

ONTARIO IMPROVES SERVICE FOR CUSTOMERS WITH DISABILITIES

McGuinty Government Helps Remove Barriers

NEWS

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Ontario is partnering with the Retail Council of Canada to help remove barriers that customers with disabilities frequently face.

A new interactive tool, '[How May I Help You?](#)' is now available to help businesses attract more customers of all abilities. It uses real-life scenarios to teach people how to interact with customers who have a variety of disabilities, including those who:

- Use assistive devices, such as canes or wheelchairs
- Have an invisible disability, such as a learning or mental health disability
- Are accompanied by a sign language interpreter
- Have a support person.

Under Ontario's landmark [accessibility legislation](#), Ontario's first standard – for [customer service](#) – is now law. The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service sets out rules that businesses and organizations must follow to serve customers with disabilities. 'How May I Help You?' supports the training [requirements](#) in the standard.

QUOTES

"Every business should strive to open their doors to every potential customer. With this tool, more businesses can increase their customer base and therefore their bottom line," said Community and Social Services [Minister Madeleine Meilleur](#).

"Businesses across Ontario will learn how to better meet the needs of customers with disabilities. And people with disabilities will have access to more goods and services. It's a win/win situation," said Derek Nighbor, Senior Vice President, National Affairs, Retail Council of Canada.

QUICK FACTS

- Today, 15.5 per cent of Ontarians have a disability. This number will grow as the population ages.
- People with disabilities have an estimated spending power of about \$25 billion annually across Canada.
- The [Retail Council of Canada](#) has 14,000 members in Ontario, including independent, chain and online merchants.

LEARN MORE

See [businesses](#) that are breaking down barriers for customers with disabilities.

Find out more about [serving customers with disabilities](#).

Visit [AccessON.ca](#) and [tell us your accessible customer service story](#).