



Hewlett Packard
Enterprise

Hewlett Packard Enterprise Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2014-2021

Updated: June 23, 2020

The following plan is in relation to the requirements under Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) for large private sector organizations.



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Hewlett Packard Enterprise Canada Co. Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

The Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE) Canada Co. Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines strategies and actions to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities in HPE Canada Co.'s programs, services, and facilities therefore increasing accessibility. The plan also details our strategy for meeting Ontario's accessibility legislation, the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA).

The reference of HPE Canada Co. in this document includes in its current form and its predecessors (HP Canada, Hewlett-Packard Canada Co.).

Objectives of the Accessibility Plan

This 2014-2021 accessibility plan outlines the policies and actions that HPE Canada Co. has or will put in place to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.

This document describes the measures that HPE Canada Co. has taken or will take to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities. The 2014 - 2021 Accessibility Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the AODA, 2005 and the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11.

As part of our commitment to accessibility, it is HPE Canada Co.'s goal to implement the standards to help create accessible programs, services and a workplace that allows full participation of persons with disabilities.

In accordance with the standards, HPE Canada Co. will review and update our organization's plan at least every five years and post on our website for our employees and the public to access. During that time, we will highlight our organization's accomplishments to date.

The 2014 - 2021 Accessibility Plan includes:

- Initiatives that were completed up until the time of publication.
- Actions to be taken to implement the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11.
- Measures that HPE Canada Co. has taken or will be taking to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities.
- The monitoring process for the Accessibility Plan.
- The communication process for the Plan.

Description of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 is legislation designed to make Ontario barrier-free to people with disabilities by 2025. Businesses and organizations that provide goods and services to people in Ontario will have to meet certain accessibility standards in five areas: customer service, employment, information and communications, transportation and built environment.

With the introduction of AODA, the Province of Ontario created sets of standards in accessibility which will apply to both public and private sector organizations. The standards are:

- **Customer Service** - The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07) was passed in January, 2008. As a private sector organization, HPE Canada Co. met the requirements of this standard before the deadline of January 2013.
- **Information and Communication, Employment, and Transportation**, have been combined into the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR). The IASR came into effect July 1, 2011, with requirements that are to be phased in over time, which for HPE Canada Co. means implementing standards from 2012 to 2021. The areas are further explained below:

The Accessibility Standard for Information and Communications will help Ontario businesses and organizations make their information accessible for people with disabilities. Organizations are expected to:

- Make their websites and web content accessible according to the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0.
- Provide accessible formats and communication supports as quickly as possible and at no additional cost when a person with a disability asks for them.
- Make feedback processes accessible by providing accessible formats and communication supports when requested.
- Make public emergency information accessible when requested.

The Accessibility Standard for Employment will help Ontario businesses and organizations make accessibility a regular part of finding, hiring and supporting employees with disabilities. Organizations are expected to:

- Let job applicants know that recruitment and hiring processes will be modified to accommodate their disabilities, if requested.
 - Build the accessibility needs of employees into their human resources practices.
 - Create a written process for developing and documenting individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.
 - Help employees stay safe in an emergency by providing them with individualized emergency response information when necessary.
- **Built Environment** - These standards are designed to remove barriers applying to public spaces and buildings. The standard for the design of public spaces only applies to new construction and major changes to existing features. Enhancements to accessibility in buildings will happen at a later date through Ontario's Building Code, which governs new construction and renovations in buildings.

HPE Philosophy, Statement of Commitment and Product and Service Accessibility

HPE Philosophy

Consistent with our Corporate Objective for Commitment to Employees, Best Work Environment Policy, Global Harassment-Free Work Environment Policy, Global Non-Discrimination Policy, Accessibility Policy and Accessible Customer Service Standard Policy in Compliance with Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), it is the policy and practice of HPE Canada Co. that we treat customers, employees, contractors, suppliers, business partners, visitors and shareowners with fairness, dignity, respect and courtesy.

We also comply with all applicable national and local laws pertaining to non-discrimination and equal opportunity.

Organizational Statement of Commitment

HPE Canada Co. is committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and equal opportunity. We are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner, and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Product and Service Accessibility

HPE Canada Co. is committed to providing products and services that are accessible for people with disabilities. This commitment supports our company's diversity objectives and helps us ensure that the benefits of technology are available to all. This is part of our Accessibility Commitment.

