



SPECIAL INITIATIVES

- [Biodiversity](#)
- [Species at Risk](#)
- [Far North Ontario](#)
- [Tree Atlas](#)

OK

IN THIS SECTION

- [About the Ministry Home](#)
- [Minister's Biography](#)
- [Joint Message on Realignment of Forestry](#)
- [Far North Ontario](#)
- [Results-based Plan 2010-11](#)
- [Results-based Plan 2009-10](#)
- [2010-2011 Accessibility Plan](#)
 - [2009-2010 Accessibility Plan](#)
 - [2008-09 Accessibility Plan](#)
 - [2007-08 Accessibility Plan](#)
 - [2006-07 Accessibility Plan](#)
- [Service Commitment and Service Standards](#)
- [Gallery](#)
- [Organization Chart](#)
- [Fourth Quarter Investments](#)
- [Corporate Publications](#)
- [Search](#)

BROWSE BY TOPIC

- [Climate Change](#)
- [Energy](#)
- [Fish & Wildlife](#)
- [Forests](#)
- [Land](#)
- [Licences & Laws](#)
- [Maps & Geographic Information](#)
- [Parks & Protected Areas](#)
- [Public Safety](#)

2010-2011 ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Ministry of Natural Resources

Table of Contents

- [Introduction](#)
- [Report on Accessibility Achievements for 2009-2010](#)
- [Report on Accessible Customer Service Requirements](#)
- [Information and Communication Commitments](#)
- [Other Accessibility Commitments](#)
 - [Accessibility Improvement Initiatives to Identify, Remove, or Prevent Barriers in preparation for AODA standards currently under development](#)
- [Act\(s\) and Regulation\(s\) being reviewed to Identify Barriers to Persons with Disabilities](#)
- [Glossary of Terms/Acronyms](#)
- [For More Information](#)

Introduction

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act AODA, 2005, sets out the roadmap to make Ontario accessible by 2025. Under this act, accessibility standards are being developed and implemented to break down barriers in key areas of everyday life.

These standards will increase accessibility for people with disabilities in the areas of customer service, information and communications, employment, transportation, and the built environment.

The Government of Ontario is preparing to lead the way towards an accessible province. In 2010, the Government of Ontario was the first public service organization to report compliance with the first standard, Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation (Ontario Regulation 429/07).

As we await the additional standards under AODA, we are guided by the Ontario Human Rights Code and obligations set out in the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA), 2001.

Each year, the government sets the course to prevent, identify, and remove barriers through annual accessibility plans required under the ODA. Building on last year's plan, the 2010-11 accessibility plan will continue moving the Ministry of Natural Resources towards the goal of an accessible province for all Ontarians.

To view other ministries' Accessibility Plans please visit [Ontario.ca](#).

[To Table of Contents](#)

Report on Accessibility Achievements for 2009-2010

The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) has worked hard over many years to ensure that our services and products are accessible to all Ontarians. Of special note, the Ministry of Natural Resources has worked hard to achieve full compliance to the regulatory requirements embedded in the Accessible Customer Service Standard (ACSS) by January 1, 2010. The following provides the highlights of the achievements realized by the Ministry of Natural Resources during 2009-10.

- [Science & Research](#)
- [Water](#)

Focus Area: Accessible Customer Service Standard
Achievements

- The ministry participated in the development of the Ontario Public Service (OPS) Accessible Customer Service Policy, leading to the provision of the policy document to the public. Further, the ministry fully adopted and implemented the policies and practices embedded within the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy.
- All classified and unclassified staff completed the necessary training to meet and exceed the requirements specified in the ACSS by January 1, 2010. This achievement included the training of over 4000 staff.
- MNR ensured that all third-party service providers who were deemed within the scope of the ACSS were trained to the requirements specified in the ACSS. This included the training of over 450 third-party service providers of hunter education in Ontario.
- The ministry strengthened and enhanced established public feedback processes and mechanisms to ensure that the requirements of the ACSS were fully met. This included:
 - enhancements to the ministry's internet-based feedback process;
 - enhancements to the services provided by the Natural Resource Information Centre (NRIC); and
 - the ability to directly contact the ministry's accessibility lead using a number of communications channels (e.g., telephone, email, fax, mail).
- MNR developed and posted a new [Service Standards Website](#) on the ministry public-facing internet site providing the public with accessibility feedback standards.
- The NRIC upgraded the ministry Tele Typewriter (TTY) services, including the training of NRIC client service staff in all aspects of TTY operation.
- The ministry developed and implemented a service disruption protocol to fully meet the requirements of the ACSS. The ministry's Emergency Management Section took a lead in developing a public service disruption notification that was responsive to the needs of ministry clients with a disability.

