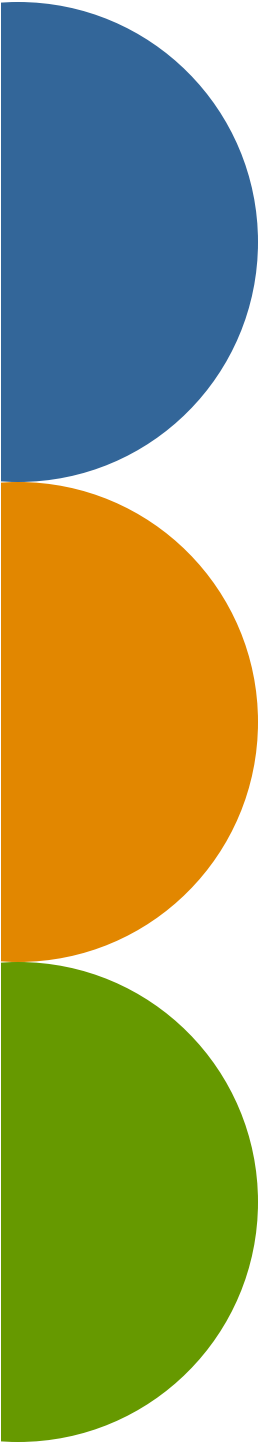
# AODA

**Accessibility for Ontarians  
with Disabilities Act, 2005**



## Agenda

- What are disabilities?
- Making Ontario Accessible- The Act
- What are we required to do to comply with the Act?
- How to communicate with people with different types of disabilities.
- How to interact with people who use assistive devices
- How to interact with a person who has a guide dog or other service animal
- How to serve a person accompanied by a support person
- Quiz



**What does “Disability”  
mean to you?**



## Who are people with disabilities?

- There are many kinds of disabilities.
- A person can have a disability that is visible, non-visible, permanent or that occurs only at certain times.
- You can't always tell when someone has a disability.



## People can have one or a combination of the following:

- physical disability
- Vision loss
- Deafness or being hard of hearing
- Speech or language impairment
- Learning disabilities
- Intellectual or developmental disabilities
- Mental health disabilities

- About 1.85 million people in Ontario have a disability. That's one in seven people.
- Over the next 20 years as the population ages, the number will rise to one in five Ontarians.
- The AODA uses the same definition of “disability” as the Ontario Human Rights Code



## Barrier to accessibility

- Barriers are obstacles that prevent people with disabilities from fully participating in all aspects of society.
- Some barriers are visible – such as a building that has steps, but no ramp. Others are invisible – such as thinking that a person with a speech impairment can't understand you.



## There are many kinds of barriers:

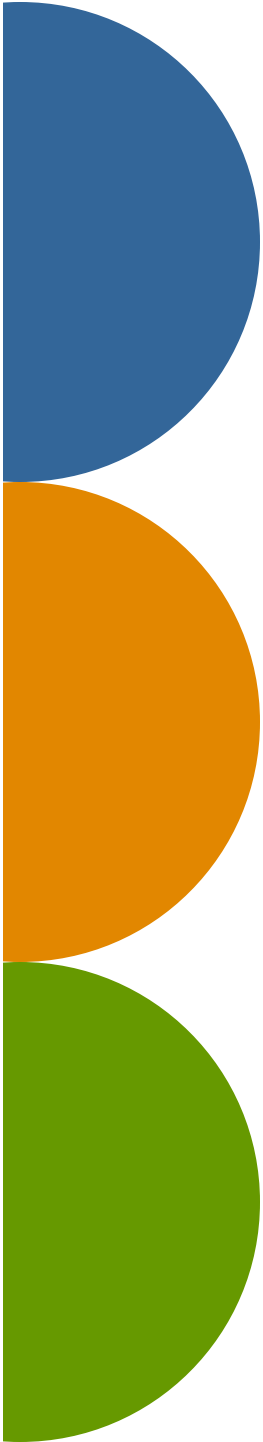
- **Architectural and physical barriers** are features of buildings or spaces that cause problems for people with disabilities.
  - Example... A hallway or a doorway that is too narrow for a person who uses a walker or a doorknob that is difficult to turn.
- **Information or communication barriers** prevent people from easily understanding information.
  - Example... Signs that are not clear or type that is too small

- **Attitudinal barriers** discriminate against people with disabilities. Stereotypes and assumptions are attitudinal barriers.
  - Example... Thinking that people with disabilities are inferior.
- **Technology barriers** occur when technology doesn't support various assistive devices.
  - Example... A website that doesn't support screen reading software.
- **Systematic barriers** are policies, practices or procedures that discriminate against people with disabilities.
  - Example... A hiring process that is not open to people with disabilities.



