



Strides Toronto
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA)
Multi-year Accessibility Plan
2021-2026

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Introduction and Statement of Commitment

In 2020, Aisling Discoveries Child and Family Centre and East Metro Youth Services amalgamated to form Strides Toronto, a multi-service agency addressing the needs of children, youth, their parents, and families. Strides Toronto is located in east Toronto and our services are predominately provided in the communities of East York and Scarborough.

Strides Toronto is committed to meeting the legislation, expectations, intent and spirit of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act, 2005 (the “AODA”) and related Regulations, as well as ensuring that persons with disabilities have equal opportunity to benefit from programs and services offered at the organization. Programs and services will be delivered in a manner that considers, respects, supports, and promotes the independence, dignity, and integration of persons with disabilities.

In accordance with our organizational obligations under the AODA, Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (*O. Reg. 191/11, s. 4 (1) (2)*), Strides Toronto has prepared this multi-year plan which contains the deliverables and activities that we’ve completed and also that we will continue to work on over the next 3 to 5 years. The plan also outlines strategies for preventing and removing barriers to accessibility, meeting the requirements set out in the Regulations, and highlights some of the Organization’s accomplishments to date related to accessibility.

In accordance with the IASR, Strides Toronto’s Multi-Year Plan will be reviewed and updated at least once every five years and be posted on our website: www.stridestoronto.ca



AODA Legislation

The AODA was passed by the Ontario legislature for the purpose of recognizing the history of discrimination against persons with disabilities in Ontario and benefiting all Ontarians by, among other goals, developing, implementing, and enforcing certain accessibility standards. To date, accessibility standards have been developing in the following areas:

- Customer Service
- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Transportation
- The Built Environment

Two Regulations have been established under the AODA, being the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, O Reg 429/07 (the “Customer Service Standard”) and the Integrated Accessibility Standards, O Reg191/11 (the “Integrated Standards” and, collectively with the Customer Service Standard, the “Regulations”).

The AODA Standards are part of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR). The IASR includes, in addition to requirements specific to each standard, the following general requirements:

- Provide training to staff and volunteers
 - Develop an accessibility policy
 - Create a multi-year accessibility plan and update it every five years
 - Consider accessibility in procurement
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The requirements under the Customer Service Standard came into force on January 1, 2012. Some of the accessibility standards under the Integrated Standards create requirements starting in 2012, while the remaining requirements are being phased in over time until 2021. Detailed information about the due date for each requirement is included in this Accessibility Plan.

This document is available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact Human Resources at hr@stridestoronto.ca if you have any questions or concerns.

Respect and Excellence are at the core of Strides Toronto values, and they are only possible through providing excellent customer service to our clients, funders, contributors and staff. This includes meeting and exceeding the needs of the diverse communities that Strides serves, including clients/participants with disabilities. This policy ensures the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) 2005, are being upheld by Strides Toronto.

Disability as defined by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and the Ontario Human Rights Code, refers to:

- *Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;*
 - *A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability.*
 - *A learning disability, or dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;*
 - *A mental disorder; or*
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- *An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.*

Strides will make every reasonable effort to ensure that our policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity by following our Multi-Year Accessibility Plan principles serve to guide Strides Toronto in actions, decision-making and service approaches pertaining to the delivery of Strides Toronto. The 2021-2026 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) outlines goals and initiatives that reaffirm Strides Toronto commitment in creating and promoting an accessible organization.

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Guiding Principles:

- **Customer Service**

At Strides Toronto we:

- Embed and strengthen the focus on accessibility within the delivery of excellent customer service by ensuring the organization is up to date with customer service guides that maintain the highest standards in accessible customer service.
 - Continue to evaluate programs and services to ensure inclusion and equitable participation of employees, clients and students with disabilities.
 - Formalize and implement accessibility requirements to ensure all consultation program and activities are accessible and inclusive.
 - Ensure people with disabilities receive goods and services of the same quality and within the same timeline as others and benefit equally from customer service initiatives.
 - Provide employees with access to tools, resources, policies and procedures to support accessible customer service.
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- **Information Communications**

Strides Toronto will:

- Take a universal approach that recognizes that accessibility solutions may need to address multiple barriers and that a single solution might not meet the accessibility needs of everyone.
- Investigate technologies, products and services that will improve accessibility for Strides Toronto employees, clients and contactors with disabilities.
- Continue to notify customers and employees about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.
- Continue to ensure that employees understand the accommodation request process, including the requirement to arrange for accessible formats and communication supports.
- Develop and implement accessible information, communication and technology guidelines and standards to ensure the organization is providing clear, accessible, appropriate and timely information and communication.
- Regularly review compliance and usability best practices in order to identify ways to improve accessibility in information, communications and technology.
- Ensure employees have the tools and resources to develop and provide information in accessible formats.
- Provide employees, clients and visitors with disabilities with equal access to information through communication supports, alternate formats, accessible websites and digital content.

