

MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY SAFETY AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

2007-2008

Accessibility Plan



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Introduction

In June 2005, the Ontario government took a strong stand on accessibility when it passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) into law.

The AODA lays out a comprehensive road map to make Ontario accessible to all people through the development, implementation and enforcement of new, mandatory accessibility standards for some of the most important aspects of people's lives.

Five key areas have been identified for the first accessibility standards: customer service, transportation, information and communications, the built environment, and employment.

The accessible customer service regulations were approved by the Lieutenant-Governor and will come into force on January 1, 2008.

An initial proposed standard on accessible transportation has been developed by the Transportation Standards Development Committee. It was posted for public review on June 27, 2007 and will be available for public comment until September 28, 2007.

The Standards Development Committee that will draft the proposed information and communications standard was established and began meeting in April, 2007. The committees developing the accessible built environment and accessible employment standards have been selected and will begin meeting in the fall of 2007.

While the government is moving forward to implement the AODA, there will be a transition period where government and the broader public sector will continue to meet their obligations under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA). These obligations will remain in effect until they are repealed and replaced by standards under the new act.

Under the ODA, Ontario government ministries, municipalities, hospitals, school boards, colleges, universities and public transportation organizations are required to develop annual accessibility plans to make policies, practices, programs, services and buildings more accessible to people with disabilities. These plans must be made available to the public. Accessibility planning efforts to date have developed a strong foundation for the development of accessibility standards that will mean real and effective change.

This document is the fifth annual accessibility plan developed by the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services. It highlights the achievements of

the 2006-07 plan and outlines the commitments for 2007-08 so that no new barriers are created and, over time, existing ones are removed.

This ministry intends to build on its achievements by implementing initiatives that support the government's commitment to continue to make Ontario an inclusive and accessible province where people of all abilities have a chance to fully achieve their potential.

Message from the Minister



Under the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* (ODA) all public sector and broader public sector organizations are required by law to have an annual accessibility plan and to make it available to the public. This is the fifth year in which plans have been written and are being implemented by organizations such as ours across the

province.

This year marks the second anniversary of the landmark *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, (AODA) – legislation that will require the development, implementation and enforcement of accessibility standards in key areas of daily living.

The accessible customer service regulations were approved by the Lieutenant-Governor on August 11, 2007 and will come into force on January 1, 2008.

An initial proposed standard on accessible transportation has been developed by the Transportation Standards Development Committee and was posted for public review between June 27 and August 31, 2007.

The Standards Development Committee that will draft the proposed information and communications standard was established and began meeting in April 2007. The committees developing the accessible built environment and accessible employment standards have been selected and will begin meeting in the fall of 2007.

Here at the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, we are building on the success of our previous four plans and continuing to look for ways to better meet the needs of people with disabilities who come into contact with this ministry, regardless of whether they are staff, members of the general public or ministry stakeholders.

My ministry is committed to improving accessibility through identifying, removing and preventing barriers, working together within our ministry, across government and in our relationships with our stakeholders.

This ministry continues to work to better educate staff on accessibility. For example, over 500 managers received employment accommodation and return to work training this year. Since 2003 the ministry has trained well over 1,400 managers. In addition, the ministry's Human Resources Branch participated in

the development of the *Guide to Writing Barrier-Free Employment Ads in the OPS*, which was made available to all managers and employees in June 2007.

I am also pleased to report the launching of the *Emergency Preparedness Guide for Persons with Disabilities/Special Needs* on May 11, 2007. The Guide was developed jointly by Emergency Management Ontario (EMO), a branch of the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, and the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario (ADO) with the participation of 20 stakeholder groups who provided subject matter expertise.

The Guide is the most comprehensive emergency preparedness resource for persons with disabilities and special needs in Canada and provides vital information to the over 1.5 million Ontarians with visible and/or non-visible disabilities. The Guide is available in French and English at www.ontario.ca/emo. Alternate formats, including five other languages (i.e., Chinese, Italian, Portuguese, Punjabi and Spanish), Braille, large-print and audio are under development for roll-out by the end of 2007. Hard copies of the Guide are available from Emergency Management Ontario, the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario, and through specific stakeholder organizations.

The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services has recently undergone changes in its organizational structure that will greatly increase our ability to focus our resources and achieve our mandate to serve all of Ontario's diverse communities to keep our province safe. The establishment of a new Organizational Effectiveness Division, whose key objective is to build a healthy, diverse and inclusive workplace, is consistent with the ministry's commitment to continue its efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities, whether they are ministry employees, stakeholders, or clients. Our goal is to foster and maintain an inclusive organizational culture with employees who are committed to accessible public service.

If you have any comments or concerns, I encourage you to contact Silva Minassian, ministry accessibility lead, at (705) 329-6647 or by email silva.minassian@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Monte Kwinter', with a stylized, flowing script.

The Honourable Monte Kwinter

Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services

Report on Achievements

2006 - 2007 Accessibility Improvement Initiatives

The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services was successful in achieving, and in some cases, surpassing, planned commitments outlined in its 2006-2007 accessibility plan. This section provides a status report.

Commitment

The training tool “May I Help You? Welcoming Customers with Disabilities” will be piloted and/or incorporated in three areas of the ministry involved in educating front-line staff.

Status

Complete

Action

The Accessibility Planning Working Group followed up with the three areas of the ministry, which had previously received hard copies of the training tool.

The Ontario Correctional Services College (OCSC) reviewed the tool and expressed interest in developing a self-directed learning tool. Ontario Police College (OPC) reviewed the tool and made it available to OPC employees/instructors. Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) introduced the tool to OPP Academy for use in block training and shift briefings.

Timeframe

2006-2007 accessibility planning cycle.

Commitment

We will continue to provide training and related resources on accommodating employees and job applicants with disabilities to all new and existing managers.

Status

Ongoing

Action

The ministry continues to provide employment accommodation training to new and existing managers. From October 2006 to September 2007, 20 additional training sessions took place with over 500 managers attending. This brings the total number of managers who have taken employment accommodation training since 2003 to 1,466.

The Director, Human Resources Branch issued a memo to all ministry managers to highlight the importance of employment accommodation in removing barriers for employees with disabilities and to inform managers of the revised MGS *Employment Accommodation and Return to Work Operating Policy*. The memo included information on how to access the revised policy and related support materials and requested that all managers ensure that their employees are also made aware of the revised policy and how to access it.

In addition, the ministry's Human Resources Branch participated in the development of the *Guide to Writing Barrier-Free Employment Ads in the OPS* which was made available to all managers and employees through the OPS Careers portal.

Timeframe

The additional sessions were delivered between October 2006 and September 2007. The memo from the Human Resources Director was sent in March 2007.

The Guide to Writing Barrier-Free Employment Ads in the OPS was posted on June 25, 2007.

Commitment

As new or revised ministry forms are developed, we will conduct an assessment of them to ensure they are accessible to persons with disabilities.

Status

Complete

Action

The ministry's Communications Branch has confirmed that all new forms are in PDF format and are accessible. In addition, the ministry's Private Investigators

and Security Guards (PISG) Branch, in consultation with Forms Management Services, Ministry of Government Services, has converted all public forms used by the Branch to an accessible format.

Timeframe

2006-2007 accessibility planning cycle.

Commitment

The Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC) has primary responsibility for the issuing of Requests for Proposal (RFP) to Architects, Engineers and other Consultants who will be hired to work on the Ministry's major capital projects such as the new South-West Regional Detention Centre in Windsor and the new Toronto Jail. The ORC is required to include a requirement that all those responding to these RFPs demonstrate experience in the design and construction of barrier-free facilities.

Status

Complete

Action

The South-West Regional Detention Centre is now referred to as "South-West Detention Centre" and the new Toronto Jail is now referred to as "Toronto South Detention Centre". The Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal (PIR) has assigned these projects to Infrastructure Ontario (IO). The ministry's Facilities Emergency Management and Security Branch continues to work with Infrastructure Ontario to ensure that all architects, engineers and other consultants involved in capital projects have demonstrated experience in the design and construction of barrier-free facilities.

