

**A Hamilton Conference Information Piece**  
**Re: Developing Congregational Guides to Accessibility**

**ONTARIO GOVERNMENT: MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES (MCSS)**  
**ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT 2005 (AODA)**

**ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE**  
**ONTARIO REGULATION 429/07**

**WHY?**

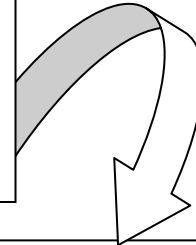
- The purpose of the accessibility standards is to move organizations (including churches) in Ontario forward on accessibility.

**WHEN?**

- The deadline for compliance with this standard for churches is January 1, 2012.

**WHAT?**

- The customer service standard is the first standard developed under this Act
- Each church will be required to address how it will meet each of 11 requirements.
  - These 11 requirements are summarized on the reverse side of this flyer



*Let's see this task  
as another  
opportunity for us  
to continue to  
make our churches  
welcoming!*

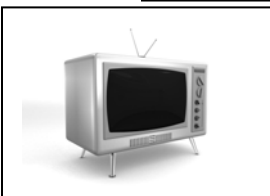
**➤ WHAT DOES "CUSTOMER SERVICE" REFER TO IN A CHURCH CONTEXT?**

(This information was in a General Council e-mail document in December 2009)

- This term is understood as our interaction with those who come through our doors – parishioners, community ministry participants, campers, students, seniors, and so on.
- It may also include how we interact with those who are seeking religious services – weddings, funerals, baptisms.

**HOW?**

- How will Conference support individual congregations?
  - Hamilton Conference is committed to creating a template for congregational use in developing their own "Guide to Accessibility" This will take place during the next 6 months. *Contact person: Judith Johnson, Conference Staff*
  - Hamilton Conference will discuss with Presbytery Executives how to support the training for requirements 9 and 10.



- In the meantime, you may want to set aside 45 minutes and watch the training video provided by the Ontario government. It is available at: [www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/mcss/serve-ability/splash.html](http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/mcss/serve-ability/splash.html)

## THE 11 REQUIREMENTS (abbreviated)

(A full copy of the Guide to Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) can be downloaded from the Hamilton Conference website [www.hamconf.org](http://www.hamconf.org))

1. Establish policies, practices and procedures on providing goods and services to people with disabilities. What are policies, practices and procedures?
  - a. Policies – what you intend to do, including any rules for staff.
  - b. Procedures – how you will go about doing the policies; the steps staff and volunteers are expected to take.
  - c. Practices – what you actually do on a day-to-day basis, including how you offer and deliver the services.
2. Use reasonable efforts to ensure that these policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the 4 core principles:
  - a. Independence
  - b. Dignity
  - c. Integration
  - d. Equality of opportunity
3. Set a policy both on allowing people to use their own personal assistive devices and on any measures your church offers to enable people to access your goods and services.
4. Communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account his/her disability.
5. Allow persons with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dog or service dog unless the animal is excluded by other law. If excluded by other law, use other measures to provide services to the person with a disability.
6. Permit persons with disabilities who use a support person to bring that person with them.
7. When admission fees are charged, provide notice ahead of time on what admission, if any, would be charged for a support person of a person with a disability.
8. Provide notice when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on are temporarily disrupted.
9. Train staff, volunteers, and any other people who interact on your behalf with persons with disabilities.
10. Train staff, volunteers, and any other people who are involved in developing your policies, practices and procedures on the topics included in the customer service standard.
11. Establish a process for feedback and your response to the feedback.