HPE Canada Co.'s Accessibility Policy further outlines our commitment. Our accessibility goal is to design, produce, and market products and services that can effectively be used by everyone, including people with disabilities, either on a stand-alone basis or with appropriate assistive devices.

To achieve our goal, this Accessibility Policy establishes seven key objectives to guide our actions as a company. All HPE Canada managers and employees are expected to support these objectives and their implementation in accordance with their roles and responsibilities. HPE Canada Co. is committed to the following:

- Raising the level of awareness of accessibility issues within our company, and providing our employees with the training they need to design, produce, market and deliver accessible products and services.
- Developing accessibility guidelines for products and services, and holding product development groups accountable for implementing these guidelines where competitively, technically and economically feasible.
- Involving people with disabilities in the development of accessibility guidelines, and in the design and testing of products and services.
- Documenting accessibility features, and making information about our products and services publicly available in an accessible form.
- Establishing relationships with leading assistive technology and solution providers
- Supporting internal and external research and development that will improve the state-of-the-art of assistive technology relevant to our products and services.
- Supporting and contributing to industry standards and guidelines for accessibility.

The Hewlett Packard Enterprise Canada Co. Strategic Road Map to Accessibility

Completed Initiatives (2012-2016)

Accessible Customer Service Standard

- The project commenced in 2011, and appropriate parties were engaged to review meeting the requirements of AODA, particularly the first standard that came into effect, the Customer Service Standard.
- The HPE Canada Procurement Team was educated around AODA, and the HPE Supplier Accessibility Requirements website was updated to include AODA information.
- Our main vendors were provided with a letter from our Director of Procurement to advise them about AODA, and their obligations.
- The process to gather feedback and request information in an accessible format was implemented and posted on the internet for the public to access.
- AODA Customer Service Standard Training was implemented for all employees in Ontario.
- [HPE Canada Co. AODA Customer Service Standard Policy](#) was created and posted on the internet for the public to access.
- New employees were educated on AODA as part of the onboarding process, as well as the requirement to take the Customer Service Standard Training within 45 days of hire. Ongoing e-mails are provided to new hires to remind them to take the training.
- [The HPE Canada Co. AODA Website](#) was created with required materials and posted for the public.
- The AODA Customer Service Standard Certification was filed with the government via the online tool.
- There were refinements to the AODA Accessibility Policy to include the HPE Canada Co. Statement of Commitment, which was posted in December 2013.
- The HPE Accessible Customer Service Standard Policy was updated in 2016.

Accessible Emergency Information

- HPE Canada Co. will provide customers and clients with publicly available emergency information in an accessible way upon request. We also provide employees with disabilities with individualized emergency response information when necessary.

Kiosks

- HPE Canada Co. took steps to consider the needs of people with disabilities when designing, procuring, or acquiring self-service kiosks as outlined in the deadline requirements of January 1, 2014.
- Meetings and/or communications were conducted with the internal team who is responsible for HPE Kiosks, to educate on AODA kiosk requirements and actions required as a private sector employer. These communications included what clients, regardless of sector, may be seeking in going forward and have regard to accessible kiosks. The Accessibility office provides design requirements to the business team who is responsible for kiosks as part of their role. Under this requirement, "have regard to" means that organizations must consider what accessibility features they could build into their kiosks to best meet the needs of their customers and clients. Organizations should strive to include accessibility features where possible, and consider the accessibility needs, preferences and abilities of the widest range of users.
- At the end of 2015, HPE Canada Co. & its print division underwent a formal separation. Historically, it was the print division that had operated kiosks and we no longer operate self-service kiosks.

Integrated Accessibility Standard

Training

- In 2014, HPE Canada Co. provided training, appropriate to the duties, on the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in this Regulation (Reg. 191/11) and on the Human Rights Code as it pertain to persons with disabilities to all employees in Ontario, regardless of their role, and to their managers, regardless of where they were located in the world.
- New employees take the training within 45 days of hire.
- HPE Canada Co. worked the appropriate external contacts to utilize the training modules as provided via the Access Forward site and Ontario Human Rights Commission. We also worked with our internal Learning and Development, as well as Compliance organizations.

