



*healing place*

CHURCH

**Training Manual  
for Staff and Volunteers  
Accessibility for Disabled People**

July 2016



This training manual is designed to meet the requirements of the Customer Service Standard related to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and will be revised as necessary when other standards are introduced between now and 2025.

## **Training Manual for Staff and Volunteers Accessibility for Disabled People**

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# Basic Introduction to Accessibility for Disabled People

## Who are people with disabilities?

When we think of disabilities, we tend to think of people who use wheelchairs and who have physical disabilities that are visible and obvious. But disabilities can also be invisible. We cannot always tell who has a disability. **The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act** (AODA) uses the same definition of “disability” as the Ontario Human Rights Code.

**AODA Section 2:** In this Act, “disability” means;

- a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical coordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
- b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- d) a mental disorder, or
- e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

For more information about the Ontario Human Rights Code, visit:

**[www.ohrc.on.ca](http://www.ohrc.on.ca)**, and click on “The Code” under the Resources Section of the website.

## What are Barriers?

When you think about accessibility, it is important to be aware of both visible and invisible barriers. A barrier is anything that keeps someone with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of their disability.

**Attitude** is perhaps the most difficult barrier to overcome because it’s hard to change the way people think or behave. Some people do not know how to communicate with those who have visible or invisible disabilities – for example, assuming someone with a speech problem has intellectual limitations and speaking to them in a manner that would be used with a child; or forming ideas about the person because of stereotypes or a lack of understanding. Some people may feel that they could offend the individual with a disability by offering help, or they ignore or avoid people with disabilities altogether. Remember, attitude is a major barrier that’s within our power to change.

**Architectural or structural** barriers may result from design elements of a building such as stairs, doorways, the width of hallways and even room layout.

**Information and communication** barriers can make it difficult for people to receive or convey information. For example, a person who is deaf cannot communicate via standard telephone. Things like small print size, low color contrast between text and background, confusing design of printed materials and the use of language that isn't clear or easy to understand can all cause difficulty.

**Technology**, or lack of it, can prevent people from accessing information. Everyday tools like computers, telephone and other aids can all present barriers if they are not set up or designed with accessibility in mind.

**Systematic** barriers can result from an organization's policies, practices and procedures if they restrict people with disabilities, often unintentionally – for example, a clothing store with a “no refund” policy and no way for someone in a scooter to enter the change room.

The Information that follows is a word document taken from the e-learning workshop at the referenced website: <http://accessforward.ca/front/customerService>

**Welcome:** Thanks for joining me for the course 'Accessible Customer Service.' I'm Marc your instructor. Before we begin, let me tell you how you can get the most out of this e-learning journey on serving customers with disabilities.

***It's important to know that training like the one we are about to start is a legal requirement under the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. The act became law in 2005.***

Under the act is a regulation, known as Ontario Regulation 429-07, Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, which became law in January 2008. This regulation is about making customer service accessible for people with disabilities. From now on, we'll call the regulation 'the customer service standard,' or just 'the standard' for short.

Training is a key part to this innovative standard. The standard says that you must be trained on serving customers with disabilities if you:

- Deal with the public.
- Deal with third parties.
- Participate in developing customer service policies, practices, and procedures.

This training must be done as soon as it is reasonable after starting a job or duties in a business or organization.

You must receive updated training when there are any changes to policies, practices and procedures that relate to customer service for people with disabilities.

Here are the main sections of the module that you can click back to at any time:

1. Purpose of the act
2. Requirements of the customer service standard
3. Serving customers with disabilities
4. Service animals
5. Support persons
6. Assistive devices
7. If there are difficulties accessing your services

This e-learning workshop on serving customers with disabilities is designed to support businesses and organizations in meeting the training requirements of the customer service standard. Here, you will find tips, suggestions and good practices on providing accessible customer service. It is important to note that this is not legal advice.

Here are some tips on using the module for best learning:

Find a time when you can do this training without interruption. Put a sign up at your desk, office, or work station. Avoid telephone calls until you are finished.

Close all other programs that you use when you are at the computer, such as your e-mail.

If you are listening to the audio, consider using headphones or a headset instead of speakers so that you do not disturb others.

If you have time, I encourage you to enrich your learning by reviewing some of the **Tips, Tools and Links** in the **Resources Section** where you'll find additional material like guides and self-tests.

