Human Resources Legislative Update

Ontario Releases Proposed Amendments to Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation

Date: August 16, 2012

On August 15, 2012, the Ontario government published proposed amendments to the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IAS) (Ontario Regulation 191/11) under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* for public consultation. The amendments, once finalized, are expected to come into force the later of January 1, 2013, or the day they are filed.

The bulk of the proposed amendments would establish new standards for “new” or “redeveloped” accessible public spaces, such as:

- recreational trails;
- beach access routes;
- outdoor public use eating areas (e.g. public parks, hospital grounds, university campuses);
- outdoor play spaces (e.g. areas that may contain play equipment such as swings, or features such as logs, rocks, sand or water where the equipment or features are designed to provide play opportunities and experiences for children and caregivers);
- exterior paths of travel, including those with ramps, stairs, curb ramps, depressed curbs, accessible pedestrian signals, and rest areas;
- accessible parking spaces;
- service counters, fixed queuing guides, and waiting areas; and
- maintenance of accessible elements.

Compliance dates for the proposed new public spaces standards range from 2015 to 2018 depending on the size and type of organization (public, private, not-for-profit). Small private and not-for-profit organizations are exempt from some of the proposed new standards. Accessibility reports would be filed as follows:

- annually for government bodies and the legislative assembly as of December 31, 2013;
- every two years for designated public sector organizations as of December 31, 2013;and
- every three years for large organizations as of December 31, 2014.

The rest of the proposed amendments address specific provisions of the current *Accessibility Standards for Customer Service* and the *Integrated Accessibility Standards* regulations.

Interested persons and stakeholders are invited to submit comments on the proposed amendments by October 1, 2012.

For more information on the IAS, see our *FTR Now* of June 9, 2011, “Ontario Government Releases Final Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Under the *AODA*.”