

e2r Alert!

ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, 2005 (“AODA”) GETTING READY FOR REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE “CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD”

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (“AODA”) requires businesses and organizations in the province of Ontario to implement and adhere to mandatory “accessibility standards” to address the needs of persons with disabilities with respect to access to goods, services, facilities, employment, accommodation and buildings.

The implementation of these “accessibility standards” will have far reaching effects for many areas of your business or organization.

“Accessibility standards” under ADOA are being developed in the following areas:

- Customer Service
- Employment
- Information and Communications
- Transportation; and
- The Built Environment.

The targeted deadline for complete implementation for all of these “accessibility standards” is January 1, 2025.

At the present time, all private sector businesses and organizations that provide goods or services either directly to the public or to other businesses or organizations and have one or more employees in Ontario, will be required to be in compliance with the first developed standard, the “Customer Service Standard”, by January 1, 2012.

The First Standard – “Customer Service Standard”

The “Customer Service Standard” addresses the area of access to customer service for persons with disabilities. The “Customer Service Standard” requires businesses and organizations ensure they provide goods and services in a manner that is accessible to persons with disabilities.

Businesses and organizations will be required to take a number of steps to ensure compliance with the “Customer Service Standard” including the development of customer service policies and procedures that address the needs of people with disabilities as well as training to staff, volunteers and contractors on providing goods and services to people with disabilities.

These requirements and others under the “Customer Service Standard” will have a significant impact on the operation of your organization.

We are pleased to let you know that we shall be holding a Think Tank on this topic in the month of May! This Think Tank will provide you with an overview of the various components of AODA, its overall purpose with a particular emphasis on the

requirements and obligations of employers under the “Customer Service Standard” and its impact on the operation of your organization. This Think Tank will be useful from not only a human resources standpoint but will provide important information that will assist in understanding the steps that your operations team will be required to take in order to be compliant with the “Customer Service Standard” before January 1, 2012.

We look forward to covering this topic with you in May!

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