

Volunteers & Other Service Providers - Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

This information is for volunteers and other persons who provide goods, services & facilities on the University of Toronto's behalf.

Service

The University is committed to providing an equitable and inclusive environment. To achieve this goal, the University depends on the full participation of its community members - including all those who volunteer and provide services on our behalf - to help reduce barriers to learning, teaching and working on all of our campuses.

What is a Disability?

As defined by the OHRC

Disability covers a broad range and degree of conditions, some visible and some not visible. A disability may have been present from birth, caused by an accident, or developed over time. There are physical, mental and learning disabilities, mental disorders, hearing or vision disabilities, epilepsy, mental health disabilities and addictions, environmental sensitivities, and other conditions.

What are the AODA Standards?

Accessibility standards are laws that government, businesses, non-profits and public sector organizations must follow to become accessible. They help organizations identify and remove barriers to improve accessibility for people with disabilities in 5 areas of daily life: Customer service; Information & communications; Transportation; Employment, and Design of public spaces.

What is the Code?

Under the Ontario Human Rights Code, people with disabilities are protected from discrimination and harassment based on disability in five social areas: when receiving goods, services and using facilities; in housing; when entering into a contract; in employment, and; when joining or belonging to a union, professional association or other vocational association.

We all play a role in creating a positive environment at the University of Toronto.

Here are a few helpful accommodation tips for meetings and events.

Assistive devices

Assistive devices help a person with a disability do everyday tasks and activities. Some devices include: Laptops, pocket recorders, digital audio players, smart phones; Hearing aid, teletypewriter (TTY) for people with speech or hearing disabilities to communicate by phone; Mobility devices such as scooters, walkers or crutches, magnifiers, white cane; Communication boards (which use symbols, words or pictures to create messages) speech generating devices.

Support persons & service animals

A support person accompanies a person with a disability in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care, or medical needs. Please welcome the support person, but focus service and communication to the individual. Service animals are welcomed at the University. Please do not distract

the service animal - this includes talking, petting or feeding. For more information on assistive devices, support persons, and service animals visit www.aoda.utoronto.ca.

Food and drink

Order straws with beverages. Request a list of ingredients with your catering order and display it near the food.

Location

Check whether your event space and washrooms are accessible at the following links:

osm.utoronto.ca/accessibility
map.utoronto.ca

If required, schedule American Sign Language (ASL) support or live captioning early. Consider using microphones with adjustable volumes for larger meetings. Insist on the speaker using a microphone if one is available. Make sure there is appropriate event signage and adequate lighting if after hours. Be aware that common background noise can be distracting. Remind presenters to speak in a clear, well-timed manner to allow assistive devices, ASL support or live captioning to translate properly. Ask the participant where they would like an accompanying support person to be seated.

Communication

Respond to accommodation requests in the same manner you would to other event-related questions. Ensure invitations provide accessibility information, including parking, ramps, entrances and someone to contact for any accommodation needs. To allow participants to use software to assist them if needed, email material before the meeting or event, or invite them to request the material in an alternative delivery format

Arrival

Be aware if certain relied upon services are non-operational (i.e. elevators, TTC, automatic door entrances). Check Building Access Notices via the AODA website at aoda.hrandequity.utoronto.ca/buildings/ or contact the facility or building management to confirm.

Plan for snow removal from stairs/ramps when required. Clear clutter from hallways to ensure easier maneuverability. Indicate entrances that might not be accessible and clearly state how one would go to the accessible entrance. Remove any wires that might cross the floor, such as computer or phone lines and any obstacles near handrails, elevators, stairs and doorways.

Resources on Campus

Accessibility Services, St. George assists with academic accommodation for students
416-978-8060
accessibility.services@utoronto.ca
studentlife.utoronto.ca/as

UTM AccessAbility Resource Centre provides services and academic accommodations to students
905-569-4699
access.utm@utoronto.ca
utm.utoronto.ca/accessability/

University of Toronto AODA Training – Volunteers & Other Service Providers
O. Reg. 191/11, Sections 7 and 80.49

UTSC AccessAbility Services provides academic accommodations to students
www.utoronto.ca/~ability/
416-287-7560
ability@utoronto.ca

Health & Wellbeing Programs & Services assists staff and faculty with accommodation needs
416-978-2149
well-being.hrandequity.utoronto.ca/

AODA Officer can assist with concerns from U of T staff and faculty, and the public
aoda.utoronto.ca
aoda@utoronto.ca

Concerns of Accessing Services

If someone is having difficulty accessing University services due to a disability:

Students can contact the Accessibility services on their campus

Faculty, Staff or Members of Public can contact the AODA Officer at www.aoda.utoronto.ca (more information on the AODA is also available at these links)

Legislation and Policies

U of T Policies

www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing_Council/policies.htm

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

www.ontario.ca/page/accessibility-laws

Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC)

www.ohrc.on.ca

Disclosing a disability

Persons with disabilities choose whether or not to disclose a disability based on a number of factors, including the relationship, the context of the interaction, their perception of the inquiry (curiosity versus assistance) and their comfort level.

Students who have a disability do not necessarily request service or accommodation or identify themselves on campus as having a disability.

Persons with disabilities who disclose information about their disability are revealing information regarding their own health and body that would ordinarily be considered private between persons who do not know each other well.

How a disclosure is received can affect how a person will approach a new situation or relationship. For example, how a professor responds to a student's disclosure can determine whether the student persists and completes the program. Disclosures should always be received respectfully and sensitively.

If you are unsure of how to assist someone with a disability, ask them - they are their own expert regarding accommodation!