

AODA Compliance Review

Including a DRAFT Statement of Commitment to Accessibility (for website posting)

January 2020

Review of AODA Compliance Requirements and Deadlines

Businesses and non-profit organizations with 20 or more employees, and all public sector organizations (of any size) must file an Accessibility Compliance Report.

- Public sector organizations must file the report by December 31st, 2019.
- Businesses and nonprofits with 20 or more employees must file the Accessibility and Compliance report by the extended deadline of June 30, 2021. The deadline was originally December 31st, 2020.

Stella's Place, as a nonprofit with more than 20 but fewer than 50 employees must file the Accessibility Compliance Report by June 30, 2021.

- As of January 28, 2021, Stella's Place has 47 employees. This number may fluctuate slightly with contract employees and fixed term contracts. Employees are counted per person, not as FTE.
- Although the deadline to file the report has been extended, the AODA compliance requirements have not been extended.
- Currently, because Stella's Place has fewer than 50 employees, we are not required to have an AODA compliant website.
- Businesses and nonprofits with 50 or more employees must have an AODA compliant website by January 1, 2021.
- Because we are planning a significant refresh of our website, and because the requirement for AODA website compliance is triggered in the new year **as soon as we pass the 50 employee mark**, the new website we are planning needs to meet AODA compliance requirements to WCAG Level AA criteria.

FAQ

Do we need to post a statement of intent on our website?

No, because we are not out of compliance as an organization with fewer than 50 employees.

Can we post a statement of intent on our website?

Yes, it may be a good idea to state that we are currently planning a refresh of our website and plan to be AODA compliant to WCAG Level AA by a certain date, ahead of our requirement to meet AODA guidelines once we pass the 50 employee threshold.

Do we need to have and post on our website a multi-year accessibility plan

Yes, as soon as we pass the 50 employee threshold. Creating the plan should be started in early 2021. Website AODA compliance should be one main goal of this plan. Physical accessibility at Wolseley should be the other (assuming already planned, just need to state).

What is our best approach?

Draft a Statement of Commitment that promises an accessible website as part of our Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP). See page 3 for a DRAFT example statement.

Important accessibility compliance deadlines and documents

- Government of Ontario: [Accessibility rules for businesses and non-profits](#).
 - For 20-49 employees, we are most likely in compliance.
 - [Employment practices should be reviewed](#)
 - For 50+ employees, to stay in compliance we need an AODA compliant website as soon as we pass the 50 employee threshold. January 1, 2021 is the compliance date for an AODA compliant website for non-profits of this size.
 - For 50+ employees, we will want to have more written documentation about how we will create written accommodation plans for employees
 - For 50+ employees we need to have and post a multi-year accessibility plan on our website. This plan needs to be developed in early 2021. The years covered can be in the past, for example 2018 - 2022, and summarize all we have done and what we plan to do.
 - Check that service counters in Wolseley will be AODA compliant, as part of our [requirement to make public spaces accessible](#).
- Government of Ontario: [Completing your accessibility compliance report](#) for 20 or more employees.
- Government of Ontario: [Accessibility Compliance Report](#), download the pdf
This is the report we will have to download, fill out, and submit by June 30, 2021. We can work on it in parts, but each page needs to be filled out in full before we can move to the next page. We can submit it any time from now until June 30. We must update it when we have more than 50 employees because our requirements will change.
- Government of Ontario: [How to make websites accessible](#)
By law, a private or non-profit organization with 50+ employees must make new and significantly refreshed public websites accessible to WCAG 2.0 Level A by January 1 2014 and **beginning January 1, 2021** to WCAG 2.0 Level AA, other than criteria 1.2.4 (live captions) and 1.2.5 (pre-recorded audio descriptions).
- Essential Accessibility. [AODA Website Compliance Checklist](#).
Summarises AODA compliance guidelines for 50+ employees and gives a WCAG checklist for A and AA levels.

Sample (DRAFT) statement of intent

Statement of Commitment to Accessibility January 1, 2021

Stella's Place is committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in equal opportunity and are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in our community in a timely manner, and in cooperation with them. We are identifying and removing barriers to accessibility in our workplace and service space; including our current physical space at 18 Camden and our new facility at 54 Wolseley, and in our virtual service spaces; including our website, our social media, and as we support participants online and by phone from our business and home offices. Stella's Place will strive to improve accessibility and provide equitable access to all employees, participants, visitors and everyone in the Stella's Place community.

As an organization with between 20 and 49 employees, we are in full compliance with the AODA requirements for a non-profit organization of our size. We have already put into place many measures to improve opportunities for people with disabilities in the areas of:

- General Requirements
- Policy and Procedure
- Customer Service
- Information and Communications
- Employment, and the
- Built Environment

It is our firm intention to continue to meet accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). As a growing and vital community mental health organization, we are working to complete a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, as required for organizations with 50 or more employees, and to post this plan on our website by **Spring 2021**. We have not yet reached the 50 employee threshold, but we aim to have our accessibility plan in place and posted in advance of this requirement. The plan will show, in detail, all of the accessibility benchmarks we have already met and all the accessibility goals we are currently working towards.

As one of our main accessibility goals for 2021, we are engaged, right now, in a significant website redesign. We started the co-design process with our web design team and several Stella's Place-involved young adults on September 3, 2020. We are working to create an inspiring and useful website that reflects young adults' needs and interests. Through careful planning, employee training, and expert consultation, our new

website will meet or exceed all WCAG AA accessibility standards. We hope to launch our new site by **date**. We can't wait to show you what we have planned!