Remember that you can be flexible with this training: it can be a resource for an all staff training session, incorporated into additional training, or done alone. Whatever works best for you.

## **Introducing the AODA - Purposes of AODA**

Let's start this journey with one of the main reasons you are taking this course: the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. We'll call it "the act" for short.

The act is a provincial law that allows the government to develop specific standards of accessibility and to enforce them. The goal is to make Ontario accessible by 2025.

The purpose of the act is to develop, implement, and enforce standards in these areas:

- goods
- services
- facilities
- accommodations

- employment
- buildings
- structures
- premises.

These standards address barriers to people with disabilities in these areas.

How are these standards developed? The standards are developed by committees that include people with disabilities, the provincial government, and representatives of various industries and sectors. People have an opportunity to review and comment on the standard before they are completed. The standards may be adopted as regulations under the act.

Take a minute to think about what this change is going to mean for you or for your business or organization. Can you imagine what an accessible Ontario might look like?

Let me tell you a bit about myself. I'm a Franco-Ontarian who loves the outdoors. I've lived in Ottawa, Timmins, and Toronto. Camped in Algonquin Park. Enjoyed a swim in Lake Superior and visited many beautiful places in Ontario.

Think for a moment about where you travel, live and work -- and what these places might look like without barriers. When everyone has access to places, people and experiences we all benefit -- in this case we benefit from the contributions, involvement and spending power of people with disabilities.

Greater accessibility will help prepare Ontario for the future. Our population is aging, so the number of people with disabilities will increase.

Some people see disabilities as the barrier to full involvement in life. But, actually, it's the environment that presents barriers. For example, having stereotypes about people with disabilities is a major barrier. There are sometimes physical barriers in the environment. Sometimes certain systems and processes create barriers.

These barriers can be based on certain ideas of what the human experience should be like. So, it is the environment that presents barriers for people with disabilities – not the disabilities.

So...now we have a regulation on accessible customer service under the act. What is it? What do you have to do?

The customer service standard is the first standard developed under the act. Other standards are expected to cover

- transportation
- information and communications
- employment
- the built environment. The built environment refers to physical things like the inside and outside of buildings.

Remember that...

- The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act is about setting standards in areas of living that pose major barriers to people with disabilities.
- The vision behind the act is to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities by 2025.
- There are more standards to follow, and they will go through public review before being finalized.

### **It's time to recap: Introducing the AODA - Purposes of AODA Review Quiz**

#### Review Questions

1. The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act was passed in what year?

- 2000
- 2003
- 2005
- 2007

Answer: 2005

2) The vision behind the AODA is to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities by 2025.

- True
- False

Answer: True

### **Introducing the AODA - Who Must Comply**

The customer service standard became law January 1, 2008. The standard applies to all people and organizations that are designated in the regulation

Or

- provide goods or services to the public or other businesses and organizations (known as third parties) and
- have at least one employee in Ontario.

To help to make sure everyone will be ready to implement the standard, there are two different dates for compliance. Check the **Resources Section** under "**Compliance**" for types of organizations and when they need to comply.

The goal of the standard is for every business and organization to provide service to their customers in a way that is accessible to people customers with all types of disabilities. Sometimes I'll call the businesses and organizations that must comply with the standard "providers" for short.

There are a number of legal requirements under the standard. To comply, businesses and organizations must:

- Set up policies, practices and procedures on providing goods or services to people with disabilities.

- Make reasonable efforts to ensure that policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the key principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity.
- Have a policy about the use of assistive devices by people with disabilities.
- Communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account his or her disability.
- Let people with disabilities bring their service animals onto the parts of the premises open to the public or third parties except in some situations.
- Let people with disabilities bring their support persons with them when accessing goods or services.
- If your organization charges an admission fee, let people know ahead of time what, if any, admission will be charged for a support person.
- Let the public know when facilities or services that people with disabilities usually use to access their goods and services are temporarily not available.
- Ensure that your staff receive training on how to serve people with disabilities, including staff involved in developing customer service policies, practices and procedures and staff who are likely to interact with customers.
- Receive feedback and let people know how feedback will be responded to and what action will be taken on any complaints. Make the information about the feedback process readily available to the public.

You can find the Summary of Requirements in the Resources Section.

There are three more things that designated public sector organizations and providers with 20 or more employees must do to comply. You can check the "Decision-makers' Section" for an explanation on those additional requirements.