Focus Area: Information and Communications
Achievements

- All MNR staff have been directed to resources provided on the broader AccessOPS intranet site related to accessible document format guidelines and standards.
- The ministry provides customers with publications and documents in alternate accessible formats when requested, as per established government processes and procedures.
- The ministry was an active participant in the Accessible Information and Communications inter-ministerial committee throughout 2009-10.

Focus Area: Built Environment
Achievements

- Ontario Parks completed a significant number of facility projects specifically to upgrade access for persons with a disability. These projects include:
 - Lake Superior – comfort station
 - Pancake Bay – comfort station
 - Wasaga Beach – comfort stations (2)
 - Mara – registration office
 - Sibbald Point – comfort station
 - Killbear – comfort station
 - Rainbow Falls – vault toilet
 - Presqu'île – comfort stations (2)
 - Wheatley – comfort station
 - Pinery – comfort stations (3)
 - Rushing River – Reno Museum access
- The ministry did undertake facility alterations and improvement projects across the province. These projects are being designed and implemented to be in compliance with the Ontario Building Code barrier-free standards. Of note are the following projects that were undertaken in 2009-10:
 - Owen Sound Area Office Relocation, Owen Sound
 - Robinson Place Alterations, Water Street, Peterborough

- Bondar Place Altérations, Sault Ste. Marie
- Whitney Block Alterations, Toronto
- Signage was enhanced in several MNR government offices to upgrade client accessibility needs (e.g., accessible washroom signage, elevator signage)
- The ministry was an active participant in the Accessible Built Environment inter-ministerial committee throughout 2009-10.

Focus Areas: Employment Achievements

- The ministry strengthened its commitment to implement all relevant acts and regulations which protect the rights and entitlements of persons with a disability in employment practices, such as, recruitment of ministry employment vacancies.
- The ministry was an active participant in the Accessible Employment Standards inter-ministerial committee throughout 2009-10.

[To Table of Contents](#)

Report on Accessible Customer Service Requirements

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07) came into force on January 1, 2008. All OPS ministries were required to comply with the Regulation by January 1, 2010.

The OPS was the first public organization to file their compliance report with the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario in January, 2010. In order to sustain compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation, it is vital that ministries continue to look for opportunities through their accessibility planning process to continue to embed accessibility in all areas of planning, programs, and policies.

Enhancing Accessibility of MNR Related Recreational Activities

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New

The ministry will identify areas for improvement to accessibility of current MNR public recreational activities, such as camping, crown land use for outdoor recreation, hunting and fishing.

Planned Action(s)

The ministry will undertake a broad review of the accessibility of current MNR public recreational activities, including camping, Crown land use for outdoor recreation (e.g., hiking, wildlife viewing), hunting and fishing. Areas for improvement will be identified, including recommendations to enhance accessibility of MNR recreational activities. Scope of implementation will depend on available resources.

Implementation Timeframe: Implementation September 2010 through to October, 2011.

Accessible Customer Service Policy and Practices

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: Ongoing

MNR will continue to implement the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy, as well as associated practices and procedures, in accordance with the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (ASCS).

Planned Action(s)

MNR fully adopted the OPS Customer Service Policy and Accessibility Guidelines as a key guide to accessibility planning and implementation in the ministry. MNR will continue to use the OPS Customer Service Policy as a tool in developing future policies, legislation and programs and will partner with the OPS Diversity Office and other OPS ministries to ensure a consistent policy approach.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing implementation through to October, 2011.

