AODA Background

Under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) [1], the government is moving to a fully accessible Ontario by 2025. The Act systemically addresses barriers to achieve accessibility that is widespread, commonplace and people with disabilities can count on, on a daily basis. At the University of Guelph, this means our buildings, policies and learning environment must also move to be as accessible as possible in the near future. This website will provide information, resources and examples to assist those at the University with further improvements to accessibility.

The legislation has five standards:

- Customer service;
- Employment;
- Information and communication;
- Transportation; and
- Built environment.

Customer Service Standard

The customer service standard requires that training be provided to all those who deal with the public and/or participate in developing policy, practices and procedures related to the provision of goods or services to the public. The University of Guelph developed a training program that included both face-to-face and online sessions. This program includes training on issues such as how to interact and communicate with individuals with disabilities, with persons who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or support person. It also includes what to do to assist a person with a disability who is having difficulty accessing goods or services. For information on the University’s commitment to providing goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities and fulfilment see the Accessible Service Provision Policy [2].

Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation (IASR) [3]

Comprised of three parts, the IASR includes the Employment, Information and Communication and Transportation standards. It sets out the requirements for policies and practices, the development of accessibility plans and the establishment of a feedback process. It also requires the continued training of employees and volunteers, depending on their roles. For information on how the University will fulfill its obligations under the IASR, see the Multi-year Accessibility Plan.

Employment Standard

In this standard, employers are to ensure the accessibility requirements of paid employees are administered throughout the entire lifecycle of employment – recruitment, return to work and redeployment. Accommodation plans may have to be developed for those employees with a disability.

Information and Communication Standard

This standard requires the provision and arrangement for accessible formats and communication supports which are to be done in consultation with the person making the request – at no additional cost. It does not mean that organizations have to have a variety of different formats available but must have the means to provide them in a
timely manner upon request. Deadlines have been set out for the mandate of accessible websites and other online resources such as e-books. It requires the training of all teaching staff in accessible instructional techniques.

**Transportation Standard** [4]

In this standard, specialized as well as conventional transportation providers are to be fully accessible. See the standard for details and dates for compliance.

**Built Environment Standard** [5]

Statement of Organizational Commitment

The University of Guelph is committed to making its learning, living and work environments accessible and welcoming – places where students, employees, volunteers and visitors are accommodated according to their needs. Our goal is to ensure accessibility in our services, products and facilities. The University is committed to providing goods and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. This policy outlines how the University fulfills this commitment and what individuals can expect when accessing services at the University.

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Links: