

Communication Access

People with disabilities have the right to expect businesses and services to be accessible to them.



People, who use wheelchairs, can have ramps to get into buildings.

People, who use sign language, can have sign language interpreters.

People, who are blind, can have documents in Braille.

And now, there is the new communication symbol.

Individuals, who have communication disabilities, should be able to expect businesses and services to be able to communicate effectively with them.

The communication symbol is about:

- Interacting with two people
- Expressing as well as understanding messages
- Listening and watching all the different ways people communicate – speech, gestures, pictures, spelling or using a device.



For people who have speech and language disabilities, communication access is:

- Understanding what is said
- Having others understand their messages

- Using the communication methods that work best for them such as speech, writing, pointing to objects or pictures, spelling words, typing on a communication device or human assistance
- Reading and understanding written information
- Signing documents and completing forms in ways that are accessible for them

People who have speech and language disabilities are unique and have their own accessibility requirements when using businesses and services.

Communication Access Now (CAN)

CAN is a national campaign to promote accessibility for people who have speech and language disabilities.

CAN's goal is to improve accessibility to goods, services and opportunities for all people who have speech and language disabilities by providing information to:

- Government, accessibility legislators and policy makers
- Businesses, organizations and community services
- People who have speech and language disabilities and their families
- Communication and disability services

CAN is important because

- People with disabilities, including speech and language disabilities have a legal right to equal access to goods and services.
- Over half a million Canadians have speech and language disabilities not caused by hearing loss. They may have cerebral palsy, autism, cognitive disability, traumatic brain injury, aphasia after a stroke, dementia, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, Multiple Sclerosis or other conditions.
- People with communication disabilities can face serious barriers to goods and services.

- The accessibility needs of this population are not well represented in existing legislation or guidelines on a provincial, national and international level.
- Businesses and organizations can do simple things to make their services communication accessible.
- Healthcare, emergency, police and justice services require protocols, training and services to ensure they can communicate effectively with people who have speech and language disabilities.
- Everyone, including seniors and people not proficient in English or French, can benefit from improved communication access.

CDAC

CAN is operated by Communication Disabilities Access Canada (CDAC) with a funding contribution from the Government of Canada's Social Development for Disability Program. CDAC is a national, non-profit, charitable organization that promotes human rights, accessibility and inclusion for people who have speech and language disabilities.

Learn how to make your business or service communication accessible by visiting

www.communication-access.org

Contact Information

Barbara Collier

Executive Director

Communication Disabilities Access Canada

Tel. 416-444-9532

Barbara.collier@sympatico.ca

www.cdacanada.com