



# Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

Making your purchases more accessible



Organizations consider many things when making a purchasing decision, including quality, cost and environmental impact. Adding accessibility to that list can make your organization more welcoming to both customers and employees.

# Requirements & deadlines

**Under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act:**

- Public sector organizations are required to **incorporate** accessibility when they make purchasing decisions. This guide will help you.
- All other organizations must **consider** accessibility when designing or buying self-service kiosks. The appendix will help you.

The requirements are phased in over time, to give smaller organizations and private companies time to prepare.

	Government of Ontario	Public sector organizations		Private sector and non-profit organizations	
		50+ employees	1-49 employees	50+ employees	1-49 employees
Accessible procurement	2012	2013	2014	N/A	N/A
Self service kiosks	2013	2013	2014	2014	2015

\* Requirements come into effect on January 1 of each year

**For more on what you need to do, read:**

- [Incorporate accessibility when procuring goods, services and facilities](#)
- [Making self service kiosks accessible](#)

# Making accessibility a priority in your purchasing practices

Incorporating accessibility into your purchasing practices doesn't have to be complicated. For example, if you use requests for proposals, vendor of record arrangements or other purchasing practices, just add accessibility design and features as part of the criteria. These steps will help you.

## 1. Assess your purchasing practices

If you don't think about accessibility when you buy goods and services, you may (quite unintentionally!) purchase something that someone with a disability cannot use. Building accessibility into your purchasing policy and practices helps to prevent barriers. It also shows your customers, staff and suppliers that you are committed to accessibility.

Review your purchasing practices and talk to your staff to make sure they consider accessibility when making purchasing decisions. You may also want to add a commitment to accessibility to your purchasing policy.

### **Sample policy statement:**

When procuring goods, services and facilities, the Town of Anywhere will incorporate accessibility design criteria and features. Where applicable, procurement documents will specify the desired accessibility criteria to be met and provide guidelines for the evaluation of proposals in respect of those criteria. Where it is impractical for the Town to incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring specific goods, services or facilities, the Manager of Procurement will provide a written explanation, on request.

## 2. Set your accessibility criteria

The law doesn't specify what accessibility criteria to use when purchasing products and services. Every organization and situation is different; so the law is flexible to help you buy what meets the needs of your organization, employees and customers.

Think about any barriers the product or service might present for people with different types of disabilities and how you can avoid them. Consider general principles of accessibility, such as:

- **Equitable:** can someone with a disability use the good, service or facility as quickly and easily as a person without a disability? For example, if you're hiring a web developer to build a website for your organization, will someone who is blind and using text-to-speech software be able to access the site?
- **Adaptable Flexible:** does the good or service accommodate a wide range of individual preferences and abilities? can a user configure the item to meet their specific needs and preferences and will it work with common assistive technologies? For example, you want to provide training to your staff – can the training be provided in a variety of formats if necessary?
- **Size and Space for Approach and Use:** Can someone - regardless of their body size, posture, or mobility - approach, reach, manipulate and use the good or facility. For example, you've purchased an accessible picnic table, but have you ensured that someone in a wheelchair can access it?
- **User-friendly:** Are the instructions perceptible and intuitive? Can someone with limited physical strength use the good? If someone makes a mistake while using the good, are the adverse consequences minimal?

### **Example:**

When purchasing new computer monitors, Jonas required the monitors to allow users to adjust the colours and contrast, making them more accessible to people with vision loss. He also required the monitors to allow users to identify the buttons by feel and operate them with one hand with minimal force. This assists individuals with both vision and mobility limitations. Finally, he asked vendors to make sure their instructions were available in accessible formats.

Here are some accessibility criteria to consider with different types of purchases:

<b>Type of purchase</b>	<b>Criteria to consider</b>
Goods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Can the good be used by someone:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• in a seated position</li><li>• using one hand, with limited upper body strength, or limited fine motor skills</li><li>• with vision loss or low vision</li><li>• with hearing loss</li></ul></li><li>• Does the product meet ergonomic standards and can it be customized to meet a variety of needs?</li><li>• Are support materials, such as manuals, training or service calls, available in accessible formats at no additional charge?</li></ul>
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Does the firm provide accessible customer service, as required under the Customer Service Standard?</li><li>• Can the service provider accommodate the needs of people of all abilities? For example, if you're hiring someone to conduct research, do their surveys and interviews accommodate people with different types of disabilities?</li><li>• Will the company use accessible signage, audio and/or print materials? For example, if you're hiring an event coordinator, will they use high contrast signage for the event?</li></ul>
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Can someone using a mobility aid, like a wheelchair or walker, get around the facility?</li><li>• Are signs placed at an accessible height?</li><li>• Does the facility have emergency procedures to assist people with disabilities?</li></ul>

Accessibility criteria for self-service kiosks are included as an appendix, and the websites at the end of this guide can help you identify accessibility criteria for purchasing technology, office equipment and services.

**Example:**

Omar's business is booming, and he's opening a new office downtown. When sourcing possible locations, Omar looks for a visible alarm system to alert people with hearing loss, and elevator buttons that use raised lettering for people who are blind.

### 3. Include accessibility in your tender

If you are writing a request for proposal, add your accessibility criteria to the tender, along with any specific features you're looking for. Don't forget to include accessibility requirements in your evaluation process; so if you score bids on cost, quality and timeliness, give points for accessibility too.

