

In a Flash



November 22, 2016

Reminder: New AODA Accessibility Requirements for Small Employers Take Effect January 1, 2017

As of January 1, 2017, Ontario businesses and not-for-profit organizations with fewer than 50 employees (broadly defined) must comply with new accessibility requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* ("AODA").

Significant highlights include:

1. **Hiring** - Employers must notify their employees and the public that they will accommodate the needs of people with disabilities in the hiring process.
2. **Accessible Workplace Information** – All workplace information, including emergency information, job descriptions, employment manuals, and health and safety information must be provided to employees in an accessible form, if requested.
3. **Talent and Performance Management** – Existing performance management or career development processes must be modified to ensure the needs of employees with disabilities are considered when holding performance reviews (either formal or informal) and when promoting or moving employees to a new job.
4. **Communicate Accessibility Policies** – Employees must be informed about the organization's policies for supporting individuals with disabilities.

All Ontario employers must continue to meet the AODA accessibility requirements currently in effect. This includes the provision of accessible customer service and employment, and regular reporting obligations, where applicable.

Effective January 1, 2016, Ontario employers with 50+ employees were required to provide accessible human resources practices and public information for employees and prospective employees. Large employers must also have documented processes in place for:

- Individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities; and
- Returning employees to work following a disability-related absence.

If you have any questions about ensuring compliance with the requirements of the AODA, please do not hesitate to contact a [Mathews Dinsdale lawyer](#).

For more information on new developments in Workplace Law, please refer to our [website](#).

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