Information and Communication

- HPE Canada Co. where applicable and under AODA regulations will consult with people with disabilities to determine their information and communication needs.
- In 2012, an AODA Web Accessibility Core Team was established and meet on a regular basis (initially biweekly, now typically monthly or as required). A number of actions were completed including:
 - Consulting with an external web accessibility vendor around AODA and actions to be wholly compliant.
 - Review of previous internal audit data and implementing a remediation plan.
 - Conducting additional internal audits of various hp.com websites which included education around AODA legislation specifically around web accessibility.
 - Having an external web accessibility vendor conduct additional audits on our HPE Experience Branding which included actions to fix infractions with header/footer and pattern library.
 - Members of the Core Team engaging other web standards/compliance subject matter experts should related issues need addressing.

Accessible Websites and Web Content

As a large organization, HPE Canada Co. shall continue to monitor and remediate any non-conformance of our internet websites and web content to conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, initially at Level A and increasing to Level AA, and shall do so in accordance with the schedule set out below:

- By January 1, 2014, new internet websites and web content on those sites must conform with WCAG 2.0 Level A.

Regular meetings, follow up actions and audits will continue with AODA Web Accessibility Core Team to ensure monitoring and compliance to be WCAG 2.0 Level AA compliant.

Receiving and Responding to Feedback

As a large organization, by January 1, 2015, HPE Canada Co. ensured there was a process for receiving and responding to feedback, where not already met by the Customer Service Standard. We shall ensure that the processes are accessible to persons with disabilities by providing or arranging for the provision of accessible formats and communications supports, upon request. Nothing in the Information and Communication section detracts from the obligations imposed under section 7 of Ontario Regulation 429/07 (Accessibility Standards for Customer Service) made under the Act. O. Reg. 191/11, s. 11 (2).(3), which HPE Canada Co. already put in place for providing feedback. Additionally, through the Customer Service Standard, HPE Canada Co. has already notified the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports. Therefore, we have completed this action.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

As a large organization, by January 1, 2016, HPE Canada Co. shall upon request provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities, in a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs due to disability; and at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons. HPE Canada Co. shall consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support. HPE Canada Co. shall notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

Employment

HPE Canada Co. is committed to fair and accessible employment practices.

- Creation of this document, the first HPE Canada Accessibility Plan. This document will be reviewed annually and updated at least every 5 years and posted for the public to access.
- Review of existing HPE Policies that currently exist in the areas of non-discrimination, equal opportunities and other areas that could adversely impact a person with a disability.
- Working with appropriate internal parties to receive approval for the wording and to adopt an Organizational Statement of Commitment, as outlined in this plan and posted on the HPE internet site in December 2013.

The Employment Standard, under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, requires employers to provide for accessibility across all stages of the employment life cycle. By pro-actively removing barriers across the employment life cycle, employers can help to create workplaces that are accessible and allow employees to reach their full potential.

As a large public sector organization, HPE Canada Co. met the Employment Standard by January 1, 2016. The areas we have/will focus upon to ensure compliance include:

Recruitment

We will take steps to notify the public and employees that, when requested, HPE Canada Co. will accommodate people with disabilities during the recruitment and assessment processes and when people are hired.

Recruitment, General

HPE Canada Co. shall notify its employees and the public about the availability of accommodation for applicants with disabilities in its recruitment processes. The accommodation wording was updated in both the job postings as well as the offer letters

Recruitment, Assessment or Selection Process

During the recruitment process, HPE Canada Co. shall notify job applicants, when they are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process that accommodations are available upon request in relation to the materials or processes to be used. If a selected applicant requests an accommodation, the employer shall consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for the provision of a suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability.

Notice to Successful Applicants

HPE Canada Co. shall, when making offers of employment, notify the successful applicant of its policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

Informing Employees of Supports

HPE Canada Co. shall inform its employees of its policies used to support its employees with disabilities, including, but not limited to, policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability. HPE Canada Co. will also provide the information required under this section to new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment. In addition, HPE Canada Co. shall provide updated information to its employees whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees

In addition to its obligations under section 12, where an employee with a disability so requests it, HPE Canada Co. shall consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job and information that is generally available to employees in the workplace. HPE Canada Co. shall consult with the employee making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

Accommodation Plans

HPE Canada Co. has taken steps to develop and implement a process for developing individual accommodation plans and return-to-work policies for employees that have been absent due to a disability.

