

Plain Language Guide to Policy #407, Accessibility

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) requires all organizations to make one or more documents describing its accessibility policy ([O. Reg. 191/11, s. 3](#)). This plain language guide is an alternative format to [Board Policy #407, Accessibility](#). It is a more reader- and user-friendly version of the full policy.

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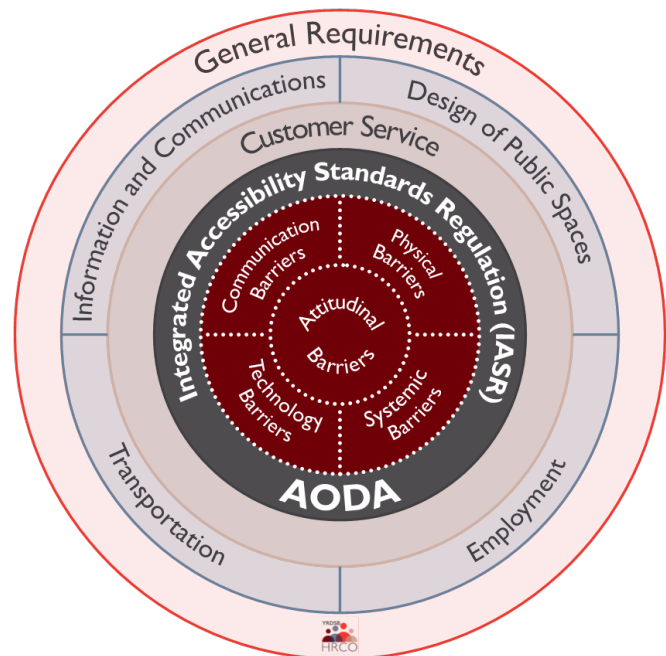
1. Policy Summary

York Region District School Board (YRDSB or the Board) revised its [Accessibility Policy](#) (Policy #407) in 2019. Policy #407 explains how the Board is committed to making its learning and working environments more accessible.

2. Procedures under Policy #407

Policy #407 has six procedures that follows the AODA standards:

1. **General Requirements**
2. **Customer Service Standards**
3. **Information and Communications Standards**
4. **Standards for the Built Environment**
5. **Employment Standards**
6. **Transportation Standards**



3. General Requirements

The AODA General Requirements relate to the accessibility standards. The Board's commitment to meeting these General Requirements is outlined below.

AODA General Requirement

How the Board is Complying

Create and maintain an accessibility policy

Board Policy #407.0, Accessibility

Prepare accessibility plans and reports

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan 2020-2025 and Annual Accessibility Reports

Consider accessibility in all planning and purchasing decisions

AODA Advisory Committee and subcommittees / working groups

Provide accessibility training

Accessibility compliance training and professional development modules

Sections 4 through 8 of this plain language guide outline each of the procedures in a question and answer format.

4. Customer Service Standards

How the Board provides accessible programs, services and facilities to people with disabilities by meeting AODA requirements for: [Feedback Processes \(4.1\)](#), [Assistive Devices \(4.2\)](#), [Support Persons \(4.3\)](#), [Service Animals \(4.4\)](#) and [Disruption of Services \(4.5\)](#).

4.1 What is the Board's feedback process for barriers to accessibility?

An online reporting tool known as [Barrier Buster](#) is available for anyone in the YRDSB community to give feedback or report on any barrier that prevents a person with a disability from accessing Board programs, services or facilities. The [Barrier Buster Protocol](#) describes the feedback process in more detail.

4.2 What is the Board's position on assistive devices?

The Board welcomes anyone who needs to use an assistive device or equipment to access Board programs, services and/or facilities. Students and staff with disabilities may use assistive devices provided by the Board based on their Individual Education Plan or Individual Workplace Accommodation Plan.

Visitors are free to use their own personal assistive device(s) to support any disability-related need(s).

4.3 What is the Board's position on support persons?

The Board welcomes all visitors who need a support person to access Board programs, services and/or facilities. A support person could be a paid professional, a volunteer, a friend or a family member and is different from a Board employee (such as an Educational Assistant) who provides support services to a student.

If a support person is involved in a meeting where confidential information is being shared, a [Parent/Legal Guardian Consent for Support Person](#) form must be completed.

A support person must also be notified in advance for any Board-related event where the support person will be required to pay to attend the event.

