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## National AccessAbility Awareness Week

From March 21, 1985 to May 22, 1987, Rick Hansen wheeled over 40,000km through 34 countries to raise awareness about the potential of people with disabilities and the importance of creating accessible and inclusive communities. This journey, the [Man In Motion World Tour](#), led to the creation of an annual celebration when Canada could reflect about how we can make our country more accessible to everyone.

The first National AccessAbility Awareness Week took place in 1988, and since then, for one week each year, we recognize the efforts of individuals, communities and workplaces that are actively working to remove barriers to accessibility and inclusion. This year, National AccessAbility Awareness Week was from May 30 to June 5.

**For businesses and non-profits with 20 or more employees, the deadline to file an accessibility compliance report has been extended to June 30, 2021.**

# Ontario has Accessibility Laws

Businesses and non-profits with  
20 or more employees must  
submit an Accessibility  
Compliance Report before  
**June 30, 2021.**

Get started today at  
**[ontario.ca/AccessibilityReport](https://ontario.ca/AccessibilityReport).**

Ontario 

Ontario has Accessibility Laws - Businesses and non-profits with 20 or more employees must submit an Accessibility Compliance Report before June 30, 2021.

Learn how to file your 2020 Accessibility Compliance Report at: [ontario.ca/AccessibilityReport](https://ontario.ca/AccessibilityReport)

## Learn How to Complete Your Business or Non-Profit Accessibility Compliance Report

## New Web Pages About AODA Rules

We recently published updated and easy-to-read info about the key accessibility requirements that business, non-profit and designated public sector organizations need to meet under Ontario's accessibility laws.

Visit [www.ontario.ca/accessibility](http://www.ontario.ca/accessibility) to find refreshed pages for [business and non-profit organizations](#) and [designated public sector organizations](#).

### Business and non-profit organizations

If you are a business or non-profit organization with 20 or more employees, [the new web page](#) is a great resource for you to get started on your [accessibility compliance report](#) that is due on **June 30, 2021**. For smaller organizations, this web page can help you quickly take stock of your current level of compliance. It has tools and information to help you become accessible.

### Public sector organizations

If you are part of the designated public sector, the deadline to file an accessibility compliance report is **December 31, 2021**. [This new web page](#) is a helpful overview of the requirements that you need to meet.

## YOUR OPINION MATTERS: Health Care and K-12 Standards Initial Recommendations Posted for Public Feedback

The Government of Ontario is pleased to announce that the Health Care and Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education (K-12) Standards Development Committees' Initial Recommendation Reports have been posted online for public comment and can be found online via the following links:

- [Consultation: Initial recommendations for the development of health care accessibility standards | Ontario.ca](#)
- [Consultation: Initial recommendations for the development of proposed Kindergarten to Grade 12 \(K-12\) education accessibility standards | Ontario.ca](#)

Standards Development Committees (Committee) are responsible for providing government with its recommendations on new accessibility standards or changes to existing accessibility standards in Ontario. These accessibility standards help move Ontario forward on its journey to create a more accessible and inclusive province. The Committees are composed of people with disabilities, representatives from disability organizations, and sector experts.

accessibility health care standards for hospitals.

Members of the public can submit feedback on the Committee's 22 initial recommendations until August 11, 2021. After you've read the initial recommendations, submit your feedback by either:

- completing our [online survey](#)
- emailing a written submission to [healthSDC@ontario.ca](mailto:healthSDC@ontario.ca)

The **K-12 Committee** was tasked with developing recommendations for proposed accessibility education standards for the publicly funded K-12 sector. In addition, a Technical Sub-Committee was tasked with developing recommendations on student transitions between different levels of the education sectors (i.e. Kindergarten to Grade 12 and post-secondary); and between education, employment, and the community.

Members of the public can submit feedback on the Committee's 197 initial recommendations and on the Technical Sub-Committee's 75 recommendations until September 2, 2021. After you've read the initial recommendations, submit your feedback by either:

- completing our [online survey](#)
- emailing a written submission to [educationSDC@ontario.ca](mailto:educationSDC@ontario.ca)

Both Committees will review and consider all feedback before they finalize their recommendations and submit their final reports to the Minister for Seniors and Accessibility for consideration.

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## Get to Know a Member of the Education Standards Development Committee – Angelo Tocco

Government works with many partners towards the common goal of a more accessible province. Representatives who contribute to the standards development committees bring diverse perspectives, backgrounds and skills to their roles. These committee members make recommendations on how to improve and develop new accessibility standards under the AODA.

