

NORTH YORK ARTS
ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITY ACT
AODA TRAINING KIT



WELCOME!

Prior to proceeding with the AODA Training Kit, the NYA Team would like to thank you for volunteering with our organization, whether it be during our summer festivals or the various other events that North York Arts organizes throughout the year! North York Arts aims to provide volunteer opportunities that are rewarding and that generate an overall positive experience.

Part of your training as an NYA Volunteer includes understanding the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA)** and how it applies to your volunteer work with North York Arts.

The AODA Training Kit will address the following:

- [What is AODA & Who Does It Serve?](#)
- [History of AODA](#)
- [Types of Disabilities](#)
- [Types of Barriers](#)
- [Accessibility Principles](#)
- [Accessibility Standards](#)
- [Accommodations for Volunteers](#)
- [Accessible Customer Service](#)

You are expected to familiarize yourself with the above 8 listed sections prior to starting your volunteer position with North York Arts. **You will be expected to complete a short multiple-choice quiz on the material to demonstrate your understanding of the material on AODA.** Once the quiz is completed, North York Arts will receive an automatic confirmation. Please make sure to use the same email that you registered with when filling out your volunteer application.

WHAT IS AODA AND WHO DOES IT SERVE?

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) is a provincial legislation passed in 2005 with the purpose of recognizing and eliminating discrimination against persons with disabilities through developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings and structures. Accessibility means the identification, removal and prevention of barriers for persons with disabilities. This includes ensuring representation and inclusion of persons with disabilities.

North York Arts is committed to providing accessible programming for all community members, partners, employees, volunteers and event attendees with disabilities. North York Arts is responsible for providing accessibility training to all employees and volunteers to ensure that it runs accessible programming for all participants with disabilities. As an NYA volunteer, it is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the material provided in the AODA Training Kit as part of your accessibility training.

HISTORY OF AODA

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act was passed in 2005. The legislation and its accessibility standards are expected to be fully implemented by 2025 in order to ensure that all Ontario-based organizations and buildings are fully accessible to all people.

The Accessible Customer Service Standard is a component of the legislation that came into effect for all charitable and nonprofit organizations on January 1st, 2012. This standard informs organizations, employees and volunteers how to provide accessible customer service to persons with disabilities.

TYPES OF DISABILITIES

Did you know 70% of disabilities are non-visible?

Disabilities can be permanent, temporary, recurring, visible and non-visible.

VISIBLE	NON-VISIBLE
Easier to identify.	Harder to identify due to no obvious cues.
Commonly associated with assisted devices or some other form of assistance, such as a support person.	Non-visible disabilities include mental, physical and learning disabilities.
Commonly associated with physical disabilities.	May or may not affect an individual on a regular basis.

Not all persons with disabilities have the same needs. For this reason, it is important, and your responsibility as a volunteer or employee, to understand the different types of disabilities in order to provide the best accessible customer service and accommodation to persons with disabilities.

The following chart outlines the five different type of disabilities mentioned in the AODA, as well as the Ontario Human Rights Act. Some disabilities fall under more than one category, such as language and speech disabilities.

DISABILITY CATEGORY	EXAMPLES
PHYSICAL DISABILITIES	Mobility impairments, visual impairments, hearing impairments, physical impairments, deaf blind
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES	Autism spectrum disorder, down syndrome, cerebral palsy
CHRONIC ILLNESS	Terminal illnesses, chronic fatigue syndrome, back pain, physical pain, diabetes
MENTAL ILLNESS	Anxiety disorders, mood disorders, psychotic disorders, personality disorders, addiction
LEARNING DISABILITIES	Dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia; challenges to store, process or produce information

TYPES OF BARRIERS

Barriers are existing obstructions to accessible services and facilities to persons with disabilities. Barriers are broken by providing accessible customer service. Accessible customer service is service that is responsive to the specific needs of attending patrons with disabilities.

The following chart identifies the five types of barriers:

- 1) **Attitude Barriers**
- 2) **Physical Barriers**
- 3) **Communication Barriers**
- 4) **Technological Barriers**
- 5) **Systemic Barriers**

The chart additionally provides specific examples for each of the barrier types and includes a section on what can be done to break the barrier.

