

2023 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 2023.
- 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 2023

Community Employment Services

- Met with clients online for virtual appointments.
- Offered Employment Services at local and rural libraries.
- Staff completed Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion training.
- Increased mobile services to provide support to rural areas in Lambton County. Employment Consultants had offered services in four county libraries to increase access to in-person services: Brights Grove, Camlachie, Forest, and Wyoming. This followed stints in Watford, Corunna, and Thedford libraries.
- Partnership with the County to offer services in the Lambton County Shared Services Centre in Sarnia. They were on rotation with other service providers to help provide wraparound supports to those furthest from the labor market.

Facilities Management

Campus Shop and C & B Building Improvement

- Added two universal washrooms on levels 1 & 2 of C Building.
- Added two new men's and women's accessible washrooms on levels 1 & 2 of C Building.
- Two new front entrance ramps with railings and lighting.
- New ramp to access upper terrace space and new code blue emergency duress station.
- New stairwell in C building with access to all levels with tactile plates and slip resistant nosing strips in existing stairwell.
- New lighting, flooring, tactile strips, and plates.
- New reception desk includes accessible desk height on both sides for staff and students.
- New doors/frames, card reader, auto operators and push buttons for B3 entrance.

Human Resources Relocation

- Accessible main reception entrance door, new reception desk with accessible heights.

Information Technology Relocation

- New reception desk includes accessible desk height on both sides for staff and students.

International Office

- New reception desk includes accessible desk height on both sides for staff and students.

Landscaping – Campus Road Enhancements

- Extending south lane way out to Wellington Street to allow better traffic flow.

- New sidewalk out to Wellington Street with curb cut-outs for better transition from sidewalk to roadway
- London Road curb cuts and tactile plates installed.
- 3-way crosswalk with tactile plates and curb cuts.
- New sidewalk that connects to the Howard Watson Trail, access beside the Smart House with curb cut outs and tactile plates, access north of the North Building and access from London Road.

Signage

- New campus directional signage and building ID signage.
- Planning to provide information highlighting building locations, accessible/cyclist/motorcycle parking spots, and exits & entrance to the college campus (upcoming this summer)

Xerox Relocation

- Include new push/wave button in the corridor for the staff entrance.

Human Resources

- Benefit and Pension forms can now be utilized electronically.
- HR representatives attended events to extend outreach to underrepresented communities promoting employment opportunities at Lambton College.
- Created a new Faculty resource on understanding accommodations.

Information Technology

- With Marketing and Communications guidance, provide continual support to employees posting content and verifying AODA compliance to <https://mylambton.ca>.
- Used 3rd party software to evaluate and maintain an industry standard or higher score for AODA compliance.
- Accessibility checks to all documents before posting on both <https://mylambton.ca>.
 - Worked with staff members to use the tool in Adobe to update PDFs before posting.
- 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 transcription and intelligent recaps of meetings.
 - Additional AI support solutions are being made available that provide further AODA checks in the Microsoft 365 solutions.
- Continue to leverage Microsoft Windows 11 with built-in accessibility options across all College computers.

Library

- Continued to work with the Ontario College Library Services (OCLS) and College Libraries Ontario (CLO) in the acquisition of visual media and digital content including e-books and materials in a variety of formats, including video and audio.
- Lambton College participates in LEAP, an initiative hosted by OCLS. As participants in LEAP, we participate in evaluating the accessibility of e-resources, adding to the growing repository of accessibility assessment reports that library staff can review to help make acquisition decisions, support library users, and advocate for accessible e-resources.

- We are in the information-finding stage of drafting information regarding accessibility for the library and learning commons web site.
- Over the past year we have made changes to the physical space in the library to make it more accessible for mobility-device users. The improvements included:
 - i. de-cluttering of the entrance to the tutoring room.
 - ii. carpeting on the ramp was replaced with hard flooring.
 - iii. Two sit-stand desks were installed in the circulation area, which increases accessibility for staff.
 - iv. An area of the library that was previously a storage cubicle was removed, which widened spaces near the study rooms, which has increased the ability to move around in the library.
- All public workstations, and loanable iPads/laptops continue to have the accessibility Read&Write application installed and updated.

Marketing, Communications and Recruitment

- Launched the new LambtonCollege.ca website (Sep 2023) fully accessible.
- Launched new Colour Contrast features in January 2024.
- Added an accessibility icon to the top of the website for easy access to physical outages on campus as part of the new web launch.
- Provide continual support to employees posting content and verifying AODA compliance to <https://lambtoncollege.ca>.
- Accessibility checks to all documents before 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.

Student Success Initiatives

- Developed a Lion's Mind video for secondary students who are transitioning out of high school, addressing a range of options related to accessibility and supports available to help students overcome barriers.
- An Inclusive Spaces Committee was founded in Fall 2023 by a student in the Community Integration through Cooperative Education program in collaboration with a Learning Specialist to create a student-led initiative that aims to advocate for belonging and creating inclusive opportunities for all students to enjoy.

Teaching and Learning Commons

- Facilitated two 1-hour internal workshops related to accessibility for faculty.
- To support Universal Design for Learning (UDL) we offered an 8-week certificate course completed by 14 employees.
- Several custom UDL workshops were developed and offered to schools and departments to further student support and development.

Lambton College is committed to meeting the upcoming AODA obligations of 2024.