2021 Annual Status Report

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) was established to make goods, services, and facilities accessible to all people with disabilities in all public, private and not-for-profit sectors by January 1, 2025.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA, 2005), became law on June 13, 2005, provided the province with a mandate to develop, implement and enforce sets of accessibility standards. Lambton College, as a large public sector organization must comply with the following AODA Standards:

- Accessibility Standards for Customer Service
- Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, which include additional general requirements:
- Accessibility Standards for Information and Communications
- Accessibility Standards for Employment
- Accessibility Standards for Transportation
- Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment

Commitment to Accessibility

Lambton College is 100% committed to meeting its obligations under the requirements of Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and to providing a safe and barrier free environment for all students, faculty, support staff, administrative staff and members of the public. We recognize the value in creating an inclusive environment for everyone. A place where colleagues, clients, staff and students are treated with dignity, respect and equality and valued for their contributions to our team.

Message from President Rob Kardas:

At Lambton College, we aspire to be a beacon of leadership in the Sarnia-Lambton community in areas related to accessibility and equity. By working to create and maintain barrier-free environments and services, we ensure people of all abilities can participate and engage in every aspect of our College, thereby building a strong and talented workforce and student body that drives excellence and innovation through its diversity. An accessible and inclusive Lambton College is one in which everyone can live a full and authentic life with an equitable opportunity to contribute to our mission. This is a vision towards which we must continuously strive.

Legislative Updates

- There were no new legislative updates introduced in 2021.
- January 1, 2021, was the deadline for employers with 50 or more employees to make website and web content accessible which was completed at Lambton.
- The next major step towards accessibility in our sector will be the creation of the Education Accessibility Standard which reflects Ontario's ongoing commitment to making education more accessible for students with disabilities.

The annual review of our Multi-year Accessibility Plan was completed by our AODA Steering Committee. The plan outlines the College's AODA obligations until 2025. We continue to work in accordance with this multi-year plan developed to meet our organizational obligations under the AODA, Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (O. Reg. 191/11, s. 4 (1) (2)).

College AODA Committee

The College AODA committee is comprised of various employees who represent key areas accountable for accessibility initiatives.

Achievements for 2021

Accessibility -Student Services

- Developed or updated several communication mechanisms and operational processes in order to create more administrative efficiencies and increase effectiveness of student resources and time spent on direct student service.
- Added capacity to store digital documents into student files for more efficient service and more confidential storage of student files
- Developed upload capacity for confidential documentation in order for students to provide digital documents securely.
- Added/provided professional development for faculty and staff on accommodation planning and accessibility services.
- Enhancements of assistive technology processes and supports related to accommodate testing provision.
- Consolidation of testing services to include accommodated testing in order to eliminate drain on resources and space required to deliver core Accessibility services on Accessibility office.

Community Employment Services

- Reviewed online documents, forms and Service Charter to verify AODA compliance and availability of alternate formats
- Reviewed all videos used to ensure they provide closed caption / voiceover options.

Information Technology

- With Marketing and Communications guidance, provide continual support to employees posting content and verifying AODA compliance to https://mylambton.ca
- Accessibility checks to all documents prior to posting on both https://mylambton.ca
- Leveraged Microsoft O365 Platforms by default – O365 is accessible by design to help people and organizations be more productive and inclusive as they create, communicate, and collaborate from any device. Examples: Microsoft Teams with closed captioning capabilities, Microsoft Forms with support for screen readers.
- Leveraged Microsoft Windows 10 with built-in accessibility options across all College computers.
- Deployment of Microsoft Windows 11 started with additional built-in accessibility options.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

- Provide continual support to employees posting content and verifying AODA compliance to https://lambtoncollege.ca
- Accessibility checks to all documents prior to posting on both https://lambtoncollege.ca
- Maintained an accessibility score of 89% or higher
- Score is lowered by Siteimprove software not accounting for the high contrast option
- Monthly meetings to review accessibility
- All printed material has a disclaimer to provide the material in an alternate format

Human Resources

Recruitment, orientation, and onboarding processes have been updated to strengthen communication around the availability of accommodations. These updates include:

- Lambton College's commitment is posted to the website which states: Lambton College is committed to accommodating applicants with disabilities throughout the hiring process, in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). The Human Resources Department will work with applicants requesting accommodation at any stage of the hiring process.
- Each job posting includes with the following statement: Lambton College is committed to an inclusive, barrier-free selection process. If contacted regarding this competition, please advise the interview coordinator of accommodation measures you may require during our selection process. Information received relating to accommodation needs of applicants will be addressed confidentially.
- Accommodation options are offered verbally during the interview when participants are asked if the question(s) need to be repeated.
- Applicants are able to review interview questions in written format fifteen (15) minutes prior to their interview if requested.
- Interviews can be conducted in a virtual format for various reasons including the need to accommodate people with disabilities related to travel and / or mobility barriers.
- Successful applicants are notified of policies for accommodating employees with disability's during the delivery of the offer of employment.
- All of the appropriate training on the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation and Human Rights code as it pertains to persons with disabilities are linked to new employee contracts and must be completed as a condition of employment.
- In conjunction with the Health, Safety and Environmental Coordinator, P&OD has developed and uses a written process for accommodating employees with disabilities. Individual accommodation plans are developed and reviewed by the employee, supervisor, physician, and HSC Coordinator. Once approved, the HSC Coordinator maintains the plan, adjusting for any new medical information received from the physician.

Lambton College continues to ensure that its feedback processes are accessible to persons with disabilities.

Lambton College continues to provide or arrange for accessible formats or communications supports when requested.

Facilities Management

- With new buildings under construction, the Facilities Department continues to comply with Built Environment Standard, focused on the new standards for public spaces and modifications to existing structures.
- Chemistry labs have been renovated and include barrier free student stations and fume hood.
- Biology labs have been renovated and include barrier free student stations and fume hood.
- Landscape improvements continue to be made and include:
  - ➢ Wider sidewalks
  - ➢ Curb cut-outs
  - ➢ The installation of tactile plates

Library

- Working with heads of Libraries and Learning Services and the Ontario College Library Services in the acquisition of visual media and digital content.
- Continues to respond to alternate format requests of library materials to registered students, faculty and staff with a perceptual disability

Lambton College is committed to meeting the upcoming AODA obligations of 2022.