Workplace Emergency Response Information

HPE Canada Co. has already met the requirements of this section by January 1, 2012.

- Creation and communication of the HPE Canada Co. Employee Emergency Response Plan and Process for Employees with Disabilities. This was rolled out to all employees and managers in Canada, not just Ontario. This plan and process is posted on the Environment, Health & Safety (EHS) intranet site.
- Information regarding evacuation procedures are posted throughout HPE facilities and the EHS intranet site which includes contact information for Canada and what to do in the event of an emergency.
- Training is available for existing or new Fire Wardens and is conducted via on-demand training, which includes how to assist a person who requires aid in the event of an emergency.
- The Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Canadian lead has regular communication, as needed, with those who have identified as needing assistance (for example, to let them know of an upcoming fire drill).

Documented individual Accommodation Plans

HPE Canada Co. developed and has in place a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities and the means of providing the individual accommodation plan in a format that takes into account the employee's accessibility needs due to disability. The team is ensuring that the process, paperwork and documentation that is currently in place is reviewed to ensure HPE Canada Co. is compliant and modifications will be made as required.

Return to Work Process

In 2014, the Return to Work Process in compliance with AODA was updated by the benefits team to clearly outline the return to work and accommodation process and posted on our intranet site for employees to reference.

HPE Canada Co. currently works with an external party to administer the Long Term and Short Term disability process, including a return to work plan and what accommodations may be required. HPE Canada Co. has in place a return to work process for its employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work. In 2014, we worked to ensure the process is adequately documented and may do further changes. The return to work process outlines the steps HPE Canada Co. takes to facilitate the return to work of employees who were absent because their disability required them to be away from work; and use documented individual accommodation plans as part of the process.

Performance Management, Career Development and Redeployment Process

We will take appropriate steps to ensure the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities needs are taken into account in relation to our performance management, career development and redeployment processes.

Performance Management

HPE Canada Co. uses performance management in respect of its employees, the company shall take into account 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.

Career Development and Advancement

HPE Canada Co. provides career development and advancement to its employees, the company shall take into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities as well as any individual accommodation plans, when providing career development and advancement to its employees with disabilities. "Career development and advancement" includes providing additional responsibilities within an employee's current position and the movement of an employee from one job to another in an organization that may be higher in pay, provide greater responsibility or be at a higher level in the organization or any combination of them and, for both additional responsibilities and employee movement, is usually based on merit or seniority, or a combination of them. O. Reg. 191/11, s. 31 (2).

Redeployment

HPE Canada Co. does include redeployment as part of a Workforce Reduction (WFR) Process, however, it is a voluntary option made available to employees should they wish to continue to seek alternate jobs within the company during that time. When reviewing the definition in the regulations, HPE Canada Co. will take into account the accessibility needs of its employees with disabilities, as well as individual accommodation plans, when redeploying employees with disabilities. Note: "Redeployment" means the reassignment of employees to other departments or jobs within the organization as an alternative to layoff, when a particular job or department has been eliminated by the organization. HPE Canada Co. will engage the appropriate subject matter experts to ensure we meet the applicable regulations.

Targets and Actions 2017-2021

Accessible Customer Service Standard

- Ongoing training on Accessible Customer Service.
- HPE Accessible Customer Service Standard Policy was updated in 2020.

Integrated Accessibility Standards

- Ongoing training on IASR (General Requirements and AODA and Human Rights). We have other courses available if needed (for example: the Transportation Standard, the Design of Public Spaces & Information and Communications).
- To update and create Corporate Policies where required for requirements of IASR.
- Incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities.

Kiosks

HPE Canada has taken, and will continue to take steps to consider the needs of people with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks by January 1, 2014. Please see information under the “completed initiatives 2012-2016”. HPE shall have regard to the accessibility for persons with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks. At the present time, HPE has no kiosks.