**Example:**

When hiring a consultant to conduct staff training, Linda interviews the vendors on how they would accommodate the needs of people with different disabilities in their presentations. She also scores them on their ability to provide training materials in accessible formats.

# What if I can't find an accessible option?

If you can't find a good, service or facility that meets your needs, look for ways to make it more accessible. If someone asks, you must explain why the option you chose isn't accessible.

## **Example:**

Santosh is purchasing a new printer for the office, but the accessible version is not compatible with his office computer network. So he buys a printer that works with their systems, but puts it on a lower table to make it more accessible to people in wheelchairs. He makes a note that, when it's time to buy new computers, he should make sure they are compatible with other accessible technologies.

# Where to find more information

- Learn more about the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and find free tools and templates at [Ontario.ca/AccessON](http://Ontario.ca/AccessON).
- To learn how to prevent barriers to accessibility in a wide range of goods, services and facilities, visit [ontario.ca/pp30](http://ontario.ca/pp30).
- Visit [www.apt.gc.ca](http://www.apt.gc.ca) for an Accessible Procurement Toolkit that helps organizations purchase accessible information and communications products.
- The Accessibility Assistant features accessibility criteria for a wide range of products at [http://accessibility.gtri.gatech.edu/assistant/assistant\\_home.php](http://accessibility.gtri.gatech.edu/assistant/assistant_home.php).
- Incorporate accessibility criteria in all stages of your procurement practices, including writing and assessing tenders at [www.universaldesign.ie/useandapply/ict/itprocurementtoolkit](http://www.universaldesign.ie/useandapply/ict/itprocurementtoolkit).

**please note:** This guide is not legal advice. If you require assistance in interpreting the legislation or the regulation, please contact your legal adviser. This guide has been created to help you understand the legislation and/or regulation and does not replace the official version of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, Ontario Regulation 191/11 and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). If there is any conflict between this guide and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation or the AODA, the regulation and the AODA are the final authorities.

This guide is protected by Crown copyright, which is held by the Queen's Printer for Ontario. It may be used for non-commercial, not-for-profit purposes only in meeting the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation 191/11.

This document is available in an alternate format on request    ISBN 978-1-4435-9949-8 (Print)  
Ce document est également disponible en français.            ISBN 978-1-4435-9947-4 (PDF)  
© Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2012                                    ISBN 978-1-4435-9948-1 (HTML)



# Appendix

## Accessible self-service kiosks

Interactive electronic kiosks are everywhere – from scanners used to check prices, to ticket vending machines and grocery checkout stations. Accessibility features make kiosks easy for everyone to use, not just people with disabilities. For example, a self-service checkout that “beeps” when it reads a barcode helps customers scan items faster – including customers who can’t read the display screen.

Here are some tips to help you design or purchase an accessible kiosk.

### **User controls**

- Controls should be visible whether someone is standing or sitting.
- Make controls easy to use with one hand, without a lot of force, and without having to grasp tightly, pinch or twist.
- Avoid steps, bins or signage that could block someone with a walker or wheelchair.

### **Display screens**

- Use high contrast colours. Try a dark blue and matte white, black and white or yellow and black.
- Avoid flashing images and limit flashes to no more than three times in one second.
- Screens should be bright enough to be read under different types of lighting.
- Use a material that isn’t reflective and position the screen to minimize reflections (from sunlight or overhead lights).
- Make sure touch screens work with prosthetic limbs and pointing devices.

## Pin pads

- Use a telephone style pin pad (with 1 in the top left). The 5 should be in the centre and marked with a raised dot and the OK/Enter button should be in the lower right corner.
- Make sure there is space between the keys and that the pad's edges are clearly defined.
- Pin pads should be angled (not flat) to accommodate users whether they are standing or sitting.
- Keys should have a low glare surface (sandblasted aluminum or stainless steel are good options).

## Card readers

- Make the card slot easy to find by highlighting it with strong colours or an indicator light.
- If it's a swipe reader, position it vertically and let users swipe up or down. Using a two-headed swipe reader is best, as it doesn't matter which way the card's stripe is facing.
- If needed, use a tactile illustration to show how to insert the card.
- Let users know their card was accepted (or rejected) with both audible and visible feedback.

## Scanners

- Users should be able to identify the scan area by touch.
- Handheld scanners should have a cradle that allows customers to move the product past the scanner without having to pinch, twist or grasp the scanner tightly.
- Light from the scanner must not shine in the user's eyes.
- Confirm successful scans with both audible and visible feedback.

## Instructions

- Instructions should be available in both a visual and audio format. Allow users to turn the audio off and/or include an earphone jack if your instructions reveal personal information.
- Use mid-frequency tones since some people can't hear high- or low-pitched sounds.
- Avoid acronyms, abbreviations and jargon. Make instructions simple and easy for all users to understand, including people with learning or cognitive disabilities.
- Use sans serif fonts and make sure it's easy to tell characters apart (e.g. X from K, 1 from l, O from Q, U from V).
- Don't rely on colour alone to guide users (e.g. don't say 'touch the green square'). Use descriptive text or icons as well.
- Avoid time limits if you can; otherwise warn users when the deadline approaches and let them extend it.