## **Interacting with Persons with Disabilities - General Tips for Serving Customers with Disabilities**

Let's get to the essence of this course: interacting and serving customers with disabilities. You can read and download **tip sheets** on interacting with people with various disabilities. You may want to keep copies of these tips sheets handy and have them nearby as reminders.

Let's review some scenarios and some suggested ways to interact with people with various disabilities, people using assistive devices, service animals and support persons.

Get ready: this is where you can really learn tips, suggestions and ways to serve customers with disabilities. For everyday customer service, this is the practical information that you'll want to remember.

Here are some things to keep in mind when serving customers with disabilities:

- If you're not sure what to do, ask your customer, "May I help you?" Your customers with disabilities know if they need help and how you can provide it.

- Speak directly to your customer.
- Not everybody with the same disability experiences the same things. Don't make assumptions about the types of disability a person has. Your customers are not required to tell you about their disabilities.
- Take the time to get to know your customer's needs and focus on meeting those needs just like you would with any other customer. Some disabilities are not visible.
- All customers have a range of needs and preferences and so do your customers with disabilities.
- If you can't understand what your customer is saying, politely ask him or her to repeat it.
- You may want to ask if the information you are conveying needs to be repeated. Ask: "Do you understand this?"
- Exercise patience.

## **Serving Customers with Disabilities - An Introduction**

Now, let's take a look at additional suggestions and good practices on how to serve people with different types of disabilities.

To make this easier for you, the disabilities are listed in alphabetical order. Don't forget to check out the **word list** in the Resources Section. It will help you use the right words.

From this screen you can access information on specific disabilities and tips on how to serve customers with those disabilities.

- Deaf, deafened, oral deaf and hard of hearing
- Deafblind
- Intellectual/developmental disabilities
- Learning disabilities
- Mental health disabilities
- Physical disabilities or disabilities affecting mobility
- Speech or language impairments
- Vision loss

Click on a title to view the information. When you complete a section, you will return to this screen where you can select another section.

## **Serving Customers with Disabilities - Deaf, oral deaf, deafened, and hard of hearing**

People who experience hearing loss may be Deaf, oral deaf, deafened, or hard of hearing. People experiencing hearing loss may use assistive devices, like hearing aids, special telephones, sign language interpreters, various amplifiers or a pen and paper.

Here are suggested ways to serve customers with hearing loss:

- Attract the customer's attention before speaking. For example, try a gentle touch on the shoulder or wave of your hand.
- Don't shout.
- Make sure you are in a well-lit area where your customer can see your face.
- If the person uses a hearing aid, reduce background noise or move to a quieter area.

Take a moment to reflect on what you have learned.

What stood out to you in learning about serving these customers better?

Let's look at the experiences of other customers...

### **Serving Customers with Disabilities: Deaf/blind**

A person who is deaf/blind cannot see or hear to some degree. Many people who are deaf/blind will be accompanied by an intervener, a professional who helps with communicating. Interveners are trained in special sign language that involves touching the hands of the client in a two-hand, manual alphabet or finger spelling.

Keep these suggestions in mind when you serve a customer who is deaf/blind:

- Speak directly to your customer, not to the intervener.
- Identify yourself to the intervener when you approach your customer who is deaf/blind.
- A customer who is deaf/blind is likely to explain to you how to communicate with them or give you an assistance card or a note explaining how to communicate with them.

### **Serving Customers with Disabilities - Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities**

Developmental or intellectual disabilities can mildly or profoundly limit a person's ability to learn, communicate, do everyday physical activities and live independently.

You may not be able to know that someone has this disability unless you are told, or you notice the way the person acts, asks questions or uses body language. However, they may understand you more than you realize.

An example of a developmental disability would be Down Syndrome.

Here's some guidance:

- Don't assume what a person can or cannot do.
- Use plain language.
- Make sure your customer understands what you've said. You can be direct and ask: "Do you understand this?"
- Provide one piece of information at a time. You can break down the information into simpler concepts, without exaggerating speech or gestures or being patronizing.
- You may want to ask if the information needs to be repeated.

## **Serving Customers with Disabilities - Learning Disabilities**

Let's talk about learning disabilities. This refers to a variety of disorders that affect how a person acquires, retains, or takes in information. People with learning disabilities just learn differently. Learning disabilities affect people from all backgrounds and are not caused by culture, language or a lack of motivation.

