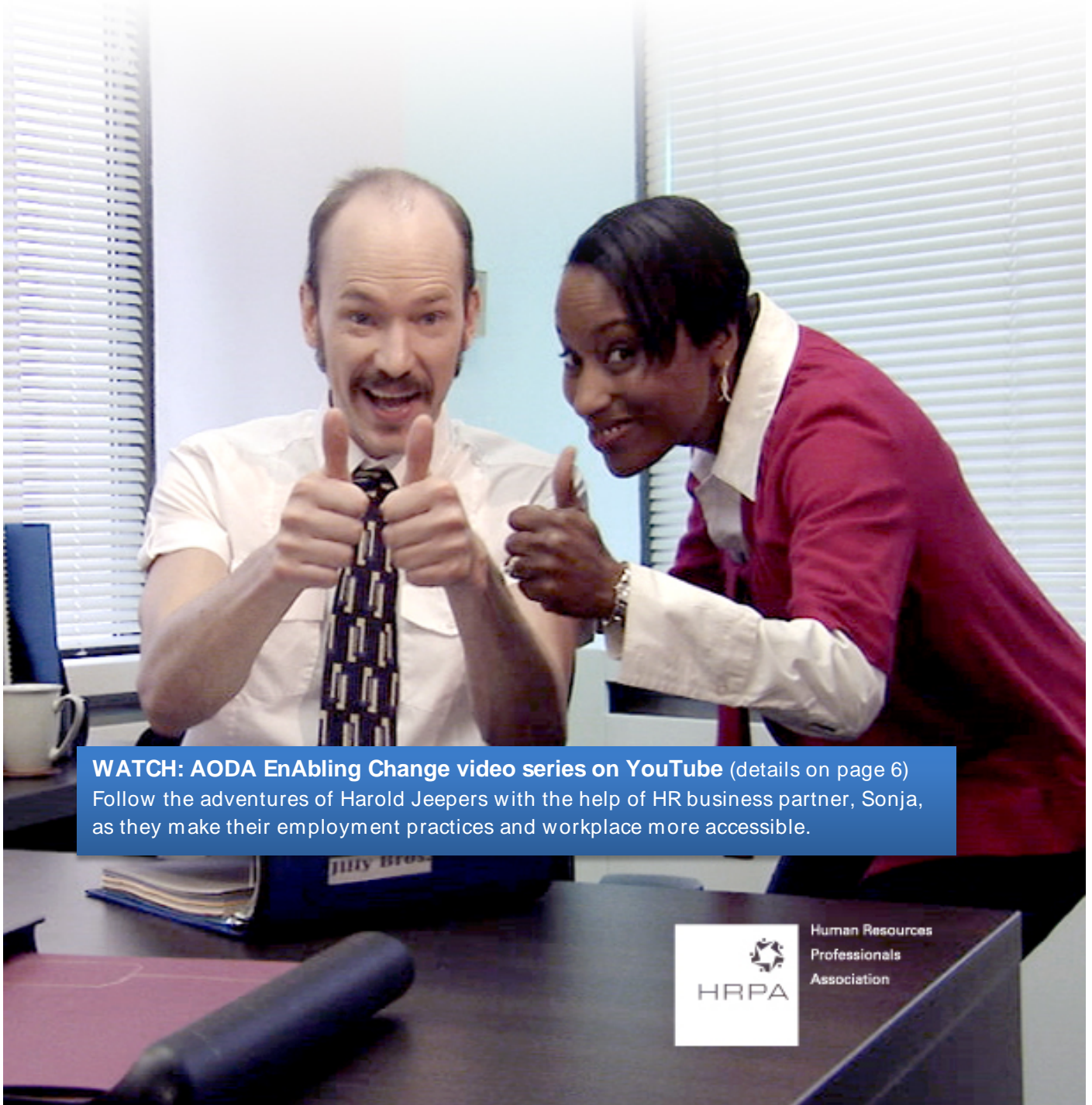


AODA: Employment Standard

Communications Guide



WATCH: AODA EnAbling Change video series on YouTube (details on page 6)
Follow the adventures of Harold Jeepers with the help of HR business partner, Sonja, as they make their employment practices and workplace more accessible.



The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and the Employment Standard Toolkit

Brought to you by the Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA)

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A message from HRPA

The Ontario workforce includes a large, diverse and talented group of people that is under-represented and under-utilized in the workplace. They are persons with disabilities.

The AODA Employment Standard is law

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and the Employment Standard makes accessibility in organizations a regular part of finding, hiring, supporting and communicating with employees who have disabilities. Under the AODA, organizations are required to comply with a number of accessibility standards. Including the Employment Standard, so that organizations can be more welcoming and inclusive for everyone. For example, under the Employment Standard, all organizations must provide workplace emergency response information and plans to employees with disabilities by 2012.