4.4 What is the Board's position on service animals?

For non-school locations (such as Board administrative buildings), the Board welcomes all visitors who require a service animal to support their access to Board programs, services and/or facilities, unless it is against the law to have the animal. All visitors are responsible for taking care of their service animal while on Board property.

For school buildings, [Board Procedure #662.14](#) outlines the process for formally applying to have a guide dog, service dog or service animal support the disability-related learning needs of a student in a classroom setting or at a school-related event.

4.5 How does the Board address disruption of services?

If any service normally provided to people with disabilities is not available, a [Disruption of Service Notice](#) must be posted and include the following:

- information about the reason for the disruption,
- the duration of the disruption, and
- any alternative facilities or services that are available.

5. Information and Communications Standards

How the Board creates and provides different types of information and communication supports for people with disabilities. The two key areas of this standard are: [Accessible Documents / Formats \(5.1\)](#) and [Accessible Format Requests \(5.2\)](#).

5.1 What are my responsibilities regarding accessible formats?

All Board-approved content, documents and resources (whether in print, digital or multimedia) must be posted or provided in an accessible format and/or with appropriate communication supports. This includes all web content, library resources, student records, and information on programs or courses.

Visit the [Accessibility Resource Hub](#) to learn about making content more accessible.

5.2 What if some Board content and documents are not accessible?

We understand that not all Board documents and resources are in accessible formats. However, any request for an accessible format needs to be met within a reasonable amount of time and with no added costs to the person(s) making the request.

If a request for an accessible format or communication support cannot be met, the staff responsible for that information or communication must give an explanation and a summary of the information to the person(s) who made the request.

6. Standards for the Built Environment

How the Board will create barrier-free facilities and ensure that all new or newly renovated buildings comply with the AODA and the Ontario Building Code (OBC).

What is the difference between AODA and OBC requirements?

The AODA's Design of Public Spaces standards apply to mostly outdoor spaces (such as recreational trails, outdoor play spaces and accessible parking). The [Ontario Building Code](#) was updated in 2015 to address accessibility for mostly indoor spaces (such as elevators, special washrooms and automatic door openers).

The Board is responsible for meeting the requirements under both the AODA and OBC for any newly constructed or renovated schools and/or Board administrative buildings. It should also be noted that best practices for accessible design of public spaces go far beyond the minimum accessibility requirements under the Ontario Building Code.

A full list of all accessibility work started and/or completed on YRDSB schools and buildings are included in the Board's [Annual Accessibility Reports](#).

7. Employment Standards

How the Board provides accessible workplace practices for current and potential employees with disabilities. The two key areas of this standard are: [Current Employees \(7.1\)](#) and [Potential Employees / Applicants \(7.2\)](#).

7.1 How are current employees with disabilities supported?

All current YRDSB employees are informed of the policies and procedures used to support employees with disabilities, including [Board Policy and Procedure #218.0, Healthy Schools and Workplaces](#).

Information about individual workplace accommodation plans and/or return to work plans is available under [Board Procedure #218.5, Healthy Schools and Workplaces](#):

[Disability Management Program - Staff](#). All decision-making about job performance, promotions and/or reassignment will take into account any relevant workplace accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.

7.2 How are potential employees / applicants with disabilities supported?

All applicants are notified that accommodations are available throughout the hiring process, as outlined in [Board Policy #532.0, Recruitment and Promotion](#). If requested, accommodations will be provided after consulting with the applicant and based on their disability-related needs.

8. Transportation Standards

How the Board provides accessible transportation for students with disabilities to and from school. The two key areas of this standard are: [Requesting Transportation \(8.1\)](#) and [Providing Transportation \(8.2\)](#).

8.1 How is transportation requested for students with disabilities?

Student Services Coordinators manage all transportation for students with disabilities based on the responsibilities outlined in [Board Policy and Procedure #680.0, Student Transportation](#). After discussing transportation requirements with parents/guardians, Student Services Coordinators share all required transportation forms and information to Student Transportation Services (STS).

8.2 How is transportation provided for students with disabilities?

Student Transportation Services (STS) create Personalized Transportation Plans based on all required forms and information provided by Student Services Coordinators. The Personalized Transportation Plan include roles and responsibilities for the following groups: bus company, driver, parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student, appropriate school staff, and student with the disability.

If you need any additional details or information about any section of this plain language guide, please refer to the full [Board Policy #407, Accessibility](#), or contact the Human Rights Commissioner's Office at: aoda@yrdsb.ca.