BARRIER TYPE	EXAMPLES	HOW TO BREAK THE BARRIERS?
ATTITUDE BARRIERS	Stereotypes, language that focuses on a person's disability rather than their abilities, and a lack of understanding of different disabilities and their needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be respectful and patient • Dismiss stereotypes • Avoid making assumptions • Speak directly to the person with a disability and not their support person, companion or interpreter
PHYSICAL BARRIERS	Lack of ramps, elevators and accessible washrooms. Stairs and doorways as structural barriers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide clear directions to accessible facilities. Accessible facilities at Mel Lastman Square are outlined on page 8.
COMMUNICATION BARRIERS	Information that is difficult to read. (small print and low contrast).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information is provided in varied formats, including in print, online and verbally by volunteers and staff at accessible on-site information booths.
TECHNOLOGICAL BARRIERS	Devices and computers that are not set up to accommodate accessibility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All film screenings during the Cultura Festival include subtitles to accommodate for patrons with various needs, including patrons who experience hearing impairments.
SYSTEMIC ISSUES	Restrictions through company policies and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chairs are provided to patrons during Sunday Serenades, as well as during Cultura Festival based on the needs.

ACCESSIBILITY PRINCIPLES

The AODA implements accessibility standards throughout the province of Ontario within the nonprofit, public and private sectors with consideration towards the following four principles: **(1) Dignity, (2) Independence, (3) Integration and (4) Equal Opportunity.**

Please review and familiarize yourself with the explanations for each of the four accessibility principles in the following chart:

DIGNITY

Persons with disabilities are to be treated with the same respect and service as any other patron. Patrons with disabilities should not receive lesser service, quality or convenience.

INDEPENDENCE

Employees and volunteers should not rush or take over any tasks of patrons with disabilities, especially when a patron has not made such a request to the employee or volunteer, and also when the patron prefers to do it themselves independently in their own way without being hurried.

INTEGRATION

Integrated services include policies, practices and procedures that improve accessibility to persons with disabilities in order to allow them to benefit from the same services in the same spaces as any other patron. When varied limitations and challenges make it difficult to provide integrated services, alternative measures should be explored.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Persons with disabilities should be provided with equal opportunity to participate in the same programs and same services as any other patron. They should not have to make more effort to access and obtain the same service as other patrons, nor should they be expected to receive service of lesser quality and less convenience.

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS

Ontario-based organizations from the nonprofit, public and private sectors are all legally obliged to comply to the accessibility standards outlined in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, which was established under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

The following list is a summary of all five accessibility standards:

- 6) [Accessible Customer Service Standard](#)
- 7) [Accessible Transportation Standard](#)
- 8) [Accessible Information and Communications Standard](#)
- 9) [Accessible Employment Standard](#)
- 10) [Accessible Public Spaces Standard](#)

* North York Arts volunteers should pay special attention to the Accessible Customer Service Standard, which is further expanded on [pages 10 and 11](#).

1. ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD

Since January 1st of 2012, all Ontario-based organizations are required to provide accessible customer service. As North York Arts representatives, all employees and volunteers are required to comply with the Accessible Customer Service Standard of the AODA.

All volunteers must review the entire AODA Training Kit and complete an assessment quiz as part of their training. There is no passing percentage; however, proof of completion must be provided that demonstrates adequate understanding of how to comply with the Accessible Customer Service Standard. North York Arts is committed to providing volunteers with the resources and training to comply with the Accessible Customer Service Standard.

More information on how to provide accessible customer service to patrons with disabilities is found on [pages 10 and 11](#).

2. ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION STANDARD

Since January 1st of 2017, Ontario-based organizations are required to be accessible through transportation. Mel Lastman Square is located in such a way that ensures easy access to public transportation. The square is located directly next to the North York Centre Subway Station and within close proximity of TTC bus stations on Yonge Street.

3. ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS STANDARD

Since January 1st of 2016, Ontario-based organizations are required to develop and provide their employees, volunteers and clients with accessible information and communications. **Accessible formats** are alternatives provided to standard print and **communication supports** are assistive services provided to aid with communication between people.

Examples of accessible formats and communication supports include:

- Reading written information directly to the patron
- Handwritten notes instead of oral communication
- Large print
- Text transcripts