One of these dedicated committee members is Angelo Tocco, who currently serves as a member of the Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) [Education Standards Development Committee](#). Angelo also served on the [Accessibility Standards Advisory Council](#) from September 2017 to September 2019. He brings with him a wealth of professional and personal insights, including his experience as a Special Education teacher and Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, along with his experience as a parent and person living with disability, to contribute to the Committee's important

One of the highlights from the past year was the work done by the Committee when it provided advice and recommendations on emergency planning and safety for students with disabilities in K-12 education during the COVID-19 pandemic. Angelo spoke to the real barriers that his students and their families were experiencing, and barriers that he faced as an educator and as a parent living with a profound hearing loss. This included the impact of wearing masks as well as working with technology platforms and education content without live or offline captions. You can read the Planning for Emergencies and Safety Working Group's report [here](#).

Angelo strongly believes that continuous education and awareness is one of the best ways to break down accessibility barriers. He reminds us that the work to improve accessibility in Ontario begins with attention and thought - "Breaking down accessibility barriers and advancing accessibility begins with meaningful conversations where all voices are equally valued."

## Normalizing Accessibility Through Inclusive Fashion

Whether its adaptive clothing, hand-free athletic shoes, or garment labels that include braille within the design, these businesses are showcasing their innovativeness by embedding universal, functional and accessible design principles while not foregoing beauty into their brands. Here are some companies that are making accessibility and its principles known in the fashion industry:

- [IZ Adaptive](#) is a Toronto-based clothing brand that is designed with functionality at the forefront for people who use wheelchairs, by incorporating adaptive features into everyday clothing basics such as pants, coats and tops that are high quality and stylish. IZ Adaptive has also created a guide about "[The Importance of Functionality in Clothing for Wheelchair Users and People Living with Physical Disabilities](#)". For more information visit their website: <https://izadaptive.com/>
- Nike has recently launched a new design that was created with accessibility in mind. The [Nike GO FlyEase](#) is a hands-free shoe with a smooth motion bi-stable hinge that enables the shoe to be secure in fully open and closed states. It also has a tensioner that imitates the movement of kicking off a shoe to make it easier to use by all athletes regardless of ability, furthering the inclusivity of the design.
- [Aille Design](#), a company created by a Ryerson University graduate, creates hand beaded garments using Swarovski Crystal Pearls that form phrases in Braille that are fully legible without the need for assistive technology or assistance from someone who is sighted to help identify the clothing. The intricate beading describes clothing characteristics, such as colour, textiles, wash instructions, and fit. The goal is to make both a social and fashion impact by destigmatizing disability and fostering independence for people with disabilities while designing clothing that is still fashion forward. For more information visit their website: <https://ailedesign.com/>

contribute to making society more inclusive for all.

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## COVID-19 Supports and Resources

The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted people living with disabilities in Ontario and has also created various challenges for many businesses and organizations. In response, the Ontario government is providing supports and resources for both people living with disabilities and businesses through this difficult time, some of which are highlighted below:

- The Ontario Community Support Program provides isolated, low-income seniors and people with disabilities and chronic medical conditions across Ontario with access to paid or subsidized meal delivery, as well as the delivery of medicine and other essentials so they can stay safe at home during the COVID-19 pandemic  
<https://www.ontariocommunitysupport.ca/>.
- The Ontario government website provides a variety of COVID-19 supports, including public mental health and/or addiction programs to address low mood, anxiety, worry or stress. Please visit <https://www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-support-people#section-5>.
- 211 Ontario provides phone, live chat online, and email features for anyone looking for information and referrals to community, government, social and health services, including mental health resources, across Ontario at <https://211ontario.ca/chat/>.
- The Ontario government website provides tips and resources for businesses and organizations so they can avoid creating unnecessary barriers for people with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic at <https://www.ontario.ca/page/accessibility-ontario-information-businesses#section-2>.
- The Discover Ability Network is an online job matching portal that connects Ontario employers and people living with disabilities who are seeking employment. The Discover Ability Network also provides related workshops, webinars and online resources for both employers and job seekers on how to navigate the job market during the COVID-19 pandemic at <https://discoverability.network/business/roadmap/>.