Guelph CHC  
growing healthy together

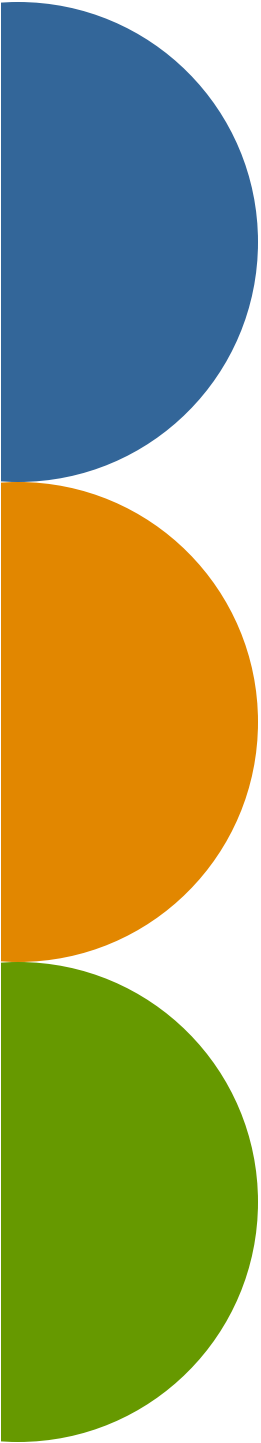
# THE ACT





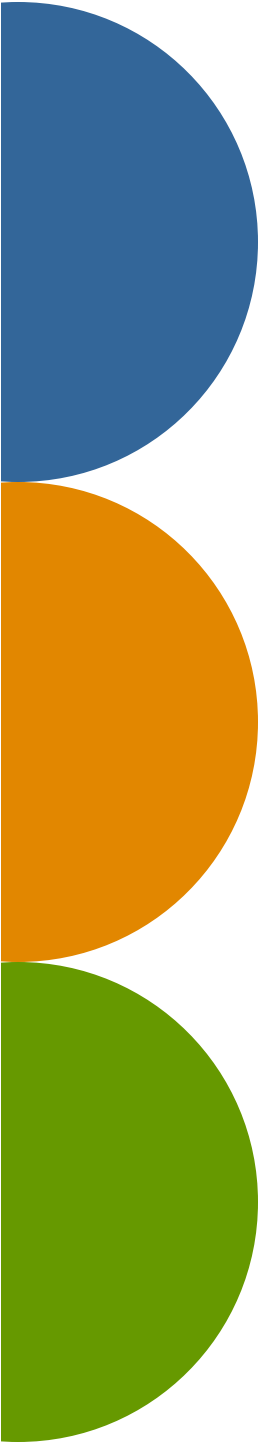
## Making Ontario Accessible

- On June 13, 2005, the government passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.
- The Act:
  - makes Ontario the first jurisdiction in Canada to develop, implement and enforce mandatory accessibility standards, and
  - applies to both the private and public sectors.

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- Under the act, the barriers that are being faced by people with disabilities are being broken down to make Ontario accessible for 2025.
  - Ontario is developing, implementing, and enforcing accessibility standards in:
    - Customer Service
    - Transportation
    - Information and communications
    - Built environment – which may include building, parking, and entrances
    - Employment