Learning disabilities are specific impairments that can result in problems with reading and language-based learning (dyslexia), problems with mathematics (dyscalculia), or problems with writing and fine motor skills (dysgraphia).

This disability may become apparent in your customer service interaction when the person has difficulty reading material or taking in and processing the information you are providing.

Some tips:

- Take some time - people with some learning disabilities may take a little longer to process, understand and respond.
- Provide information in a way that works for your customer. For example, keep a pen and paper handy. That way, you can explain, and then review and repeat the information using your notes. If you're discussing confidential information, consider giving the notes to your customer or offering to destroy them.
- Be prepared to explain any materials you provide for your customers.

## **Serving Customers with Disabilities - Mental Health Disabilities**

Mental health, the important thing to remember: focus on completing the transaction in a calm, patient way and meeting the customer's needs. Mental health issues can affect a person's ability to think clearly, concentrate or remember. Mental health disability is a broad classification for many disorders that can range in severity. Customers may experience anxiety due to phobias or panic disorder. Hallucinations, mood swings, and a deep lack of motivation may be signs of a mental health disability. A person may have a clinical depression or bipolar disorder.

The major barrier for people with mental health disabilities is the stigma associated with it and the lack of understanding.

Here are some suggestions:

- Be confident and reassuring. As with all customers, listen carefully and focus on meeting the customer's needs.
- If the person appears to be in a crisis, ask them to tell you the best way to help.
- If a customer appears to show signs of a mental health disability, it may be helpful to keep in mind that the customer's reactions are not connected to you personally, as a service provider. The customer may simply be showing symptoms of mental illness.

Did you know that one in five people in Ontario will experience a mental health issue at some point in their lives?

## **Serving Customers with Disabilities - Physical Disabilities or Disabilities Affecting Mobility**

The common image of someone with a physical disability who uses a wheelchair is a stereotype. For example, physical disabilities can result from arthritis, heart or lung conditions or amputations. Here are some tips, but there are more in the **Resources Section**:

- People with physical disabilities often have their own ways of doing things, so it's a good idea to ask before you help.
- Respect your customer's personal space. Don't lean over them or on an assistive device.
- Don't move items or equipment, such as canes or walkers, out of the person's reach.
- If you have permission to move a person in a wheelchair remember to make sure your customer is ready to be moved and that you describe what you are going to do beforehand. Don't leave the individual in an awkward, dangerous or undignified position such as facing a wall or in the path of opening doors.
- In some situations, inform your customer of the accessible features in the immediate environment (automatic doors, accessible washrooms, elevators, ramps, etc.).

OK. I know you're getting this. Look around you and check for things that may be in the way of someone with limited mobility. It's a good idea to remove them, or find alternative ways to serve your customer.

## **Serving Customers with Disabilities - Speech or Language Impairments**

Some customers may have problems communicating because of their disability. Cerebral palsy, stuttering, hearing loss or other conditions may make it difficult for the person to pronounce words or may cause slurring or stuttering. A person with this type of disability may use a communication board or other assistive devices.

A few pointers...

- Don't assume that just because a person has this disability they also have another.
- Give your customer whatever time they need to get their point across. If appropriate, offer to move to a more comfortable location.
- Ask questions that can be answered "yes" or "no," if possible.
- Don't interrupt or finish your customer's sentences. Give them time to finish.

## **Serving Customers with Disabilities - Customers with Vision Loss**

Did you know that few people who are blind have no vision? According to CNIB, nine out of ten people who come to CNIB have some degree of vision.

Three million Canadians have difficulty reading conventional text.

Vision loss can restrict someone's ability to read signs, locate landmarks, or see hazards. Some customers may use a guide dog or white cane; others may not. Some customers simply need to view written materials—like documents, receipts, menus, brochures, instructions or labels—in large print, or with the help of a magnifier.

Keep in mind....

- Don't assume the individual can't see you.
- Identify yourself when you approach your customer and speak directly to him or her.
- Offer your elbow to guide the person. If they accept, walk slowly, but wait for permission before doing so.
- Identify landmarks or other details to orient your customer to the environment around them.
- If you're giving directions or providing any information, be precise and descriptive. For example, if you're approaching a door or an obstacle, say so.
- Don't leave your customer in the middle of a room. Guide them to a chair or a comfortable location. Don't walk away without saying good-bye.