Accessibility Procurement Policies and Practices

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: Ongoing

MNR will ensure that managers, supervisors, and staff are provided with policies and procedural guidance on accessibility in the procurement of goods and services. The ministry will continue to implement the government-wide guidelines for accessibility in procurement.

Planned Action(s)

MNR will continue to adhere to the OPS Procurement Directive and the Procurement Operating Policy. The ministry will communicate the policies and guidelines through staff training and will incorporate them in ministry procurement procedures.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing implementation through to October, 2011.

Accessibility Training and Awareness

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: Ongoing

MNR will implement accessibility training in accordance with the training requirements of the ASCS.

Planned Action(s):

The ASCS requires the ministry to:

- train staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other people who interact with the public or other third parties on the Ministry's behalf on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard; and
- train staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other people who are involved in developing policies, practices, and procedures on the provision of goods or services on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard.

MNR requires all ministry staff to successfully complete the OPS Centre for Leadership and Learning's "May I Help You? Welcoming Customers with Disabilities" e-learning courses to fulfill the mandatory regulatory training requirements. The ministry's training strategy includes a tracking, monitoring, and reporting process for all training. Training in accessible customer service has been incorporated into the process for new hires as well as recurring unclassified staff positions. The OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and associated practices and procedures is included in ministry training initiatives, as well as enhancing knowledge of assistive devices available for customers with a disability.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing implementation through to October 2011. Initial staff and third party service providers training completed by January 1, 2010. Training of new staff, including new hires and students, and third party service providers, ongoing January 2010 through to October 2011.

Service Disruption Notification

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry will continue to implement and improve on the established accessibility service disruption protocol developed in 2009.

Planned Action(s)

The ASCS requires that "every designated public sector organization...shall prepare a document that sets out the steps to be taken in connection with a temporary disruption..." The ASCS guidelines go further to identify the following four steps:

- the circumstances under which a temporary disruption notice will be provided and where it will be posted;
- what steps will be taken when an unexpected disruption occurs;
- information that will be included in the notice of a temporary disruption; and
- what alternative facilities or services, if any, can be made available during the temporary disruption to continue to provide service to people with disabilities.

The MNR developed a document in 2009 that sets out the steps to be taken in connection with a temporary disruption. The ministry will continue to implement the service disruption protocol at all ministry locations.

The ministry's Emergency Management Section will be strengthening existing emergency management service disruption protocols across MNR, ensuring that accessibility requirements are fully met.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing implementation through to October, 2011.

General Enhanced Communications with Person(s) with a Disability: Commitment to Accessible Meetings

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry will enhance its efforts to organize and host accessible meetings.

Planned Action(s)

The ministry is committed to enhancing the accessibility of ministry-organized and hosted meetings. The ministry conducted a thorough review of current best practices within the OPS and other agencies leading to the identification of approaches and practices appropriate to MNR. Guidelines will be communicated broadly across the ministry for implementation in the next year.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing implementation through to October, 2011.

Continuous Improvement of Customer Service Delivery for Persons with a Disability

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New

The ministry will use the OPS Inclusion Lens as a means to identify areas of improvement in accessibility service delivery.

Planned Action(s)

The OPS Diversity office recently introduced the Inclusion Lens, a tool for all ministries to use in the review of legislation, policies, programs and services relative to diversity and accessibility. The ministry will apply the tool to current service delivery as it relates to accessibility and make improvements as required.

Implementation Timeframes: Ongoing implementation through to October, 2011.

Ontario Parks Admissions Accessibility Policy

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry will continue to support the Ontario Parks policies and practices associated with admission fees to Ontario provincial parks for support persons of a person with a disability.

Planned Action(s)

Ontario Parks has an existing policy and associated practices relative to admission fees for support persons who accompany a person with a disability. Ontario Parks' policy states that if a person with a disability enters the park for day-use purposes, all of the occupants of the vehicle are granted entry under the discounted disabled vehicle permit. The same approach is in place for camping, where all members of the camping party are granted the discounted rate. MNR will continue to support the Ontario Parks' policy and associated practices relative to admission fees for support persons who accompany a person with a disability.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing implementation through to October, 2011.