We make it easy to explain to businesses their responsibilities under AODA

But understanding the employer's duty to accommodate doesn't have to be difficult or confusing. HRPA has made it easy to understand and simple to execute through the [Harold Jeepers' series of six short videos](#). Each video deals with one of the requirements of the Employment Standard. It also includes CHANNELS, a companion guide to the videos that provides information about the Employment Standard that employers can use to build awareness of the Standard with their managers and other staff. The Harold Jeepers' video series and guide are produced by HRPA as part of an EnAbling Change partnership with the Government of Ontario and are available in English, French and in accessible formats.

Use this toolkit to inform your network

This toolkit is designed to give you more details on AODA and the Employment Standard. It contains resources to help build your knowledge about AODA and share relevant messages within your network, including:

1. Background, definition and facts you can use in your communications to members, employees and other stakeholders;
2. A short summary on AODA that could be used as an article for an upcoming newsletter, intranet or blog update or other relevant communication channel;
3. Suggested messages that you can post on social media channels (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn) to help engage your organization's stakeholders;

4. Links to the Harold Jeepers video series from HRPAs to help you learn more about AODA and the Employment Standard.

For other resources on AODA and the Employment Standard, visit www.hrpa.ca/aoda. You can also access information about the other AODA standards on the website.

I hope you find this toolkit helpful for your organization. Don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Chris Larsen

Vice president, Membership and Marketing, HRPAs

Toolkit Resources

LEARN: Background, definitions and facts about AODA and the Employment Standard

To help you understand the basics about AODA and the Employment Standard, we've provided the following background, definitions and facts that you can have ready at your fingertips. It might also provide some useful content for executive, internal and stakeholder communications. You can read more about AODA and the Employment Standard at www.hrpa.ca/aoda.

Background

- In 2005, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) was passed. The overall goal is an accessible Ontario by 2025.
- The Employment Standard applies to paid employment and will help employers make their employment practices and workplaces more accessible to potential and existing employees with disabilities.
- Both large organizations (50 or more employees) and small organizations (1 to 49 employees) are subject to the Employment Standard and the entire regulation.
- By 2012, all organizations must provide workplace emergency response information and plans to employees with disabilities.

Definitions

- **Disability:** The restriction in a person's functional capacity that results from an impairment, i.e. functional limitations. Some common disabilities include Developmental/Intellectual, Hearing, Learning, Mental Health, Physical/Mobility, and Visual.
- **Barrier:** Anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technology barrier or a policy or practice.
- **Employment Standard:** Applies to paid employment and will help employers make their employment practices and workplaces more accessible to people with disabilities. This standard builds upon existing requirements under the Ontario Human Rights Code and applies to these human resource activities:
 - Developing and documenting individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities
 - Recruitment, assessment and selection and informing employees of supports
 - Accessible formats and communication supports
 - Workplace emergency response information
 - Facilitating return to work
 - Performance management, redeployment and career development and advancement

Facts

- One in seven people in Ontario have a disability. Over the next 20 years, that number will rise to 1 in 5 as the population ages.
- Staff retention is 72% higher among persons with disabilities, which is equal to savings of millions of dollars every year in hiring and training costs.¹
- Most accommodations for employees with disabilities cost less than \$500. It's a small investment for great employees.²
- It is estimated that one million Canadians have some kind of disability that makes it difficult or impossible for them to read conventional print. Our aging population means an increasing number of people are becoming part of this group.

¹ Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services

² Job Accommodation Network

TELL: Internal communications story

The following is a pre-written article on AODA and the Employment Standard. It is meant to provide more information and highlight the benefits of hiring people with disabilities. Feel free to insert the article into your upcoming internal communications channels, such as a newsletter, intranet or blog.

Accessibility is good business: what you need to know about the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

When we think of people living with disabilities, well-known Canadians like Rick Hansen and Terry Fox often come to mind. But in fact, one in seven people in Ontario have a disability; and over the next 20 years that number will rise to 1 in 5 as the population ages.

Studies show that when businesses hire people with disabilities, the pool of potential employees becomes larger, absenteeism decreases, and staff retention is 72 per cent higher among persons with disabilities.

This adds up to millions of dollars every year in hiring and training costs.

Organizations have a big role to play in helping to make sure that accessibility for persons with disabilities (development/intellectual, hearing, learning, mental health, physical/mobility and visual) is a normal part of their operations. It's also legislated. Under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and its Employment Standard, persons with disabilities must be provided with equal opportunities for employment with respect to recruitment, retention and accommodation.

Accessibility is not simply about ramps or automatic door openers; it's about understanding that people with disabilities may have different needs. The Employment Standard mandates that every organization that provides goods, services or facilities to the public or to other organizations, and has one or more employee, must:

- Develop and document individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities
- Recruit, assess and select and inform employees of supports
- Provide accessible formats and communication supports
- Develop and communicate workplace emergency response information
- Facilitate return to work
- Ensure performance management, redeployment and career development and advancement

The dates to meet the Employment Standard requirements differ between large and small organizations, but all organizations must have workplace emergency response information in place starting January 1, 2012.