You've probably seen someone with vision loss who uses a guide dog. There are other types of service animals who help people with other disabilities as well.

- Hearing alert animals help people who are Deaf, oral deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.
- Animals trained to alert an individual to an oncoming seizure.
- Service animals trained to assist people with:
  - Autism
  - Mental health disabilities
  - Physical disabilities and
  - Other disabilities.

You might recognize service animals when they wear a harness or a sign, or when they are helping someone. Their owner might carry a certificate or a letter from a doctor or nurse that states that the individual requires the use of a service animal because of a disability. You can ask to see such a letter. You might also observe the animal helping someone by opening doors or alerting them to certain sounds.

The customer is responsible for the care and supervision of the service animal.

Avoid touching, talking to or making eye contact with the service animal: they are working animals and need to stay focused.

## **Serving Customers with Disabilities - Customers with Support Persons**

Some people with disabilities that you encounter will be accompanied by a support person.

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

According to the regulation, support persons must be allowed to accompany an individual with a disability to any part of your organization that is open to the public or to third parties.

A customer with a disability might not introduce their support person. If you're not sure which person is the customer, you could take your lead from the person using or requesting your goods or services or simply ask. Once you've determined who your customer is, then speak directly to him or her not to the support person.

It's also good practice to confirm with your client or customer that they want the support person to be present while confidential matters are being discussed.

## **Serving Customers with Disabilities - Personal Assistive Devices**

Let's talk about assistive devices. Most assistive devices used by people with disabilities are "personal assistive devices" – such as wheelchairs. They belong to the person using them and they are part of that person's personal space.

So, it's generally inappropriate to lean on or reach over them. Also, it wouldn't be a good practice to restrict anyone from moving around by holding onto the person's personal assistive device.

There are many assistive devices that you won't even notice at first glance, such as a hearing aid. And some aren't used all the time, like a speech amplification device or a white cane.

## **Serving Customers with Disabilities - Devices that Help People with Disabilities Access Your Services**

Let's consider for a moment the assistive devices in your operation that may help with the provision of goods or services to customers with disabilities. The standard says that

you must be trained on how to use them. Ideally, you should have instruction manuals handy, perhaps a summary instruction sheet.

One of the more common assistive devices is a TTY line.

TTY stands for Teletypewriter, a type of telephone that allows callers to send typed messages to each other across phone lines.

TTY users can directly call other TTY numbers or they can connect with a Relay Service. A standard phone user can also place a call to a TTY user through the Relay operator. You give the operator your name, the name of the person you are calling, and the number you wish to reach. Using the Relay Service locally is free. For long-distance, any standard long-distance charges would apply.

A handy "how-to" for both TTY and Relay System calls is provided in the **Resources Section**.

Examples of other assistive devices that can help you serve your customers would be alternative keyboards for people who have difficulty with conventional ones.

Or, you might have software that enables people with disabilities to communicate with you using a computer.

Elevators, escalators and automatic door openers are assistive devices.

Under the standard, you must provide notification when these services are temporarily not available.

## **Serving Customers with Disabilities - If there are Difficulties Accessing Your Services**

Sometimes your customers will have difficulty accessing your services. Most customers have specific needs or preferences. Being positive, flexible and open to suggestions will help to create a good customer experience.

If you notice that your customer is having difficulty accessing your services, a good starting point is to ask how you can best help them.

Often, there are simple solutions. For example, your customer is Deaf and doesn't have a sign language interpreter. You could ask him, in writing, if using a pen and paper would be a good way to serve him. Remember, if you're discussing confidential information offer to return the notes to the customer or to destroy them.

Perhaps your customer can't reach some of the products in your shop because the displays and counters are too high. You could offer to bring the products to him or her.

If the menus in your restaurant are unreadable to someone with vision loss, you could offer to read the menu aloud.

Be prepared to help with doors if your business doesn't have automatic door openers.

## **Summary and Review - Summary**

It's time to pull all this information and learning together. In the last half hour or so, you have learned about...

- the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 and the vision behind it for making Ontario accessible by 2025;
- the customer service standard, deadlines for compliance and what's required to comply;
- the standards' specific customer service requirements;
- tips on interacting with people with various disabilities;
- interacting with people who have --
  - service animals;
  - support persons;
  - assistive devices; and
- what to do if a customer with a disability is having difficulty accessing your services.

