

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS IN ONTARIO

November 17, 2008

Ontario passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act in 2005, becoming the first jurisdiction in Canada to commit to breaking down barriers through mandatory standards. These accessibility standards are the rules that businesses and organizations in Ontario will have to follow to identify, prevent and remove barriers for people with disabilities.

Ontario is developing accessibility standards in key areas of everyday life, including:

- Customer Service, which came into force January 1, 2008
- Transportation
- Information and communications
- Employment
- The built environment, including buildings and other structures.

Proposed accessibility standards are developed by committees of people from the disability and business communities that:

- Release an initial proposed standard for public review
- Revise the proposed standard to incorporate public input
- Submit a final proposed standard to the government for consideration as law.

ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

The committee's proposed accessible information and communications standard — the third standard to be released — is [available online](#) for the public to review until January 16, 2009. A committee comprised of 40 members developed this proposed standard.

Accessible information and communications can mean different things to different people.

Accessible information can be:

- A publication in large print for a person with a visual disability
- Captioning on a video for a person who is Deaf or hard of hearing
- A website built to support assistive technologies for people with mobility or visual disabilities.

Visit www.AccessON.ca for more information on improving accessibility.