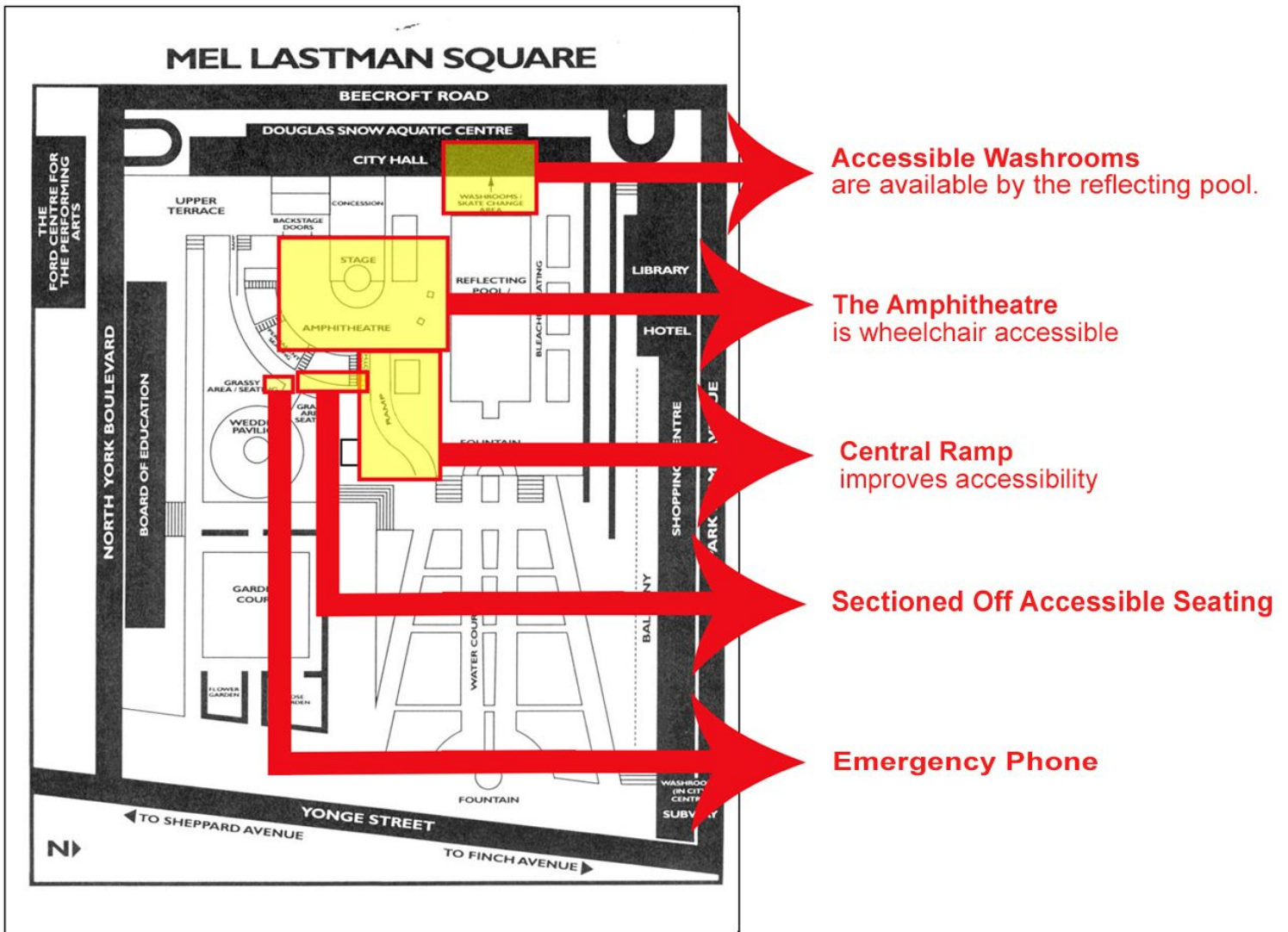
4. ACCESSIBLE EMPLOYMENT STANDARD

Since January 1st of 2017, Ontario-based organizations are required to provide accessible employment practices for persons with disabilities. North York Arts is committed to providing equal opportunities to all employees and volunteers.

Please approach the North York Arts Program and Volunteer Coordinator Cecilia Garcia, or contact her by email at cecilia@northyorkarts.org, or by phone at (416) 733-9388 ext. 7067, to address any accommodations that you may require as a volunteer. All information shared is maintained strictly confidential.

5. ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC SPACES STANDARD

Since January 1st of 2018, all public spaces must meet the legal requirements to provide full accessibility to all visitors, including persons with disabilities. This includes Mel Lastman Square, where the Cultura Festival and Sunday Serenades take place. Mel Lastman Square is composed of accessible washrooms, an accessible seating area and a ramp.



ACCOMODATIONS FOR VOLUNTEERS

Please approach the North York Arts Program and Volunteer Coordinator Cecilia Garcia, or contact her by email at cecilia@northyorkarts.org, or by phone at (416) 733-9388 ext 7067, to address any accommodations that you may require as a volunteer. All information shared is maintained strictly confidential.

North York Arts will do everything in its power to accommodate individual needs with our existing resources. In the situation that a volunteer role and/or responsibility cannot be adjusted due to existing limitations, North York Arts will work with the volunteer to find alternative options to accommodate for their needs. For instance, North York Arts will work with the volunteer to provide a role that better accommodates their needs.

North York Arts is committed to providing equal opportunities to all employees and volunteers from diverse communities and equity-seeking groups. We recognize that barriers to services exist for members of diverse communities, particularly for equity-seeking groups, and we are committed to acting as a positive force in eliminating these barriers.

