

Making Ontario Accessible

For further information go to: <http://news.ontario.ca/mcss/en/2009/12/accessibility-standard-coming-into-force-for-public-sector.html>

As of January 1, 2010 the province's first accessibility standard, for customer service, came into force. This policy emerged under the McGuinty government. This means that all public service buildings such as hospitals, schools and municipal buildings will be required to meet the standards set out by this policy.

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.

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.

Part of the requirements include:

- i) Training staff about meeting the needs of customers with a variety of disabilities
- ii) Communicating with a person in a manner that takes into account their disability,
- iii) Permitting customers to bring their service animals, such as guide dogs, onto their premises.

All businesses or organizations that provide goods or services to the public or to other third parties in Ontario are legally required to comply with the requirements of the standard.

Public sector organizations must:

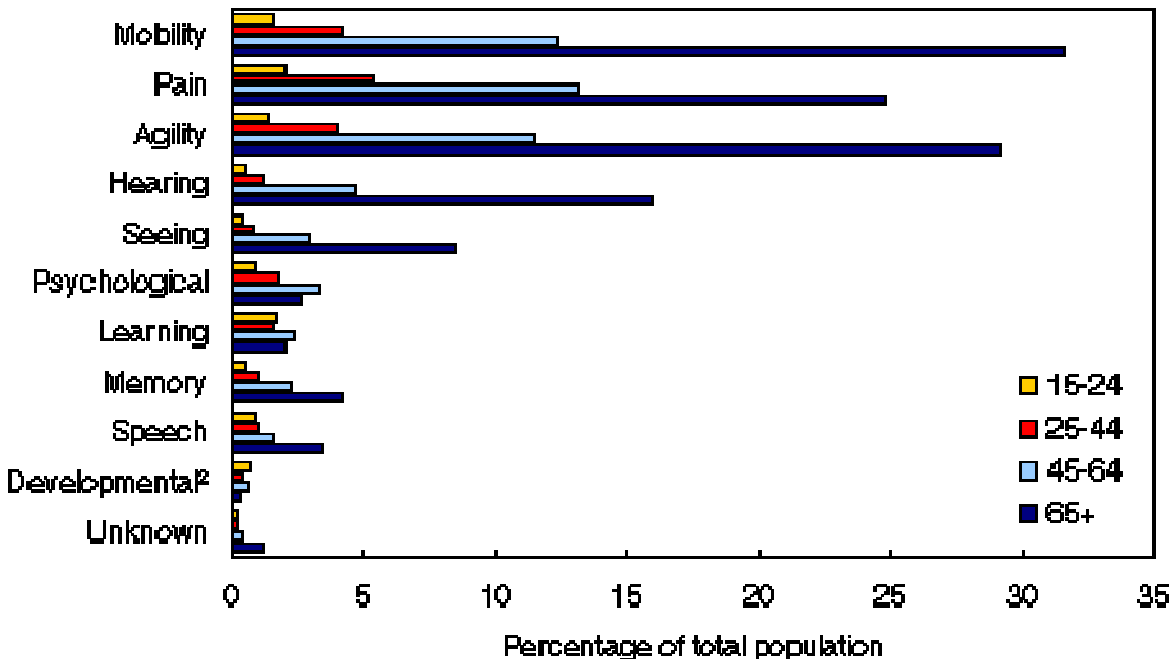
- Comply with the standard by January 1, 2010, and
- File their first accessibility report by March 31, 2010.

The [customer service standard](#) is part of [Ontario's plan](#) to make the province accessible for people with disabilities by 2025. The province's private sector will need to meet these requirements by 2012.

Did You Know?

- More than 1.85 million Ontarians have a disability and this number is quickly rising as the population ages.
- Beginning in 2011, the aging of the population will accelerate over the next three decades with the number of seniors in Canada projected to increase from 4.2 million to 9.8 million between 2005 and 2036, representing 13.2% and 24.5% of the total population, respectively.
- Population aging is projected to continue between 2036 and 2056, but at a slower pace, increasing from 9.8 million to 11.5 million, forming 27.2% of Canada's population in 2056.
- After age 65, about one in three Canadians has developed a disability and the likelihood continues to increase with age. (A disability can be a physical, mental or health condition.) By 2026, it is projected that there will be over three million people with disabilities over 65 years of age — almost double the 1.6 million reported in 2001 and outnumbering those with disabilities aged 25 to 64.
- Mobility problems are the type of disability most often reported by adults aged 15 and over. In 2001, nearly 2.5 million or 10.5% of Canadians had difficulty walking, climbing stairs, carrying an object for a short distance, standing in line for 20 minutes or moving about from one room to another. For all age groups, women were more likely to have mobility problems than men. Indeed, among adults aged 15 and over, there was a significant difference in the overall proportion of women (12.2%) and men (8.6%) with a mobility-related disability.
- Also with respect to motor skills, activity limitations related to agility affect a substantial number of persons aged 15 and over. In all, 2.3 million or 9.7% of adults reported having difficulty with everyday activities that require these skills, such as bending down to pick up an object, getting dressed or undressed, or cutting one's food.
- Based on the provincial disability rate of 16% and the 2001 Census data, the Peterborough area had an estimated 20,000 to 33,600 persons with disabilities aged 15 and over.

Prevalence of disability among adults aged 15 years and over, by type of disability and age, Canada, 2001



¹ The Canada total excludes the Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut. The sum of the values for each category may differ from the total due to rounding.

² For the type of disability "Developmental", the data should be used with caution.

Source: Statistics Canada, Participation and Activity Limitation Survey, 2001.

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