Timeframe

2006-2007 accessibility planning cycle.

Commitment

We will conduct a review of the Emergency Management Statute Law Amendment Act to identify opportunities to enhance accessibility and to prevent barriers for persons with disabilities.

Status

Complete

Action

There have been no barriers for persons with disabilities identified in the *Emergency Management Statute Law Amendment Act*, which came into force on June 30, 2006. In addition, Emergency Management Ontario, in partnership with the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario, developed the *Emergency Preparedness Guide for Persons with Disabilities/Special Needs*.

The Guide was developed with the participation of 20 stakeholder groups who provided subject matter expertise and is the most comprehensive emergency preparedness resource for persons with disabilities and special needs in Canada. It provides vital information to the over 1.5 million Ontarians with visible and/or non-visible disabilities.

The Guide is available in English, French at www.ontario.ca/emo. Alternate formats, including five other languages (i.e., Chinese, Italian, Portuguese, Punjabi and Spanish), Braille, large-print and audio are under development for roll-out by the end of 2007. Hard copies of the Guide are available from Emergency Management Ontario, the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario, and through specific stakeholder organizations.

Timeframe

2006-2007 accessibility planning cycle. The *Emergency Preparedness Guide for Persons with Disabilities/Special Needs* was launched on May 11, 2007.

Commitment

The ministry will pilot *Best Practices Guidelines for Discharge Planning*, which include a focus on offenders with special needs, in selected adult institutions.

Status

Complete

Action

The proposed guidelines were piloted in eight correctional facilities for a period of six months. Site visits were conducted to each facility to review files and conduct focus groups. Data input and analysis was also completed.

Timeframe

2006-2007 accessibility planning cycle.

Commitment

The ministry will continue to support consultants' work in order to validate the Physical Demands Hazards Analysis and to develop appropriate pre-employment physical abilities test for prospective correctional officers.

Status

Complete

Action

The ministry has continued to work with the consultants on this project. The physical abilities test for prospective correctional officers was developed and finalized. In June 2007 the new test was presented to Adult Institutional Services Committee and was approved by the Committee.

Timeframe

2006-2007 accessibility planning cycle.

Commitment

The ministry's Accessibility Planning Working Group will explore and recommend options for internal tracking of the completion of online ODA training for ministry managers.

Status

Completed

Action

The ministry's Accessibility Planning Action Group reviewed this matter in depth. Internal tracking was not a recommended option. Corrections sent a memo to all managers reminding them of the requirement. In addition, managers attending training on employment accommodation are reminded of the requirement and provided with information on how to access it online.

In July 2007 the ministry received an updated report from Accessibility Directorate listing the names of all ministry managers who have taken the training from its inception in 2000 up until the end of June 2007. Divisional reports were generated from the list and distributed to division/program area heads for appropriate follow up.

Timeframe

Review of tracking options was completed during the 2006-2007 accessibility planning cycle. Memo to managers in Corrections was sent in November 2006. Divisional reports were distributed in September 2007.

Commitment

Should the ministry decide to merge its two intranet sites in the future, the ministry's Communications Branch will work to ensure that accessibility is incorporated into the development of the new site or any new intranet sites that are the responsibility of Communications Branch.

Status

Complete

Action

The ministry's new intranet site was launched and the ministry's Communications Branch has confirmed that the new site is accessible.

Timeframe

The new ministry intranet was launched on June 1, 2007.

Commitment

Once funding allocation through the infrastructure plan 2007-2008 has been confirmed, the ministry's Facilities, Emergency Management and Security Branch will make a decision regarding the prioritization of a project to install an elevator in the visitor's area of Monteith Correctional Centre to improve accessibility to persons with physical disabilities.

Status

Complete

Action

A project inspector and the project designer visited Monteith Correctional Centre and found that there is a functioning elevator in the Jail part of the complex. Any visitor with a physical disability can use this elevator to access the visitors' level. The program staff at Monteith Correctional Centre can ensure that the offender is taken from the Correctional Centre part of the complex to the Jail in order to meet with visitors.