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## Website Accessibility Plug-Ins

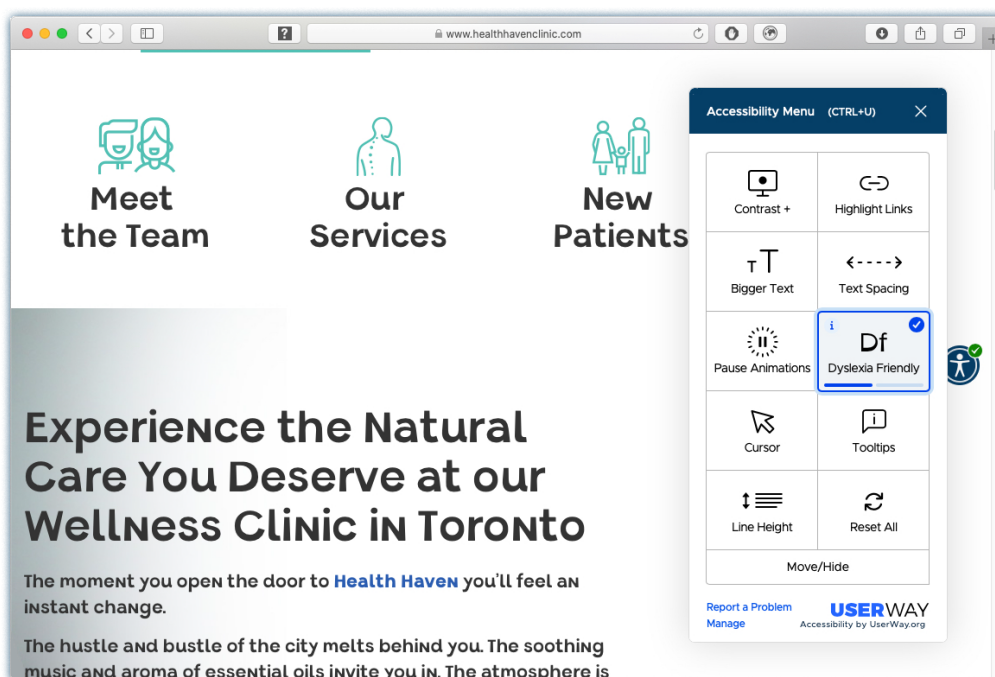
The AODA is foundational legislation to identifying, preventing and removing accessibility barriers in Ontario. Its Information and Communications accessibility standard outlines ways to prevent accessibility barriers in the areas of communications, including internet websites. As the world continues to move all aspects of life - from leisure, shopping, education, government services and work - to the internet, compliance with this standard is more important than ever. The following are

Challenge #1: How do I make my website AODA compliant and accessible for a very wide variety of users and not make it complicated or cluttered?

Challenge #2: How can individuals easily customize their user experience to suit their requirements while visiting my website, on any device.

One Solution: Adding an accessibility plug-in to your website help can help bring it closer to AODA compliance.

Accessibility plug-ins can add a wide range of accessibility features to an existing website, or while building a new one. Some of the features that can be added or modified by these plug-ins include: contrast, font size and style, adjust letter and line spacing, pause videos and animations, screen readers, add or modify navigation tools, highlight links and page structure. Usually the plug-ins are represented as small accessibility icons in a corner or along an edge of your web pages. Once selected/clicked on, a pop-up window will come up with all the options available by that specific product. Pick the options you'd like, then close the pop-up window, and better enjoy the website.



*The Health Haven's website with the accessibility plug-in icon in the middle right edge and the active pop-out window, with the Dyslexia Friendly font display selected, are visible in this screen shot.*

These accessibility web plug-ins have features that are designed to enhance the user experience by those that have to deal with visual impairments, mobility impairments, seizures, cognitive challenges, etc.

It's important to note that no plug-in is going to make your website 100% AODA compliant. The writers, designers, and programmers of your website need to know the information and

# AODA Compliance Assistance Tools

## **Business / Non-Profit and Designated Public Sector Organizations, of All Sizes:**

We have included checklists, forms, worksheets, and sample templates which can be used by employers to meet and exceed requirements under the Accessibility Standard for Employment.

### **Sample Return to Work Process and Plan**

Target Standard/ Requirement: Employment

#### **Central Forms Repository Link:**

<http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/FormDetail?>

[OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&SRCH=1&ENV=WWE&TIT=0047&NO=009-0047E](http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/FormDetail?OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&SRCH=1&ENV=WWE&TIT=0047&NO=009-0047E)

### **Sample Accommodation Process and Plan**

Target Standard/ Requirement: Employment

#### **Central Forms Repository Link:**

<http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/FormDetail?>

[OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&SRCH=1&ENV=WWE&TIT=0048&NO=009-0048E](http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/FormDetail?OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&SRCH=1&ENV=WWE&TIT=0048&NO=009-0048E)

### **Providing Accessible Emergency Information to Staff**

Guide with resources to develop individualized workplace emergency response information for employees who have a disability.