Information and Communications

Accessible Websites and Web Content

By January 1, 2021, all internet websites and web content must conform with WCAG 2.0 Level AA, other than success criteria 1.2.4 Captions (Live), and success criteria 1.2.5 Audio Descriptions (Pre-recorded). O. Reg. 191/11, s. 14 (4).

Employment

HPE Canada has taken, and will continue to take steps to ensure we have fair & equitable hiring practices and that employee support practices are more accessible. Please see information under “completed initiatives 2012-2016.”

Built Environment - Design of Public Spaces

Whenever applicable, HPE Canada Co. will meet the Accessibility Standards for the Design of Public Spaces when building or making major modifications to public spaces. As per the regulation, public spaces include:

- Recreational trails/beach access routes.
- Outdoor public eating areas like rest stops or picnic areas.
- Outdoor play spaces, like playgrounds in provincial parks and local communities.
- Outdoor paths of travel, like sidewalks, ramps, stairs, curb ramps, rest areas and accessible pedestrian signals.
- Accessible off street parking.
- Service-related elements like service counters, fixed queuing lines and waiting areas.

HPE Canada Co. will put procedures in place to prevent service disruptions to its accessible parts of its public spaces. In the event of a service disruption, we will notify the public of the service disruption and alternatives available on the [HPE Canada Co. AODA website](#).

Other Accessibility Barriers

As HPE Canada Co. works through implementing the various activities under this multi-year plan, should barriers be identified that would impact people with disabilities, HPE Canada Co. will engage the appropriate parties and work to remove them in a timely manner.

Plan Consultation

Input on this Plan was received from various advisors, including Human Resources, Legal, the Product Accessibility Program Office, the AODA Officer and the Diversity and Inclusion Core Team. In addition, members of HPE's Disability Network Resource Group (DNRG) serve as consultants where applicable. This team is hereby known as the Integrated Accessibility Standards Project Team (IASPT).

The IASPT has reviewed the implementation details for the requirements of the Regulation, the review of past initiatives and this multi-year plan. They will continue to apply their professional experience to address the accessibility issues and any barriers identified.

The review and input on this Plan will provide the framework for the development of the next HPE Canada Co. Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

Review and Monitoring Process

Failure to comply with the AODA regulations can result in administrative penalties as outlined in Part V: *Compliance of the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11*.

With Human Resources approval of the Accessibility Plan, the AODA Officer or delegate(s) will monitor the progress made on the actions required in the Plan on a quarterly or more frequent basis. The AODA Officer will update the VP of Human Resources on the progress being made on the implementation of the Plan on an annual, or more frequent basis.

An updated report will be posted on the HPE Canada Co. AODA website at least once every 5 years at [HPE Canada Co. AODA Accessibility for Ontarians](#) to allow the public to access and be updated as to our progress.

Should legislative requirements change, priorities within the Accessibility Plan may also change, which will be reflected in the formal progress report.

Communication of the Accessibility Plan

Copies of this Plan will be made available on the HPE's website at [HPE Canada Co. AODA Accessibility for Ontarians](#) with updated versions and/or progress reports being posted as required.

Should alternate formats be required or should you have any questions about this Accessibility Plan, or wish to provide feedback on the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, please contact the HPE Canada Co. AODA Officer as noted below:

HPE Canada Co. AODA Officer

Mail:
5150 Spectrum Way, Suite 400
Mississauga, Ontario
L4W 5G2
Canada

Email: fieldhr_canada@hpe.com

All feedback will be kept in confidence and be used to improve the way we do business. The person who provided the feedback will receive a response outlining the actions taken, as deemed appropriate, if any.

Appendix – Additional Information about Types of Disabilities, Barriers as well as Myths and Realities about People with Disabilities

Disability Defined

- For purposes of [AODA](#) (as taken from the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005), “disability” means:
- 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 a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- a mental disorder, or
- an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997; (“handicap”).

Understanding Disabilities

Information below extracted from [Access Forward](#) and the [Ontario Human Rights Commission](#).

When you hear the word “disability”, what pops into your mind? Do you think of a person who uses a wheelchair? Or a person with a service animal? There are many kinds and degrees of disabilities. Being hard of hearing is different from being deaf. Having low vision is different from being legally blind.

