



# Board Protocol for Barrier Buster Process

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## 1. What is Barrier Buster?

Barrier Buster is an electronic reporting tool that allows any customer<sup>1</sup> to communicate any barriers that prevents a person with a disability from accessing any services, facilities or opportunities at York Region District School Board (YRDSB or the Board). Barrier Buster is the Board's formal process for receiving and responding to feedback about barriers to accessibility.

The Barrier Buster reporting form can be accessed and completed online from the [YRDSB homepage](#) or from the Board's [Accessibility webpage](#) (under the "Barrier Buster" navigation tab).

## 2. Barrier Buster Process

### 2.1 Submitting an Identified Barrier

- a) Complete and submit an online Barrier Buster reporting form with contact information to start the Barrier Buster process (we will not be able to follow-up on any report form submitted anonymously).
- b) Once submitted, the reporting form is forwarded directly to the Barrier Buster inbox ([aoda@yrdsb.ca](mailto:aoda@yrdsb.ca)) where it is received by the Human Rights Commissioner's Office.
- c) A reply email confirming receipt of the submission will be sent within two (2) regular business days.

### 2.2 Assessing Identified Barriers

- a) Each Barrier Buster submission is reviewed and logged into a Barrier Buster submission tracking sheet.

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<sup>1</sup> "Customers" are defined under [Board Policy #407.0, Accessibility](#) as "any member of the Board community, including but not limited to: trustees, employees, students, parents/guardians, permit holders, vendors, service providers, contractors, volunteers and visitors and all other persons who are invited to or who work on Board property."

- b) The Barrier Buster subcommittee communicate as needed to review submissions, discuss potential solutions, and determine actions to remove the barrier(s) where appropriate.
- c) If additional information about the identified barrier is required, a follow-up email will be sent to the person who made the Barrier Buster submission.
- d) If the barrier is deemed to require immediate action and/or is beyond the scope of the Barrier Buster subcommittee, the submission will be referred to the appropriate Board department or unit for action.

### **2.3 Communicating Actions for Barrier Removal (Feedback Loop)**

- a) Upon determining actions for an identified barrier, an email will be sent to update the person who submitted the Barrier Buster reporting form, as well as any additional parties as required.
- b) Updates to all identified barriers are reflected in the Barrier Buster submission tracking sheet, which is used to provide quarterly updates to the AODA Advisory Committee.
- c) All completed and ongoing work towards the removal and elimination of barriers within YRDSB are shared in the Annual Accessibility Report.

### 3. Barrier Buster Process Flowchart

#### **Submitting an Identified Barrier**

- Customer completes and submits Barrier Buster reporting form online
- HRCO receives and confirms receipt of the submission within 2 regular business days

#### **Assessing Identified Barriers**

- Each submission is reviewed and logged into Barrier Buster tracking sheet
- Barrier Buster subcommittee meet as needed to review submissions, discuss solutions, and determine actions to remove barrier(s)

#### **Communicating Actions for Barrier Removal (Feedback Loop)**

- Update email(s) will be sent to the person who submitted the reporting form
- All completed and ongoing barrier removal is shared in Annual Accessibility Report

### 4. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

#### 4.1 What are barriers to accessibility?

A barrier is anything that prevents a person with a disability from participating fully in society. There are five main types of barriers to accessibility:

1. **Attitudinal Barriers:** Inaccurate beliefs and perceptions about people with disabilities based on assumptions and stereotypes. Attitudinal barriers are the most pervasive type of barrier.

2. **Communication (or Information) Barriers:** Prevent people from understanding or accessing information in a meaningful way.
3. **Physical (or Architectural) Barriers:** Anything in the built environment or design of public spaces that prevent access to goods, services, and/or facilities.
4. **Systemic (or Organizational) Barriers:** Usually created through policies, procedures, and practices that apply to everyone, but are unfair or inequitable to certain people.
5. **Technology Barriers:** Digital or virtual platforms that are not designed to be user-friendly or with consideration for people with disabilities. Technology barriers often relate to communication barriers.

#### 4.2 Why is Barrier Buster necessary?

Under the Customer Service Standards of [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act](#) (AODA), all organizations are required to establish a process for receiving and responding to feedback, and must specify the actions that will be taken if a complaint is received regarding the experience of a customer with a disability. All organizations are also required to prepare a document describing the feedback process ([O. Reg. 165/16, s. 16](#)). This protocol and the Barrier Buster process it outlines are how the Board meets these AODA standards.

This protocol also acts as additional communication for addressing Recommendation 49 of the [Employment Equity Audit](#) whereby: “It is recommended that the relaunch of Barrier Busters be accompanied by communications to employees to increase their confidence in the program.”

#### 4.3 How else can I address barriers that I have identified?

Barrier Buster is the Board’s formal process for identifying and removing barriers to accessibility. You should first speak to a member of your school or department about how they can support in removing any barrier you have identified.

Additionally, if you would like to provide general feedback on the accessibility of a service provided by the Board, [Customer Service Feedback Forms](#) are available online (via the BWW) or in print at the main office or front desk of all Board locations.