- **Employment:**

Strides Toronto will:

- Ensure all employees students and volunteers continue to complete mandatory AODA and accessibility training appropriate to the person's role in a variety of formats
- Record and track employee learning and development activities specifically related to AODA and accessibility requirements



- Ensure that all training, activities, course materials and learning approaches are developed and delivered in accessible formats
 - Enhance knowledge and skills of employees to ensure compliance with policies, Human Rights legislation, AODA and other related legislations.
 - Review people services policies and procedures to identify, prevent and remove barriers to employment and development opportunities. This review will also serve to ensure ongoing compliance with legislation
 - Continue the practice of preparing individualized accommodation and emergency response plans for employees with disabilities or requiring accommodation
- **Transportation**
 - Strides services locations are accessible to its employees and clients regardless of the method of transportation utilized.
- **The Built Environment**

Strides Toronto will:

 - Create permanent inclusive solutions ensuring accessibility for persons with disabilities is not an afterthought
 - Ensure accommodation processes incorporate an approach that recognizes and addresses accessibility barriers

Strides Toronto is an organization which fosters a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion, that values and includes employees and clients with disabilities. Strides Toronto is committed in developing, maintaining and monitoring accessibility guidelines and tools to support implementation and AODA compliance assurance. Employees have the support and tools needed to actively identify, prevent and remove accessibility barriers.



AODA, Customer Service Standard (O. Reg. 429/07)

2021-2026					
Customer Service Standard	Activities	Responsibility	Status		
			Complete	In Progress	Ongoing
<p>s. 4 Use of service animals and support persons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish policies, practices and procedures around a person with a disability being accompanied by a service animal or support person. Create document describing policies, practices and procedures; provide upon request. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statement on the use of service animals and Support persons is included in AODA Policy Continued commitment to communicating this obligation. A description of the policies, practices and procedure will be provided upon request. 	<p>Senior Human Resources Generalist</p>	X		
<p>s. 5 Notice of temporary disruptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide public notice of disruption in facilities or services by posting on premises or on website. Include in notice reason for disruption, anticipated duration, and description of alternatives, if available. Create a document describing steps to be taken for temporary disruptions; provide upon request. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment to AODA and CSS was written into Strides Toronto policy. Information on steps to be taken written into Strides Toronto policy. Communication to all service areas on this obligation was sent. Commitment to post public notices on premises and to communicate with visitors prior to their arrival. Will create a document with steps to be taken in the event of a temporary 	<p>Manager, Office and Facilities</p>		X	

2021-2026

Customer Service Standard	Activities	Responsibility	Status		
			Complete	In Progress	Ongoing
<p>s. 8 Notice of availability of documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notify customers that the documents covered by this regulation are available upon request by posting conspicuously on premises, website or other reasonable method. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a notice on the website indicating the availability of all documents upon request. 	<p>Manager, Office and Facilities</p>	X		
<p>s. 9 Format of documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alternate format of documents covered by this regulation must take into account person's disability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commitment from Strides Toronto to ensure all material developed is in an accessible format upon request. 	<p>Manager, Office and Facilities</p>	X		



AODA, Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, (O. Reg. 191/11)

2021-2026

Information & Communication Standards	Activities	Responsibility	Status		
			Complete	In Progress	Ongoing
<p>s.3 Establishment of Accessibility Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish polices, practices and procedures on providing goods or services to persons with disabilities according to principles set out in regulation. Create document describing policies, procedures, and practices; provide upon request in alternative format. <p>s. 3 (3b)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make documents publicly available and provide them in an accessible format upon request. <p>s. 3 (4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that considers their disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legacy Aisling Discoveries policy written and approved. Legacy East Metro Youth Services policy written and approved. Communicated policy to all staff and supervisors/ manager. Increased communication strategy organization-wide re: AODA and CSS obligations. New AODA policy for Strides Toronto currently being developed. Documents will be provided in an accessible format upon request. Communication methods will take an individuals disability into account. 	<p>Human Resources Director</p>		X	

<p>s.4 Accessibility Plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create multi-year plan (5 years) outlining strategic direction to prevent and remove barriers, post plan, and make accessible. • Plans be reviewed in consultation with persons with disabilities. • Prepare annual status report on the progress taken, post status report and make accessible. • Consult with persons with disabilities or an accessibility advisory committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-year AODA plan prepared. • Prepare status report of all elements of plan that are completed and or are being implemented. • Review plans with those with disabilities. 	<p>Senior Human Resources Generalist & Human Resources Administrative Assistant</p>		<p>X</p>	
<p>s. 5 Procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate accessibility criteria and features; if not possible, provide explanation upon request. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All purchases consider accessibility criteria and features. 	<p>Manager, Office and Facilities</p>	<p>X</p>		
<p>s. 6 Self-serve kiosks</p> <p>Incorporate accessibility features when designing, procuring or acquiring self-serve kiosks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A 	<p>N/A</p>	<p>X</p>		

