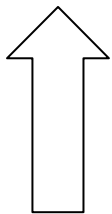
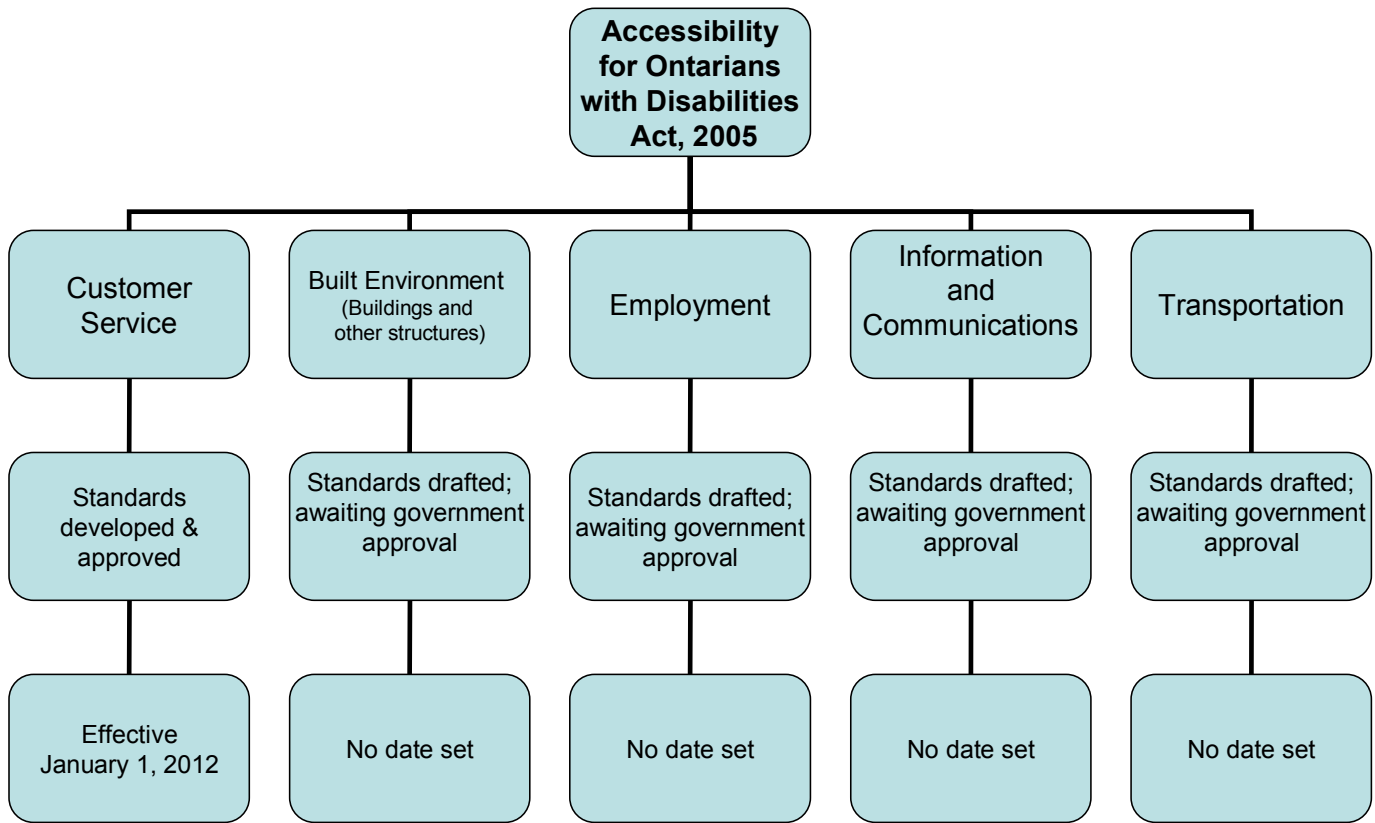




# WELCOMING COMMUNITIES

## Components of the Accessibility Act



**ONLY  
COMPONENT  
NEEDING  
ADDRESSING  
RIGHT  
NOW**

In early October 2010, a copy of the document "Writing Your Own Policy Statement: Accessibility Standards for Customer Service" will be sent to the chair of the Board/Council in every Pastoral Charge. This document includes a template for creating your own policy statement.

## Accessibility for Ontarians Act, 2005

### The Big Picture

On June 13, 2005, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 came into being replacing the Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2001. The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 calls on the business community, public sector, not-for-profit sector, and people with disabilities or their representatives to develop, implement and enforce mandatory accessibility standards.

Accessibility standards are the rules that businesses and organizations in Ontario will have to follow to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility. The first standard to come into effect is the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service. By January 1, 2012, all sectors will be required to have implemented the Customer Service standards.

Other standards are also being developed in the areas of:

- built environment (buildings and other structures)
- employment
- information and communications
- transportation.

These standards were available for public review in 2009 and are now undergoing revisions before being sent for approval and being passed into law. The goal is for Ontario to be totally accessible by the year 2025.

#### **Customer Service**

Date for churches: January 1, 2012

Already in place, the standard states what businesses and other organizations in Ontario must do to provide their goods and services in ways that are accessible to people with disabilities.

The legal requirements of the accessibility standards for customer service are set out in two Ontario Regulations

- Ontario Regulation 429/07 which states the requirements of the customer service standard
- Ontario Regulation 430/07 which exempts organizations that have fewer than 20 employees (other than designated public sector organizations) from certain documentation requirements of the standard.

#### **Built Environment**

No date set

The goal of the proposed standard is to break down barriers in buildings and other structures for people with disabilities by proposing requirements in areas such as:

- entrances, doorways and ramps
- parking spaces
- signs and displays
- recreation, such as parks and trails.

#### **Employment**

No date set

The goal of the proposed standard is to help employers create equal employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

The proposed standard:

- sets out specific requirements for the recruitment, retention and accommodation of people with disabilities, and
- applies to all organizations in Ontario with at least one employee.

#### **Information and Communications**

No date set

The proposed standard outlines how businesses and organizations may be required to create, provide and receive information and communications in ways that are accessible for people with disabilities.

#### **Transportation**

No date set

This standard is the only one that is sector specific, that is, it relates specifically to modes of transportation that come under the jurisdiction of provincial and municipal governments.

(Reference: Ministry of Community and Social Services)

(Provided by Bev Oag, Duty of Care and Incorporated Ministries, Program Coordinator, General Council)