In addition, the ministry's Facilities, Emergency Management and Security Branch initiated and completed a new project at the Brampton Probation and Parole Office to install an automatic door opener. An offender who used a wheel chair had recently been assigned to this office which was accessible, but the lack of a door opener created a barrier for the offender.

Timeframe

The project inspector and project designer visited Monteith Correctional Centre on April 12, 2007. The Brampton Probation and Parole project was completed in March 2007.

Commitments — Measures to Prevent New Barriers

In the coming year, the ministry will continue its efforts to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities. We will focus on education and awareness raising measures as a strategy to help prevent new barriers for ministry employees, stakeholders and clients. This section summarizes these commitments.

Customer service

Commitment

The ministry will ensure that within the next three years, all ministry staff will participate in the course “May I Help you: Welcoming Customers with Disabilities”.

Employment

Commitment

The ministry is committed to continue delivering management training in the area of employment accommodation and return to work. The ministry will also continue to take steps to ensure that all ministry managers complete the online training module “ODA: Maximizing the Contribution of Employees with Disabilities”.

Commitment

The ministry will be undertaking an Employment Systems Review which will include applicants and employees with disabilities in its scope.

Communications and information

Commitment

A number of new forms will be introduced with the implementation of the new *Private Security and Investigative Services Act*. The ministry's Private Security and Investigative Services (PSIS) Branch will continue to work with Forms Management Services, Ministry of Government Services, to ensure the new forms are available in an accessible format.

Commitment

The ministry will, upon request, make ministry publications (intended for the public) available in a format that is accessible to persons with disabilities, unless it is not technically feasible to do so.

Built environment

Commitment

The ministry will continue to reduce existing barriers within ministry facilities to accommodate special needs as they may arise and to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Commitments — Barriers to be Addressed

The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services commits to continue to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities in the coming year. This section summarizes these commitments.

Employment accommodation

Barrier

Employment Accommodation information is not consistently shared with all new employees.

Commitment

The ministry will ensure that new employees are made aware of roles and responsibilities in relation to employment accommodation and resources available to them.

Responsibility

Accessibility Planning Working Group and ministry managers.

Timeline

January 2008.

Communications and information

Barrier

Lack of effective mechanism for persons with disabilities to get involved in or provide feedback on accessibility planning activities in the ministry.

Commitment

The ministry will take steps to ensure that ministry employees, and in particular, employees with disabilities, are informed about accessibility planning and invited to participate in accessibility planning activities in the ministry.

Responsibility

Executive Lead, Accessibility Planning.

Timeline

Fall 2007.

Built environment

Barrier

No designated drop-off zone for persons with disabilities at some government-owned facilities occupied by the Ministry.

Commitment

The Ministry will develop a prioritized list of its facilities to determine the most effective way to provide access for persons with disabilities.

Responsibility

Facilities, Emergency Management and Security Branch

Timeline

Initiate preparation of the list in the 2007-08 accessibility planning cycle.

Barrier

Four of the classrooms at the Ontario Police College include tiered lecture theatre style flooring. This limits access to persons with a physical disability in all but the back row.

Commitment

The ministry is initiating a project to remove the false flooring and to reconfigure the classrooms to provide full access to persons with physical disabilities.

Responsibility

Facilities, Emergency Management & Security Branch.

Timeline

Funding for the project was approved in January 2007. Project design phase has begun and is anticipated to be completed by March 2008. Construction is scheduled to start in fiscal year 2008-2009.

For More Information

Questions or comments about the ministry's accessibility plan are always welcome. Please phone or email:

General inquiry number:

Toronto local: 1-416-317-9911 or 1-416-326-5000

Toll free: 1-866-517-0571

TTY number:

Toronto local: 1-416-326-5511

Toll free: 1-866-517-0572

E-mail: jus.g.sgcs.webmaster@jus.gov.on.ca

Ministry website address: <http://www.mcscs.jus.gov.on.ca/>

Visit the Ministry of Community and Social Services Accessibility Ontario web portal at: www.mcscs.gov.on.ca/accessibility/index.html. The site promotes accessibility and provides information and resources on how to make Ontario a barrier-free province.

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