<p>s. 7 Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train all employees, volunteers, persons developing policies, and all others providing goods, services, or facilities on behalf of the organization on requirements of CSS and IASR standards and on OHRC as it pertains to disabilities. • Ensure training on standards and OHRC is appropriate to duties of employees, volunteers, and others. • Provide ongoing training in respect to any changes. • Keep record of training, dates trained, number trained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training provided to all employees, volunteers, persons developing policies to meet obligation. • Develop a strategy to communicate the training requirements to all employees and volunteers. • Ensure training available to employees and volunteers in an accessible format as required. • Completion of required training is tracked. • Develop a strategy to ensure ongoing compliance of all Strides Toronto employees and volunteers. 	<p>Human Resources Department</p>		<p>X</p>	
<p>s.11 Feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure feedback processes are accessible by providing accessible formats or arranging for communication supports, upon request. • Notify public about availability of accessible formats and communication supports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback process created. The public can provide feedback and/or seek more information by contacting Strides Toronto at contactus@stridestoronto.ca • Contact information is posted on the Strides Toronto website • There is a suggestion box available at all Strides Toronto sites with reception area in which clients and visitors are welcome to utilize to provide feedback. • Ensure all clients, family members, volunteers, and community members are advised of feedback process. 	<p>Manager, Office and Facilities</p>	<p>X</p>		

<p>s. 12 Accessible formats and communication supports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange for accessible formats and communication supports (upon request, in a timely manner, at cost that is no more than regular charge to others). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TTY service is available, to all contributors who require it. • Accessible formats and communication supports are available. 	<p>Manager, Office and Facilities</p>		<p>X</p>	
<p>s. 13 Emergency and public safety information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make information available to public in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, upon request. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will provide an individual response plan as requested by visitors to accommodate disabilities. 	<p>Senior Human Resources Generalist</p>	<p>X</p>		
<p>s.14 Accessible Website and Web Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designated public sector organizations shall make their internet websites and web content conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)2.0, initially at Level A and increasing to Level AA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strides Toronto website and web content, web applications - Level AA compliant. 	<p>Senior Human Resources Generalist & Manager, IT Services</p>	<p>X</p>		

<p>s. 15 Education and training resources and materials, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide educational or training resources or materials in an accessible format, upon request. • Procure or obtain accessible or conversion-ready electronic format of training resources or material where available. <p>Arrange to provide comparable if cannot be procured.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement process will be incorporated into revised AODA policy. • Resources will be purchased upon request. • Education and training resources will be provided upon request in an accessible format. 	<p>Manager, Office and Facilities, Senior Human Resources Generalist</p>	<p>X</p>		
<p>s. 18 Educational libraries: print-based resources</p> <p>Provide, procure or acquire accessible or conversion-ready format of print-based resources (upon request). (Note 1: Special collections and archival material are exempt).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print-based resources will be made available in alternate formats as required. 	<p>Manager, Office and Facilities</p>			<p>X</p>
<p>s.22, 23, 24 Recruitment General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify applicants about the availability of accommodation. • Notify job applicants selected in hiring process that accommodations are available upon request in relation to material or processes to be used. • Consult with the applicant or arrange to provide the accommodation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A workplace accommodation process is in place. • Newly hired employees are informed of availability of accommodations and process for making requests. • Accommodation statements are included on all Strides Toronto job postings. • All candidates are encouraged to share needs for accommodation with the Human Resources Administrative Assistant during the recruitment process. • Accommodations can be made upon request. 	<p>Human Resources Associate & Human Resources Administrative Assistant</p>	<p>X</p>		

<p>s. 25, 26, 28 Employee accommodation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform employees of policies used to support employees with disabilities, including policies on providing job accommodation. • Develop a written process for developing documented individual accommodation plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodation policies are in place and practiced for legacy organization's • Strides Toronto job accommodation policy is currently being developed. • Employees are informed of process and encouraged to report any accommodation needs to Human Resources. • Written process for developing documented individual accommodation plans has been developed. 	<p>Senior Human Resources Generalist</p>	<p>X</p>		
<p>s.27 Workplace Emergency Response Information</p> <p>To develop a Workplace Emergency Response plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When an employee moves to a different location in the organization • When an employee's overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed • When the employer reviews its general emergency response policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All accommodation plans are reviewed with each employee on an annual/regular basis. • Accommodation needs are considered when employee moves to different location/position within the organization and in the event of a workplace emergency. 	<p>Senior Human Resources Generalist</p>	<p>X</p>		
<p>s.29 Return to Work Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop return to work process for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and/or injury and require accommodations in order to return to work. • Develop documentation process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strides Toronto Return to Work policy is currently being developed. • Return to work process has been developed and is currently being practiced from each Legacy organization. • Human Resources will work in collaboration with staff to ensure their safe and gradual return to work. • Accommodation plan/documentation created 	<p>Snior Human Resources Generalist</p>	<p>x</p>		

<p>s.30 Performance Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An employer that uses performance management in respect of its employees shall consider the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, when using its performance management process in respect of employees with disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration will be made for staff with accommodation plans in place during the performance management process. 	<p>Senior Human Resources Generalist & Supervisor</p>	<p>X</p>		
<p>s.32 Redeployment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop process to consider accommodation and accessibility needs that employees may have when redeploying them to other positions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration will be made for staff with accommodation plans in place when being redeployed to other positions. 	<p>Senior Human Resources Generalist</p>	<p>X</p>		