Target Standard / Requirement: Employment

#### **Central Forms Repository Link:**

<http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/FormDetail?>

[OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&SRCH=1&ENV=WWE&TIT=00032&NO=028-ON00032E](http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/FormDetail?OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&SRCH=1&ENV=WWE&TIT=00032&NO=028-ON00032E)

### **Accessible Recruitment Process**

Compliance assistance tool for accessible recruitment.

Target Standard/ Requirement: Employment

#### **Central Forms Repository Link:**

<http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/FormDetail?>

[OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&SRCH=1&ENV=WWE&TIT=recruitment&NO=028-ON00031E](http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/FormDetail?OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&SRCH=1&ENV=WWE&TIT=recruitment&NO=028-ON00031E)

### **Accessibility Training Requirements Checklist**



Target Standard/ Requirement: General

**Central Forms Repository Link:**

[http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/FormDetail?](http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/FormDetail?OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&SRCH=1&ENV=WWE&TIT=training+checklist&NO=ON00092E)

[OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&SRCH=1&ENV=WWE&TIT=training+checklist&NO=ON00092E](http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/FormDetail?OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&SRCH=1&ENV=WWE&TIT=training+checklist&NO=ON00092E)

## **Business / Non-Profit, and Designated Public Sector Organizations with 50+ Employees:**

### **Accessibility Policy Sample**

Provides a sample template of what should be included in an accessibility policy.

Target Standard/ Requirement: General

**Central Forms Repository Link:**

[http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/FormDetail?](http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/FormDetail?OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&SRCH=1&ENV=WWE&TIT=policy+sample&NO=ON00090E)

[OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&SRCH=1&ENV=WWE&TIT=policy+sample&NO=ON00090E](http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/FormDetail?OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&SRCH=1&ENV=WWE&TIT=policy+sample&NO=ON00090E)

### **Sample Multi-Year Plan Template**

Guidance and a template to the regulated community for a multi-year accessibility plan.

Target Standard/ Requirement: General

**Central Forms Repository Link:**

[http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/FormDetail?](http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/FormDetail?OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&SRCH=1&ENV=WWE&TIT=accessibility+Plan&NO=ON00091E)

[OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&SRCH=1&ENV=WWE&TIT=accessibility+Plan&NO=ON00091E](http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/FormDetail?OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&SRCH=1&ENV=WWE&TIT=accessibility+Plan&NO=ON00091E)

## **Designated Public Sector Organizations of All Sizes:**

### **Designated Public Sector and Multi-Year Accessibility Plans**

Guidance to DPS organizations on how to establish and review their multi-year accessibility plan; includes a template for their status report.

Target Standard/ Requirement: General

**Central Forms Repository Link:**

[http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/FormDetail?](http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/FormDetail?OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&SRCH=1&ENV=WWE&TIT=accessibility+Plan&NO=ON00120E)

[OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&SRCH=1&ENV=WWE&TIT=accessibility+Plan&NO=ON00120E](http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/FormDetail?OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&SRCH=1&ENV=WWE&TIT=accessibility+Plan&NO=ON00120E)

### **Accessible Educational & Training Resources and Materials Checklist**

Guidance to school boards, libraries, training institutions on requirements related to providing accessible training resources, books, etc.

Target Standard/ Requirement: Information and Communication

**Central Forms Repository Link:**

[http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/FormDetail?](http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/FormDetail?OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&SRCH=1&ENV=WWE&TIT=training+checklist&NO=ON00119E)

[OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&SRCH=1&ENV=WWE&TIT=training+checklist&NO=ON00119E](http://www.forms.ssb.gov.on.ca/mbs/ssb/forms/ssbforms.nsf/FormDetail?OpenForm&ACT=RDR&TAB=PROFILE&SRCH=1&ENV=WWE&TIT=training+checklist&NO=ON00119E)

## Did you enjoy this newsletter?

Do you know someone who is interested in accessibility? If you liked this newsletter and know others who would also benefit from receiving these updates, feel free to forward them this link so that they can subscribe to the newsletter, or visit [ontario.ca/accessibility](https://ontario.ca/accessibility).

### **Please provide us your feedback!**

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