A disability can happen to anyone at any time. Some people are born with a disability. For others, the disability happens because of an illness or an accident. Sometimes it's because the person is getting older.

See below for examples of various types of disabilities:

- Visual - Visual disabilities reduce a person's ability to see clearly.
- Hearing - There are many degrees of hearing loss. This includes a person with profound hearing loss (deaf), a person who has become deaf later in life (deafened) and a person who has some hearing loss (hard of hearing).
- Deaf-Blind - A person who is deaf-blind has a combined loss of vision and hearing
- Physical - There are many types and degrees of physical disabilities. Not all physical disabilities require a wheelchair.
- Speech or Language - Some people have problems communicating. It could be due to cerebral palsy, hearing loss or another condition.
- Mental Health - Mental health disabilities are not as visible as many other types of disabilities. Examples include a person with a mental illness, anxiety disorder or mood disorder.
- Intellectual or Developmental - These disabilities can mildly or profoundly limit their ability to learn, socialize and take care of their everyday needs.
- Learning - Learning disabilities are information processing disorders. They can affect how a person acquires, organizes, expresses, retains, understands or uses verbal or non-verbal information.

Barriers

Barriers are obstacles. Barriers to accessibility are obstacles that make it difficult — sometimes impossible — for people with disabilities to do the things most of us take for granted — things like going shopping, working, or taking public transit.

When we think of barriers to accessibility, most of us think of physical barriers — like a person who uses a wheelchair not being able to enter a public building because there is no ramp.

The fact is there are many kinds of barriers. Some are visible. Many are invisible.

Table 1. Barriers to Accessibility

Type of Barriers	Examples
Attitudinal barriers are those that discriminate against people with disabilities.	Thinking that people with disabilities are inferior. Assuming that a person who has a speech impairment can't understand you.
Information or communications barriers happen when a person can't easily understand information.	Print is too small to read. Websites that can't be accessed by people who are not able to use a mouse. Signs that are not clear or easily understood.
Technology barriers occur when a technology can't be modified to support various assistive devices.	A website that doesn't support screen-reading software.
Organizational barriers are an organization's policies, practices or procedures that discriminate against people with disabilities.	A hiring process that is not open to people with disabilities.
Architectural and physical barriers are features of buildings or spaces that cause problems for people with disabilities.	Hallways and doorways that are too narrow for a person using a wheelchair, electric scooter or walker. Counters that are too high for a person of short stature. Poor lighting for people with low vision. Doorknobs that are difficult for people with arthritis to grasp. Parking spaces that are too narrow for a driver who uses a wheelchair. Telephones that are not equipped with telecommunications devices for people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing.

Table 2. Common Myths and Realities about People with Disabilities

Myth	Reality
People with disabilities are inferior to "normal" people and their lives are very different.	What is "normal"? We all have different abilities, talents, interests and personalities — you name it! People with disabilities go to school, get married, work, have families, play, do laundry, go shopping, eat out, travel, volunteer, vote, pay taxes, laugh, cry, plan and dream — just like everyone else. People with disabilities are us!
We need to feel sorry for people with disabilities.	That's patronizing. People with disabilities don't need pity. They need access to opportunities.
People with disabilities are brave and courageous..	Adjusting to a disability requires adapting to a lifestyle, not bravery and courage.
It's not a good idea to hire people with disabilities. They have a higher turnover rate and they take sick days more often.	Many studies show that employees with disabilities are often more productive, dependable and loyal than their co-workers without disabilities and that staff retention is 72% higher among persons with disabilities. That adds up to savings of millions of dollars every year in hiring and training costs. The experiences of large corporations such as DuPont and the Royal Bank of Canada show that when business hires people with disabilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the pool of potential employees becomes larger• staff retention rates increase• absenteeism decreases.
You have to be careful when you're talking to a person with a disability, because they are easily offended if you use the wrong word.	You just need to be as polite and respectful as you would when speaking to anyone. If you're not sure what to say or do, it's okay to ask.
It's difficult serving customers with disabilities.	Customers with disabilities have the same preferences, perceptions, attitudes, habits, and needs as customers without disabilities, and they are looking for the same quality of products and services. Everyone, regardless of ability, deserves to be treated with the same dignity and respect.