## How will Guelph CHC comply?



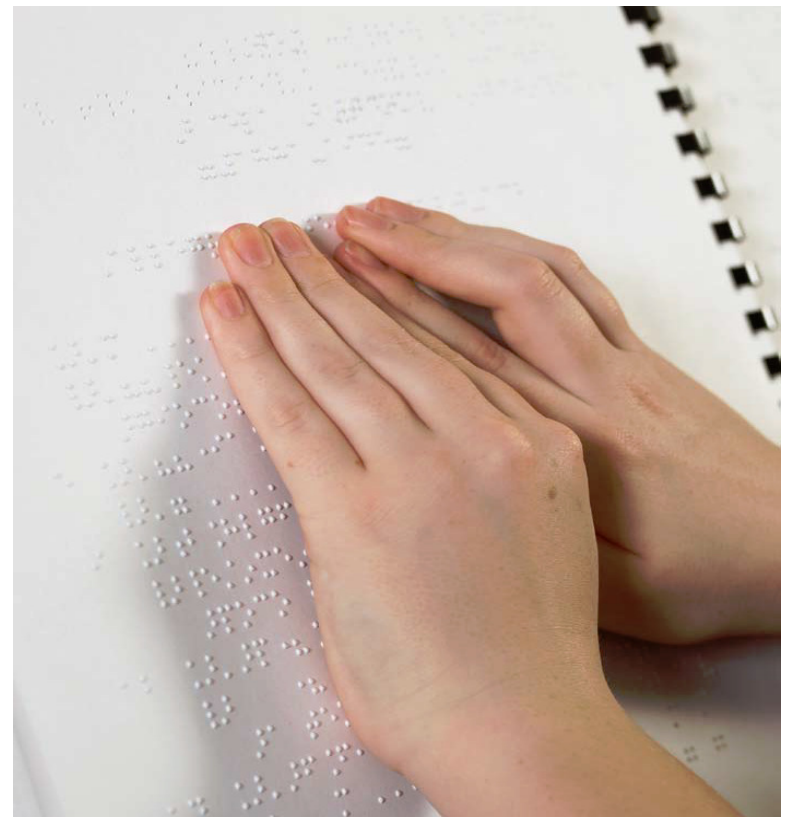
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- There are a number of legal requirements under the standard. To comply, we must:
    1. Set up policies, practices and procedures on providing goods or services to people with disabilities (7 policies/procedures required)
      - Accessibility for Clients with Disability Policy
      - Use of Assistive Devices
      - Communication with People with Disabilities Policy
      - Guide dogs and Service Animals Policy
      - Support Persons Policy
      - Notice of Disruption in Service Procedures
      - Feedback Procedure
    2. Ensure that staff receive training on how to serve people with disabilities.
    3. Report Compliance

## What are the deadlines for complying?

- Guelph CHC must comply with the standard starting January 1, 2012.



# How to communicate with people with different types of disabilities



## People with Physical Disabilities

- Openly communicating and responding to your customer's needs is the key to excellent customer service for all.

### Tips....

- For a lengthy conversation with someone in a wheelchair, consider sitting so you can make eye contact at the same level
- Don't touch items or equipment, without permission
- If you have permission to move a person's wheelchair, don't leave them in an awkward, dangerous or undignified position, such as facing a wall or in the path of opening doors.

## People with Vision Loss

- Vision loss can restrict someone's ability to read, locate landmarks or see hazards. Some clients may use a guide dog or a white cane, while others may not.

### Tips....

- Identify yourself when you approach and speak directly to the client.
- Ask if they would like you to read any printed material out loud to them.
- When providing direction or instruction, be precise and descriptive.
- Offer your elbow to guide them if needed.

## People who have hearing loss

- People with hearing loss may be deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.

### Tips....

- Once a client has identified themselves as having hearing loss, make sure you are in a well-lit area where they can see your face and read your lips.
- Attract client's attention before speaking. Try a gentle touch on the shoulder or wave of your hand.
- If the client uses a hearing aid, reduce background noise or move to a quieter area.
- Ask if another method of communicating would be easier (ex. Using a pen and paper)

## People who are deafblind

- A person who is deafblind may have some degree of both hearing and vision.

### Tips....

- A client who is deafblind is likely to explain to you how to communicate with them, perhaps with an assistance card or a note.
- Speak directly to the client not to their intervenor (support person)

## People with speech or language impairments

- Cerebral palsy, hearing loss or other conditions may make it difficult for a person to pronounce words or may cause slurring. Some people who have severe difficulties may use a communication board or other assistive devices.

### Tips....

- Don't assume that a person with a speech impairment also has another disability.
- Whenever possible, ask questions that can be answered with a "yes" or "no"
- Be patient. Don't interrupt or finish the clients sentences.

## People who have learning disabilities

- Learning disabilities come in a variety of forms.  
Ex. “dyslexia” which effects how a person takes in or retains information.

### Tips....

- Be patient – people with some learning disabilities may take a little longer to process information, to understand and to respond.
- Try to provide information in a way that takes into account the client’s disability (Some may have difficulty with written words, while others may have problems with numbers and math)

## People with intellectual/developmental disabilities

- Developmental or intellectual disabilities, such as Down Syndrome, can limit a person's ability to learn, communicate, do everyday physical activities and live independently.

### Tips....

- Don't make assumptions about what a person can do.
- Use plain language.
- Provide one piece of information at a time.

