

accessibility for people with disabilities

What does accessibility for people with disabilities mean to M&M Meat Shops?

As the population ages, the number of people with both visible and invisible disabilities is naturally increasing. Government institutions, retail establishments and public facilities need to become more cognizant of that fact. All of us are seeing more people with wheelchairs, scooters, walkers, guide animals and hearing and seeing problems than ever before. It's the price of getting old. Our job as responsible food retailers is to do our best to accommodate this growing group of Canadians.

In an effort to accommodate those people with disabilities, the Government of Ontario introduced the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) in 2005. The timetable for enactment of the initial steps for retailers is drawing near. This act is being rolled out in stages over a period of years and will provide those people with disabilities the options for freedom of choice and flexibility of movement, so they can live as normal a life as possible with dignity and independence. Access to institutions and buildings is an important part of that choice. That also means easy access to M&M Meat Shops' stores and our services.

Although the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act is Ontario-only legislation, we anticipate that other provinces will likely follow suit in the near future. Traditionally, legislation that has been created or initiated by Ontario is usually accepted by other provinces shortly thereafter. By initiating the following measures across our whole chain, we will once again take the lead in ensuring that the needs of our customers are met. We have developed this package for all stores that includes the M&M Meat Shops policies and procedures established to apply these standards in our stores as well as the various standards to which all retailers will be required to adhere.

M&M Meat Shops Ltd. has always prided itself on offering the best customer service possible, so that we can meet the needs and expectations of our customers. Complying with this act is no exception. The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act is designed "to break down barriers so that people of all abilities can live and work to their full potential". One of the basic standards of this accessibility is in the area of customer service. The task of ensuring our customer service includes those with disabilities is simple, but is a task that needs to be taken seriously.

We are currently developing a mandatory training program for all Franchisees and Product Consultants to assist in understanding and implementing the M&M Meat Shops' AODA policies and procedures. This training will use a variety of tools, including webinars, government resources, and printed materials to equip all M&M Franchisees and Product Consultants with the skills and knowledge required to comply with the AODA.

Please review this package with your staff. Further information regarding the training program will be available soon. If you have any questions, please contact your Field Consultant or the Human Resources Department.

To create a friendly food shopping experience that makes our customers say, "I'll be back!"