¹ **Equity-seeking groups** include persons with disabilities, Aboriginal/First Nations people, women, racial minorities, the socio-economically disadvantaged, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered persons.

To achieve this, NORTH YORK ARTS will:

- strive to ensure that diverse communities have equitable access to NYA services and resources are included in our decision-making processes.
- be non-discriminatory and promote the goals of anti-racism, access and equity.
- take reasonable steps to ensure NYA services, programs and decision-making reflect the community we serve.

ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE

Providing accessible customer service means understanding the different types of disabilities and how to best accommodate for persons with disabilities. Volunteers are expected to adhere to the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equal opportunity, outlined on [page 5](#), in all their experiences working with persons with disabilities.

Remember the following when delivering accessible customer service:

- **Disability does not mean inability!**
- Respect everyone's personal space.
This includes not touching assistive devices unless you have been asked.
- Do not touch and interact with service animals as they must be attentive to the needs of their owner at all times.
- Account for a person's disability and their needs when communicating with them.
- Speak directly to the patron; not their support person, companion nor their interpreter.
- Do not make assumptions on how a person is to be helped!
Instead, ask the individual, **"How may I help you?"**
- Maintain respectful, clear and welcoming communication.
- Do not hurry patrons with disabilities, do not talk for them nor do things for them when they have not made a request.
- Direct patrons to accessible facilities available on-site.
(ex. Accessible washrooms, seating areas and ramps).
- A person who has a disability is **not a disabled person, but a person with a disability**. Make sure to always put the person before their disability!

PROVIDING INDIVIDUALIZED ACCESSIBLE CUSTOMER SERVICE

Volunteer Toronto has developed tip sheets on how to provide accessible customer service to persons with disabilities with different needs. To reinforce your understanding on how to provide accessible customer service to patrons with varied needs, these additional tip sheets are available for your reference:

- [Welcoming Customers with Disabilities](#)
- [Welcoming Customers with Visual Impairment](#)
- [Welcoming Customers with Deaf, Deafened or Hard of Hearing](#)
- [Welcoming Customers with Physically Disabled](#)
- [Welcoming Customers with Speech Impairments](#)
- [Welcoming Customers with Mental Health Disabilities](#)
- [Welcoming Customers with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities](#)
- [Welcoming Customers with a Learning Disability](#)

HOW TO RESPOND TO AN UNACCOMPANIED SERVICE ANIMAL?



In the case where a service animal is unaccompanied and found without its owner, let the nearest park or security personnel and/or NYA staff member know immediately. Park and security personnel can be identified by wearing orange and yellow vests.

If no security personnel and NYA staff members are within proximity, and the unaccompanied service animal is encouraging you to follow it by nudging your leg with its nose, follow the service animal as the owner may be in a state where urgent medical attention is necessary, such as in the case of a seizure.

Once meeting with the owner and gaining a better understanding of the situation and the owner's needs, report the current incident to the closest available park security personnel and/or NYA staff member immediately. If no security personnel and NYA staff are nearby, and the situation requires urgent attention, use the emergency phone located right outside of the stage. The emergency phone is clearly identified on a long blue pole that says "emergency." The phone will connect you directly to security personnel.

ASSESSMENT QUIZ

Now that you have completed all 8 sections of the AODA Training Kit, you are ready to take the **assessment quiz**! The quiz is multiple-choice format and the questions cover material that has been provided in this training kit.

Remember to use the same email that you registered with when filling out your volunteer application. Once the quiz is completed, North York Arts will receive an automatic confirmation.

You are able to retake the quiz as many times as needed in order to obtain the desired result. The following 8 sections should have been completed before starting your assessment quiz:

- **What is AODA & Who Does It Serve?**
- **History of AODA**
- **Types of Disabilities**
- **Types of Barriers**
- **Accessibility Principles**
- **Accessibility Standards**
- **Accommodations for Volunteers**
- **Accessible Customer Service**

When ready, the assessment quiz can be accessed by **clicking here**.

Thank you again for volunteering with North York Arts!
We are looking forward to having you join our team!

NYA 2017 Pictorial Photo Credits

Beyond Access Beyond the Creative

Creative Community Workshop with Paola Gomez

Photo by: Alex Usquiano

My City My City Six

City Hall Exhibition

Photo by: City Representative

Ephraim's Place

Youth Dance Program

Photo by: Craig Chong

Legacy Collective

Stitching Stories

Photo by: Alex Usquiano

Cultura Festival

Hula-Hoop Family Program

Photo by: Isabel Sales

Sunday Serenades

Photo by: Kayla Wondergem