## People who have mental health disabilities

- Mental health issues can affect a person's ability to think clearly, concentrate or remember things. Mental health disability is a broad term for many disorders that can range in severity.

### Tips....

- Treat the person with the same respect and consideration you have for everyone else.
- Be confident, calm and reassuring.
- If a client appears to be in crisis, ask them to tell you the best way to help.

# How to interact with people who use assistive devices

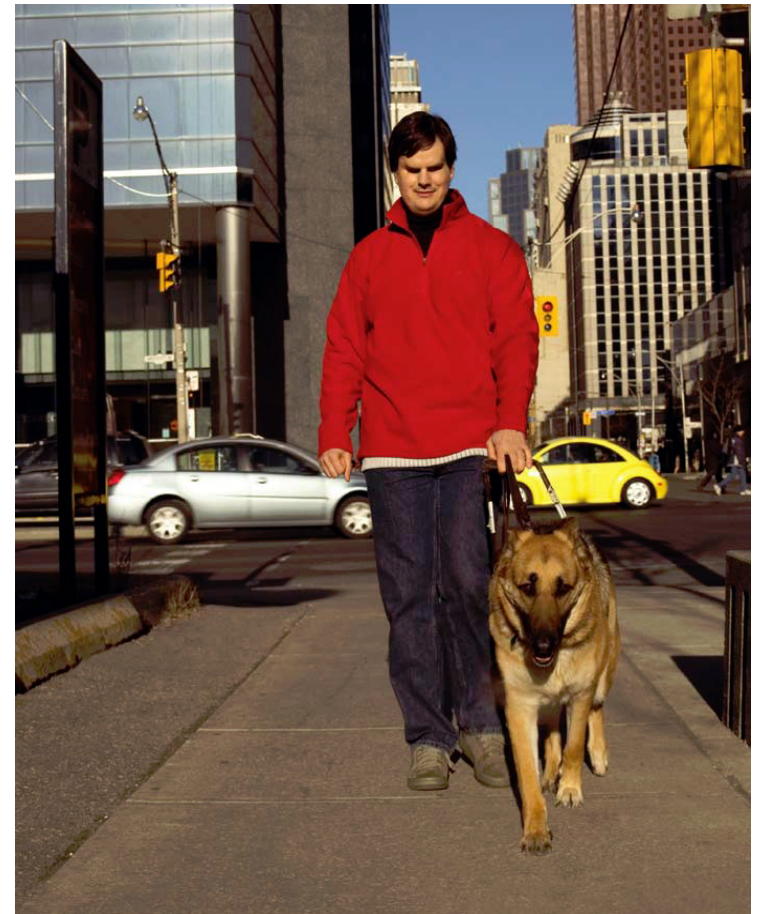


- An assistive device is a tool, technology or other mechanism that enables a person with a disability to do everyday tasks and activities, such as moving, communicating or lifting. Personal assistive devices can include things like wheelchairs, hearing aids, white canes or speech amplification devices.

### Tips....

- Don't touch or handle any assistive devices without permission.
- Don't move assistive devices or equipment, such as canes and walkers, out of your clients reach.
- Let your customer know about accessible features in the immediate environment that are appropriate to their needs (e.g. public phones with TTY service, accessible washrooms, etc.)

# How to interact with a person who has a guide dog or other service animal



- There are many types of service animals. Examples include guide dogs and animals trained to alert an individual to an oncoming seizure and lead them to safety.
- Under the standard, service animals must be allowed on the parts of your premises that are open to the public.

### Tips....

- Remember that a service animal is not a pet. It is a working animal. Avoid touching or addressing them.
- If you're not sure if the animal is a pet or a service animal, ask the client.



## How to serve a person accompanied by a support person

- A support person can be a personal support worker, a volunteer, a family member or a friend.
- A support person may help your client with a variety of things from communicating, to helping with mobility, personal care or medical needs.

### Tips....

- If you're not sure which person is the client, take your lead from the person using or requesting your service, or simply ask.
- Speak directly to the client, not to their support worker.



# “How can I help you?”

Your clients are your best source for information about their needs. A solution can be simple and they will likely appreciate your attention and consideration.

# Quiz Time

Please take a few minutes to complete the quiz.

Don't forget to put your name on your quiz.

# Want more info...

Ministry of Community and Social Services Website...

[www.AccessON.ca/compliance](http://www.AccessON.ca/compliance)

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

Contact Centre (ServiceOntario)

Toll-free: 1-866-515-2025