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# **Kit 1: The AODA - What You Need To Do**

## MedIA Release

[YOUR LOCATION] – [date]– The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) became law in 2005 with the goal of making the province more accessible by 2025. The AODA applies to all organizations in Ontario that have one or more employees.

To help our business members understand their role, and take sustainable steps, towards compliance, [name of your BIA] is sharing information on the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) with its members. The information will be distributed [channel of distribution, such as newsletter/social media posts/bulletin/ etc.] to BIA members.

This overview information includes:

* Overview webinar on the AODA
* AODA Checklists for businesses
* AODA Deadlines “At a Glance”
* Resources for more information

### Quick Facts

* The AODA applies to all organizations with 1+ employees – more than 360,000 businesses and organizations in Ontario.
* 70% of disabilities are invisible.
* Less than 2% of people who have a disability use a wheelchair or scooter as their primary mode of transportation.
* Over the next 20 years, an aging population and people with disabilities will represent 40% of the total income in Ontario - $536 Billion.
* Improved accessibility in Ontario can help generate up to $9.6 Billion in new retail spending and $1.6 Billion in new tourism spending.

### Quotes

[quotes from your BIA, business members, board members, or local champions of the AODA in your community]

### Quick Links

[Ontario BIA Association – Accessibility Resources](http://obiaa.com/accessibility/accessibility-smart-businesses-project/)

Twitter: [@OBIAA\_](https://twitter.com/OBIAA_) (Hashtag for social media: **#accessBIA)**

[Your Twitter handle]

### Media Contact

[Insert Your Contact Information]

## Article

### The AODA for BIAs

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) became law in 2005. The legislation applies to businesses, nonprofits, public sector, and government organizations with one or more employees. This includes many BIA members in [district]!

The AODA is made up of five standards: the Customer Service Standard; the Information and Communications Standard; the Employment Standard; the Design of Public Spaces Standard; and the Transportation Standard. The last four standards are collectively called the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR). Each standard has requirements that organizations need to meet, with specific compliance deadlines.

The goal of the AODA is to make Ontario accessible by 2025 and helps us meet the changing needs of our communities, the future needs of an aging population, and the competitiveness of our businesses.

To find out more about the AODA and how it affects you, check out the [Ontario BIA Association’s Accessibility page](http://obiaa.com/accessibility/) on their website and watch our [AODA Overview webinar](http://aoda.adobeconnect.com/p7dwr7ylyt3/) to get a quick summary of what obligations businesses’ have under the AODA.

## Social Media

### Facebook/LinkedIn

AODA for BIAs: What the law is and how it can affect you. [link]

### Twitter

Business Tip: Ask “How may I help you?” instead of making assumptions, especially when speaking to people with disabilities. #accessBIA

AODA for BIAs: What the law is and how it can affect you. [link] #accessBIA

## Resources

Items with no hyperlink can be found in the Members Portal (Resource Section) of OBIAA website.

* IASR Checklist (see PDF in Resources folder)
* Customer Service Checklist (see PDF in Resources folder)
* AODA Timelines (see PDF in Resources folder)
* [Government of Ontario: About Accessibility Laws](https://www.ontario.ca/page/about-accessibility-laws)
* [AODA for BIAs and Businesses](http://aoda.adobeconnect.com/p7dwr7ylyt3/) (webinar)

## Contact

If you would like further information on the AODA, please contact Constance Exley, Project Manager of Accessible Smart Businesses and CEO of Accessibility Ontario at [director@accessontario.com](mailto:director@accessontario.com).