## Summary and Review - Review Questions

Taking this quiz will help you review the material and discover how much you have learned and retained.

1. When you are dealing with a customer with a disability and are unsure if they need help, you should:
  - a. Go ahead and help them – if they don't like it, they'll say so
  - b. Ignore them until you have time for them – serve the easiest customers first
  - c. Always serve your customers with disabilities away from other customers.
  - d. Wait and see if they really are customers – maybe they'll change their minds and go someplace else
  - e. Ask "May I help you?"

**Answer E is correct.** Asking open-ended questions like "May I help you?" or "How may I Help You?" invites individuals to work with you on how you can best serve them.

- 2) Which of the following statements is **always true**?
  - a.) Older people are all hard of hearing
  - b.) Avoid touching a service animal without permission
  - c.) Support people are paid employees of customers with disabilities
  - d.) People who are blind cannot see anything

**Answer B is correct.** Remember to never touch or address a service animal. They're working.

- 3) Which statement about customers with disabilities is **true**?
  - a.) Their disability might affect how they interact with you and it might not
  - b.) They all use assistive devices like a wheelchair or a hearing aid
  - c.) Their disability affects them with the same severity at all times

d.) All people with the same disability are affected in the same way

**Answer A is correct.** Disabilities vary from person to person. Sometimes the symptoms come and go. And remember, you might not know your customer has a disability.

4. If you need to communicate by telephone with a customer who is Deaf, orally deaf, deafened or hard of hearing, you can use the Relay Service. The number for the Relay Service is:

- a) 911
- b) 411
- c) 1-800-855-0511
- d) A number that has a 416 area code

**Answer C is correct.** There is no charge for this service when making local calls. For long distance calls, standard charges would be applied to the number you are using.

5. **True or False:** Canada 's population is aging, so the number of people with disabilities is likely to increase in the next 20 years.

**Answer: True**

## Summary and Review - Conclusion

If there are any areas that you need to repeat, take the time now to review, and download and print any material for future reference. Take the time to ask yourself:

- What have I learned about serving customers with disabilities?
- What will I do differently from now on?

Thank you for letting me share this information with you. Enjoy your day.

## Healing Place Training - Sample Awareness Quiz

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This quiz can be used to evaluate misconceptions you may have about people with disabilities. Answer the following statements with either true or false.

1. A positive attitude is important when meeting or helping a person with a disability.  
 True  False

2. Generally, people see the disability first and the person second.  
 True  False

3. All disabilities are caused by a disease or are inherited.  
 True  False

4. People with mobility impairments do not care about how they look, and they can't shop the way other people do.

True  False

5. Someone who uses a power wheelchair cannot drive a motor vehicle.

True  False

6. If you notice someone wearing a hearing aid, speak loudly so he or she can hear you.

True  False

7. When guiding a person who has vision loss, you should always take them by the arm.

True  False

8. Someone who is severely physically disabled cannot do anything alone.

True  False

9. A person who is Deaf cannot use the phone.

True  False

10. A person can have a disability and not be handicapped.

True  False

11. People who have vision loss have a better sense of hearing.

True  False

12. You should avoid using expressions such as “look”, “see” and “watch out” when talking to someone with a visual impairment.

True  False

13. The majority of people who are Deaf or hard of hearing can speech read.

True  False

14. If you see someone in a wheelchair having trouble, you should give him or her a push.

True  False

15. Over one million Canadians have some kind of disability that makes it difficult for them to read conventional print.

True  False

16. When a customer with a disability is in your workplace, you should always provide extra attention.

True  False

17. Guide dogs see colours and read signs.  
 True  False
18. People who are Deaf or hard of hearing see better than everyone else.  
 True  False
19. People who are Deaf, deaf/blind or hard of hearing cannot talk at all.  
 True  False
20. People who use wheelchairs are paralysed.  
 True  False
21. Mental health disability is a rare, untreatable disorder.  
 True  False
22. People with learning disabilities cannot be productive.  
 True  False
23. Intellectual disability is the same as mental health disability.  
 True  False
24. About one in seven Ontarians has a disability.  
 True  False
25. Forty-seven percent of Ontarians over the age of 65 have disabilities.  
 True  False

