



## Inclusive and Accessible Event Planning

## Understanding AODA

- AODA: [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#)
- The purpose of the Act is to benefit all Ontarians by developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards.
- The AODA has 5 Standards:
  - » Customer Service
  - » Transportation
  - » Employment
  - » Built Environment
  - » Information and Communications

\*Note: Transportation, Employment, Information & Communication have been amalgamated into the **Integrated Standard** that came into law as of January 2012.

## Requirements of AODA ~ Customer Service Standard

- Training for all staff
- Development of an Accessible Customer Service Policy
- Establishing practices and procedures that meet the service needs of persons with disabilities
- Providing feedback mechanisms to allow for future service developments/fixes/ disruptions

[access@trentu.ca](mailto:access@trentu.ca)

<http://www.trentu.ca/ohrea/feedback.php>

## A word about Trent

- Has one of the largest number of students with disabilities per capita over any other Canadian University
- Appeals to students because of its small student: teacher ratio
- DSO well established in its support services
- Trent University offers support in three offices
  - Disability Services Office
  - Trent Counselling Centre
  - Health Services

## AODA: Principles to Remember

- Accessible Customer service is provided when it encompasses the following four factors:

Dignity  
Independence  
Equal Opportunity  
Integration

# Identifying Barriers

- The standards requires us to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with disabilities in key areas of daily living.
- Barriers keep people with disabilities from fully participating in activities that most of us take for granted.

Barriers include:

Attitudinal  
Architectural/ structural  
Information and Communication  
Technology  
Systemic

# Inclusive and Accessible Event Planning

- Event, meetings and conferences bring people together to share information, develop strategies, work toward common goals and celebrate accomplishments.
- Participation is a key element in the success of these events. Given the time, effort and resources committed to planning events, it is the law to ensure that all attendees can participate fully.
- Although unintentional, the need to include people with disabilities is often overlooked when meetings and conferences are organized.

# PUTTING A PLAN IN PLACE

- Budgeting
- Knowing your participants
- Selecting Accessible Facilities
- Safety and Evacuation Procedures
- Scheduling Considerations

## Before the event:

- Accessibility requirements? Please contact \_\_\_\_\_ by email at \_\_\_\_\_ or by phone at \_\_\_\_\_, before \_\_\_\_\_.



# CONDUCTING THE EVENT

- Communication is key when sharing ideas, developing strategies and working toward common goals at meetings, conferences and social gatherings.
- Event organizers, chairpersons and presenters help set the tone of the meeting and can promote the success of accessible and inclusive communication.

# ROLE OF THE ORGANIZER

**The following are suggestions to help organize events within a framework that respects accessibility and inclusion:**

- 1.** Determine a schedule that includes regular breaks for participants, service providers and guide/service dogs (approximately 20- to 30-minute health break and a 90-minute lunch break).
- 2.** Promote a scent-free environment by providing advance notice to presenters and participants to refrain from using perfumes, colognes and strongly scented toiletries.
- 3.** Let the presenters know their responsibilities.
- 4.** Keep in mind the needs of various participants and their service providers, such as seat allocation nearest to the sign language interpreters for persons who are deaf, deafened and hard of hearing.

# ROLE OF THE ORGANIZER

5. Request advance copies of presentation materials from presenters to forward to service providers (e.g. simultaneous and sign language interpreters, note-takers and captionists) before the meeting.
6. Prepare event signage using large print and contrasting colours (e.g. directions to meeting rooms and washrooms, scent-free environment poster, emergency exits, participant nameplates and name tags).
7. Find participants to volunteer to help persons with disabilities who require assistance in the event of an emergency evacuation.
8. Establish a policy/mechanism for waiving registration and/or entrance fees for attendant/coach. (Trent AODA Customer Service)

# PRODUCTS AND SERVICES THAT MAXIMIZE PARTICIPATION

- Interpretation Services
- Real-Time Captioning and Note-Taking Services
- Alternatives to Print Formats
- Captioned Material
- Assistive Listening Devices

# Event checklist

## Accessibility Checklist for Planners

# Inclusive and Diverse Programming

## **Inclusion**

- Whose perspectives, experiences, viewpoints, voices are included?
- Do the activities or materials used promote one point of view? Is this positive or negative?
- Are there multiple perspectives, a variety of voices?
- Are these voices "authentic"?
- Do the activities or materials promote the values of different groups?
- Whose contributions are included/excluded?
- Is anyone being left out?
- Are the inclusions valued or token?
- Do your students see themselves reflected in material/activities?

# Inclusive and Diverse Programming

- Are there activities within a unit relevant/real to all students based on their own social and cultural experiences?
- Do the planned activities encourage students to appreciate diversity?
- Is the language inclusive?
- Are all learning styles supported?
- Do any of the activities exclude learners of certain cultural learning styles (e.g., role-play)?
- Does the unit include a range of activities which appeal to different groups?
- Is reference made to a wide variety of learning materials, texts, examples, and illustrations?
- Have you recognized difficulties in access to resources, materials and equipment?
- Is the perspective of inclusion itself valued?

If you require any additional information or have any questions, please contact.

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# Glossary of terms

- **CD** - Publications are read aloud or recorded using text-to-speech software and digitized on a CD-ROM.
- **Braille** - Publications are produced in a code of raised dots that are read by touch.
- **Closed Captioning** - Text hidden within the lines used to create the television picture and cannot be seen unless decoded. Just like subtitles, the decoded text appears at the bottom of the screen.
- **Descriptive narration** - Video with a described narrative woven into the original soundtrack that meets the viewing needs of a blended audience; it is meaningful for the vision-restricted viewer and unobtrusive for the sighted viewer.
- **DVD** - Publications are read aloud or recorded using text-to-speech software and digitized on a DVD.
- **FM system** - Use of radio frequencies to transmit sound signals that can be amplified.
- **Guide/service dog** - Guide dogs can often be used by persons who are visually impaired. Service dogs can be used by persons who have different disabilities, such as reduced mobility.
- **Infrared system** - Use of infrared light to transmit sound signals that can be amplified.
- **Intervener** - A professional service provider who communicates auditory and visual information to a deaf/blind person using a variety of methods, depending on what works best for the individual. These include visual sign language, tactile sign language, tactile finger spelling, Braille and large-print notes.
- **Large print** - Publications printed in a font size that is not less than 14 point.
- **Note-taker** - A person who provides a text (written or transcribed using a keyboard) of the key messages communicated through presentations and discussions.
- **Open captioning** - Text that appears on the television screen at all times, without decoding.
- **Oral interpreters** - In some cases, a person who is hearing impaired may not use sign language and may rely on speech (lip) reading. At larger meetings and conferences it is difficult to be positioned in front of all speakers in order to read speech. As such, the services of an oral interpreter, whose speech is read, may be requested.
- **Real-time captioning** - A highly trained captionist records speech on a shorthand transcription machine, similar to court reporting.
- **Sign language interpreters** - An interpreter is used to facilitate communication between people who do not share a common language, and typical of this is the interaction between hearing impaired and hearing persons. In Canada, sign language interpreters communicate in both American Sign Language (ASL) for Anglophones and Quebec Sign Language (QSL/LSQ) for Francophones.
- **TTY teletypewriter** - A telecommunication device that enables conversation over the telephone. It consists of a keyboard, an acoustic coupler and a printer or electronic screen or both.