

*Accessibility for Ontarians  
with Disabilities Act &  
North York  
Family Health Team (NYFHT)*



## Ontario has new legislation about accessibility.

In order to create a barrier-free province by 2025, Ontario has created the ***Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*** (AODA).

The **Customer Services Standard** was the first part of the Act to become law as of January 1, 2008 and designated public service organizations including the NYFHT, must comply with this legislation.

## Did you Know?

We will use the phrase ***“persons with disabilities”*** and **not** “people with disabilities”.



Using the word “persons” recognizes the diversity of experience among persons with disabilities, whereas the word “people” tends to imply that everyone in the group is the same.

## What is a “disability”?

Disabilities can be visible or invisible.

Visible disabilities include physical disabilities such as those caused by birth defects, illness, or injury and may require the use of assistive devices such as wheelchairs or prostheses.

Invisible disabilities include deafness or hearing impediments, muteness or speech impediments, mental impairments, developmental disabilities, learning disabilities etc.

The AODA is built around the core principles of

***Independence, dignity  
integration and  
equality of opportunity,***

and works to be proactive where possible in addressing issues of accessibility. In light of this, this legislation requires the NYFHT to do the following:

1. Ensure that its policies, practices and procedures on providing goods and services to persons with disabilities are consistent with the above listed core principles.
2. Communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account his or her disability.
3. Provide training on a number of topics, including policies, practices and procedures to its Board of Directors and its Committees, to staff, students, volunteers and any other people who interact with the public on NYFHT’s behalf.
4. Ensure NYFHT policies address allowing persons with disabilities to use their own personal assistive devices to access NYFHT’s goods and services.
5. Allow persons with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal, unless the animal is excluded by another law. If a service animal is excluded by law, use other measures to provide services to the person with a disability.
6. Permit persons with disabilities who use a support person to bring that person with them. Where admission fees are charged, provide notice ahead of time on what admission, if any would be charged for a support person of a person with a disability.
7. Provide notice of service disruption when NYFHT’s facilities or services that persons with disabilities rely on are temporarily unavailable.
8. Make a feedback process available to the public and determine how the NYFHT will respond and take action on any complaints.

## FEEDBACK

Any feedback or concerns on issues of accessibility of NYFHT services should be addressed to the Executive Director via telephone (416 494-3003 ext. 102), by email (info@nyfht.com), in writing or in person to 301—240 Duncan Mill Rd., North York, Ontario M3B 3S6

Staff concerns regarding accessibility can also be directed in confidence to the Executive Director or through Medical Director to the Chair of the NYFHT Board of Directors.



## Education and Training

All employees of the NYFHT are required to complete training on the Customer Service Standard to ensure successful compliance with the AODA. Training will be available and in and is offered throughout the year.

### *“Do staff need training?”*

If staff are members of our NYFHT community, their interactions with others make an impact.

The AODA applies to each person who provides customer service in the course of their job. Each staff will become familiar with the AODA and the customer service standard, its principles and other key concepts.

## Accessible Customer Service Principles

- Treat persons with disabilities with the same respect and consideration one has for everyone else.
- Patience and a willingness to find a way to communicate are ones best tools.
- Some disabilities are not visible. Take the time to get to know the individuals' needs.
- If one is not sure what to do, ask the client or patient. “May I help you?” Persons with disabilities know if they need help and how it can be provided.
- Think about speaking plain language and speaking in short sentences. If one can't understand what someone is saying, just politely ask again.
- Remember to speak directly to a person with a disability, not to their interpreter or someone who is with them.
- Avoid touching or addressing service animals as they are working and have to pay attention at all times. Ask permission before touching a wheelchair or other assistive device.
- Know the emergency procedures for persons with disabilities



## Assistive Devices



Assistive devices help persons with a disability do everyday tasks and activities. Some devices include laptops, pocket recorders, digital audio players, hearing aids, and teletypewriters (TTY) for people unable to speak or hear by phone. NYFHT sites rely on the Bell Canada Relay Services from any phone for free (1-800-855-0511)

Other assistive devices include mobility devices such as scooters, walkers or crutches, magnifiers, white cane, communication boards (which use symbols, words or pictures to create messages) and speech generating devices.

## Resources

To find information about NYFHT's accessibility and accommodation policies, practices and procedures, please visit:

<http://www.nyfht.com>