## Answers to Awareness Quiz

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1. **True** – Barriers are broken down in part through open, positive attitudes -- when people are accepted for themselves.
2. **True** – A disability is just one of the characteristics of the individual, but the disability is often seen before the person.
3. **False** – Some disabilities are the result of a disease, some are inherited, while others are the result of an accident.
4. **False** – People with disabilities have different interests and enjoy different activities like everyone else.
5. **False** – There are many modifications available for vehicles to allow people with disabilities to drive, including people in power wheelchairs.
6. **False** – It is important to look directly at someone who is hard of hearing and speak clearly. Shouting may only create sound distortions when amplified through the hearing aid.
7. **False** – People who have vision loss may prefer to take your arm when you are guiding them. Ask if they need your assistance first.
8. **False** – There are many helpful aids for people who have physical disabilities which may help them to be more independent.
9. **False** – There are different systems that allow someone who is Deaf to use the telephone, such as the Teletypewriter (TTY) or a relay system.
10. **True** – Barriers in the lived environment and/or other people's negative attitudes are the only handicaps for people with disabilities.
11. **False** – Generally, people with vision loss have no better sense of hearing than anyone else, though some people with vision loss learn to use their senses more efficiently.
12. **False** – There is no need to use special language around people who have vision loss. They use the same expressions as everyone else.
13. **True** – Most people who are Deaf or hard of hearing can speech read, but they don't all do it very well. Most of them can understand about 25% of what is being

said. People who excel at speech reading can understand approximately 45-50% of what is being said.

14. **False** – Try to respect the person’s independence by asking if your assistance is needed first.
15. **True** – It is estimated that one million Canadians have some kind of disability that makes it difficult or impossible for them to read conventional print. An increasing number of senior citizens are becoming part of this group.
16. **False** – People with disabilities may need some special attention, but it should not be assumed in every case. Your customers want to be treated with dignity, so consider discreetly asking each one if help is needed. You don’t always know who has a disability and who doesn’t!
17. **False** – Guide dogs do not see the colours of traffic lights, and do not read the signs on washroom doors. The owner decides when to cross the street by listening to the traffic flow.
18. **False** – Generally, people who are Deaf or hard of hearing have no better sense of seeing than everyone else, but they may concentrate more on what they are seeing.
19. **False** – People who are Deaf, deaf/blind or hard of hearing may choose not to speak because they are unsure of pronunciation, or they may know that their voices sound different, but most can make sounds, and can probably speak some words.
20. **False** – Not everyone who uses a wheelchair is paralysed. People might use a wheelchair if they have arthritic spines or sore legs, severe asthma or a heart condition that limits the ability to walk.
21. **False** – Many types of mental health disabilities are treatable and not necessarily permanent.
22. **False** – Many people develop ways to work with, or around, their particular type of learning disability. Repeated practice can help a person with a learning disability to perform some tasks with less difficulty.
23. **False** – Unlike mental health disability, intellectual disability is a limitation affecting intellectual capacity, not emotional equilibrium. Moreover, an intellectual disability is a permanent condition that cannot be medically treated or cured.
24. **True** – According to the Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS) 2006 from Statistics Canada, about 1.85 million Ontarians (one in seven) have a disability.

25. **True** – According to the Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS) 2006 from Statistics Canada, about 47 percent of Ontarians over the age of 65 have disabilities.

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Resources Section of the e-Course: Serve-Ability: Transforming Ontario's Customer Service, Accessibility  
Directorate of Ontario, Ministry of Community and Social Services

## **Test Your Knowledge**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Under the AODA, different standards on accessibility are being developed that will set requirements for the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers for people with disabilities in key areas of daily living.	True	False
The customer service standard is a voluntary standard. Your business or organization can decide whether or not to put it into practice.	True	False
The term “disability” only applies to people who use wheelchairs.	True	False
Avoiding someone because of their disability is a barrier in attitude.	True	False
Your organization must accept feedback about the manner in which it provides goods or services to people with disabilities.	True	False
You should not ask your customer to repeat himself if you don’t understand him the first time. It might offend him.	True	False
If a person has vision loss they cannot see anything.	True	False
It’s helpful to someone who uses a hearing aid if you reduce background noise.	True	False
You should always speak directly to your customer, not to her support person or companion.	True	False
If your customer uses a manual wheelchair, feel free to push her around your store.	True	False
You can always tell when someone has a disability.	True	False
Assistive devices enable a person with a disability to do everyday tasks and activities.	True	False
Your organization must allow people with disabilities who use a support person to bring their support person with them while accessing goods or services on parts of the premises that are open to the public.	True	False
Service animals should be treated as pets.	True	False