To help provide more details and training on how to comply with the Employment Standard, the Human Resources Professionals Association, as part of an EnAbling Change partnership with the

Government of Ontario, developed six video shorts that each deals with one of the requirements of the Standard.

HRPATV CHANNELS is a companion piece to the videos that provides information about the Employment Standard, and that employers can use to build awareness of the Standard with their managers and other staff.

To learn more about the AODA and its Employment Standard and view the EnAbling Change video series and CHANNELS guide, visit www.hrpa.ca/aoda.

SHARE: Suggested messages for social media channels

Social media is a valuable tool to help spread messages about AODA and the Employment Standard to your stakeholders and influencers. We've prepared a number of messages below for your organization to use on social media channels such as LinkedIn, Twitter or Facebook.

To see how we're communicating about AODA and our own involvement, please follow us on Twitter ([@HRPA](#)) and our LinkedIn groups.

- 1 in 7 people in Ontario have a disability. Over the next 20 years, that number will rise as the population ages. Are you #AODA compliant?
- Accessibility is more than just automatic doors and ramps. Are you making your workplace better for people with disabilities? #AODA
- Looking for information on how to make an accessible workplace for people with disabilities? Watch these @HRPA videos:
<http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL9B60A211E2F7F952&feature=plcp> (bit.ly this)
#AODA
- @HRPA is an excellence resource to learn more about #AODA and accessibility in the workplace <http://www.hrpa.ca/Pages/AODA.aspx>
- Organizations everywhere are making sure that they're #AODA compliant. Get all the facts via [@HRPA](#)
- We want to know what you're doing to make your organization more accessible #AODA
- Creating a province where every person who lives or visits can participate fully makes good sense, for our people, businesses & communities

WATCH: AODA EnAbling Change video series

The Harold Jeepers' collection of Employment Standard video shorts

Want a visual and entertaining way to learn about AODA and the Employment Standard? HRPAs, as part of the EnAbling Change partnership with the Government of Ontario, has produced a series of six short videos centred around a main character, Harold Jeepers. Each video deals with one of the requirements of the Employment Standard. Watch the videos to live, learn and laugh with Harold Jeepers, or share them within your network.

Harold Jeepers is a new manager at Jiffy Brothers Industries. He has arrived at a time when the company is making their employment practices and workplace more accessible to potential and existing employees with disabilities. Harold has to get up-to-speed on the requirements of the Employment Standard and he's relying on his HR business partner, Sonja, to keep him on the right track.

Here is a short summary of each video:

[Part 1: Developing and Documenting Individual Accommodation Plans - AODA Enabling Change Series](#)

Meet Harold Jeepers. He has just landed a manager's job at Jiffy Brothers Industries. He's got a lot to absorb, including his role in helping the company make their employment practices and workplace more accessible. Harold learns ten things about individual accommodation plans. But first he has to win an epic battle with the office photocopier.

[Part 2: Keeping Accessibility Needs and Plans in Mind - AODA Enabling Change Series](#)

New manager, Harold Jeepers has a challenge. Jiffy Brothers Industries is about to close one of its locations and he's been asked to come up with redeployment suggestions. Harold thinks he has the right suggestions. But does he?

[Part 3: Accessible Formats & Communication Supports - AODA Enabling Change Series](#)

New manager, Harold Jeepers is thinking of ways he can make Jiffy Brothers Industries' communications more accessible to all employees. Some of his solutions might be innovative, but will they work? And what's up with the mime?

[Part 4: Workplace Emergency Response Information - AODA Enabling Change Series](#)

New manager, Harold Jeepers wants to make sure Jiffy Brothers Industries' emergency response plans work for all employees. But Harold gets a little too hands-on in his approach. Will Harold's antics become the talk of the office?

[Part 5: Recruitment & Informing Employees of Supports - AODA Enabling Change Series](#)

Manager, Harold Jeepers and his Jiffy Brothers Industries' HR business partner, Sonja, are discussing a new human resources policy for recruitment. That's when Rose appears, plops down a communications access screen and starts typing. What six things does Rose reveal?

[Part 6: Facilitating Return to Work - AODA Enabling Change Series](#)

New manager, Harold Jeepers is delighted that Janice is returning to Jiffy Brothers Industries after a long period of absence due to a disability. During lunch, Harold leans back in his chair and that's when things take a turn for the strange. Snow White was never like this.



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The Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA) is Canada's HR thought leader with more than 20,000 members in 28 chapters across Ontario. It connects its membership to an unmatched range of HR information resources, events, professional development and networking opportunities and annually hosts Canada's largest HR conference. In Ontario, HRPA issues the Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) designation, the national standard for excellence in human resources management and the Senior Human Resources Professional (SHRP) designation, reserved for high-impact HR leaders.
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