## Answers to "Test your Knowledge"

1. True
2. False: All providers of goods and services to the public or other third parties with one or more employees and all designated public sector organizations in Ontario must comply with all of the applicable requirements of the customer service standard.
3. False: The AODA uses the same definition of "disability" as the Ontario Human Rights Code, which includes both visible and non-visible disabilities. The term "disability" does not only apply to people who use wheelchairs.
4. True
5. True
6. False: If you can't understand what your customer is saying, just politely ask again.
7. False: Few people with vision loss are totally blind. Many have limited vision such as tunnel vision, where a person has a loss of peripheral or side vision, or a lack of central vision, which means they cannot see straight ahead. Some people can see the outline of objects while others can see the direction of light.
8. True
9. True
10. False: Don't touch a person's wheelchair or assistive device without permission.
11. False: Disabilities can be visible and non-visible. You can't always tell who has a disability.
12. True
13. True
14. False: Service animals are working and have to pay attention at all times. Don't touch or address them.

## Tips for Guiding an Individual who has Vision Loss

The following are instructions and tips on guiding a customer with vision loss. For more information about guiding someone with vision loss visit [www.cnib.ca](http://www.cnib.ca)

- Ask first if they wish to be guided.
- If the answer is “yes”, offer your arm. Ask which arm is better. Walk at a normal pace. The person will walk about a step behind. Announce handrails, doors (to the right/left, push/pull to open etc.) and describe the surrounding areas (such as what is in an aisle – shelves and sections).
- If you are guiding towards stairs:
  - Let the individual know if they have to walk up or down;
  - Approach the stairs head on, not at an angle and come to a full stop in front of the stairs;
  - Lead or guide them to the rail side to allow them to take hold of it;
  - Let them find the first step and then start to climb or descend the stairs;
  - Try to be one step ahead and announce the last step.
- If you are going through a narrow doorway, passage etc., the guide goes first, after explaining the circumstances and describing the area.
- Upon entering a room, offer to describe the dimensions and the location of people and furniture.
- If the person wishes to sit, offer to guide him/her and place his/her hand on the back of the chair.
- Keep the person informed when others approach or leave.
- If you must leave the individual alone, do not leave him or her standing in the middle of the room, with nothing to hold onto. If he/she is not seated, guide him/her to a door, wall, or piece of furniture to stand next to. This will help the person to stay spatially oriented.
- If the individual is accompanied by a guide dog, stand to the right of the individual, as the guide dog is usually at the owner's left side. When guiding an individual with a dog, offer your left arm, but if the person you are guiding prefers to hold your right arm, that's okay too.
- When the individual has a guide dog, offer to open the door first, before doing so. They may be using the door's location as a reference point, or he/she may prefer to do it without assistance to protect the dog's paws.

“Tips for guiding an Individual (Customer) who has Vision Loss” is part of the course “Serve-Ability: Transforming Ontario's Customer Service”. The End User Agreement and copyright rules apply to any documents, resources, and materials that form part of the course. See the End User Agreement for more information.

## **Instructions on Helping an Individual with an Assistive Device**

Many people with disabilities will have their own personal assistive devices. Don't touch or handle an assistive device without permission.

Examples of personal assistive devices:

- wheelchairs,
- scooters
- walker
- amplification devices that boost sound for listeners who are hard-of-hearing without reducing background noise
- hearing aids
- oxygen tanks
- electronic notebooks or laptop computers
- personal data managers
- communication boards used to communicate using symbols, words or pictures
- speech-generating devices that "speak" when a symbol, word or picture is pressed

### **Moving personal assistive devices**

If you have permission to move a person in a wheelchair remember to:

- wait for and follow the person's instructions;
- confirm that they are ready to move;
- describe what you are going to do before you do it;
- avoid uneven ground and objects that create bumpy and unsafe ride; and
- practice consideration and safety – don't leave the person in an awkward, dangerous or undignified position such as facing a wall or in the path of opening doors.

Do not move items or equipment, such as canes and walkers, out of the individuals reach.

Respect the individual's personal space. Do not lean over them or on their assistive device.

Let the individual know about accessible features in the immediate environment (automatic doors, accessible washrooms, etc.).

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