Accessibility Feedback Process

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry has established a number of processes for people, including persons with a disability, to provide feedback on the delivery of ministry service. The processes include timely response to any feedback and action on complaints. The ministry will continue to adapt and improve on its accessibility feedback process.

Planned Action(s)

The ASCS requires the ministry to ensure that there are effective processes available to receive and respond to feedback on accessibility concerns. Additionally, each ministry must make information about the feedback process readily available to the public. The ministry provides the public with a wide range of feedback mechanisms, including feedback vetted through the ministry public-facing website and the MNR 1-800 telephone services managed by the Natural Resource Information Centre (NRIC). The ministry will review the existing processes each year to identify potential improvements.

During the time period January 1 to October 31, 2010, the ministry received public feedback on accessibility-related issues or processes, including:

- 54 calls directed through the ministry NRIC 1-800 telephone information line;
- accessibility feedback directed by the public through the MNR "Contact Us" feedback forms (corporate and program area feedback received); and
- feedback directed through e-mail (5) and telephone calls (1) directed to the MNR accessibility lead for consideration and action

In all cases, the ministry responded to the feedback in a timely and appropriate manner, as per the service standards posted on the MNR website. Feedback channels were used to request ministry publications in alternate (accessible) formats; the requests were fulfilled in a timely manner.

Implementation Timeframes: Ongoing implementation through to October, 2011.

[To Table of Contents](#)

Information and Communication Commitments

Information and the methods of communication are key to delivering many government programs and services to the public. It is essential that we provide the same quality and service to everyone in the province.

In anticipation of the pending standards guiding information and communications, the Government of Ontario is continuously looking for opportunities to prevent and remove barriers to persons with disabilities when creating, procuring, conveying, receiving or distributing information and communications to the public.

Enhancing Accessibility of Communications and Information related to MNR Related Recreational Activities

Focus Area: Information and Communication

Commitment: New

The ministry will identify areas for improvement to accessibility of current communication and information products associated with MNR public recreational activities (e.g., camping, crown land use for outdoor recreation, hunting and fishing).

Planned Action(s)

The ministry will undertake a broad review of the accessibility of current communication and information products associated with MNR public recreational activities (e.g., Ontario Parks' guide, fishing regulations publication, hunting regulations publication). Areas for improvement will be identified, including recommendations to enhance the accessibility of communication and information products associated with MNR recreational activities. Scope of implementation will depend on available resources.

Implementation Timeframe: Implementation September 2010 through to October, 2011.

Accessible Document Standards and Guidelines

Focus Area: Information and Communication

Commitment: New

Develop accessible document standards and guidelines and communicate to all ministry staff for implementation.

Planned Action(s)

Develop accessible document standards and guidelines based on best practices used both within and external to the OPS. Provide communication to all staff regarding the application of the standards and guidelines.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing implementation through to October, 2011.

Accessibility of Information and Communications Materials

Focus Area: Information and Communication

Commitment: Ongoing

Encourage staff to incorporate accessibility considerations into the preparation of information and communication materials to ensure that products are accessible to everyone.

Planned Action(s)

Develop a training strategy to encourage all staff to take the training videos prepared by the Diversity Office. The training will include creating accessible documents (i.e., Microsoft word and PDF) and how to create Braille-ready documents.

The MNR will continue to work cooperatively with Publications Ontario to provide publications in ODA-compliant format. All ministry staff will be provided with ongoing guidance on procedures for responding to requests for publications in accessible formats.

Provide communication to all staff regarding best practices when sending PDF documents and e-mails to ensure a greater level of accessibility.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing implementation through to October, 2011.

Meeting Public-Facing Website Accessibility Standards

Focus Area: Information and Communication

Commitment: Ongoing

The MNR will comply with accessibility standards associated with the ministry's public-facing website as currently defined in the ODA and as prescribed in the Integrated Accessibility Regulation (pending passing into law).

Planned Action(s)

The ministry hosts an ODA-compliant, public-facing website that has been developed and maintained at the current OPS web standards. Until such time as the provisions of the new Integrated Accessibility Regulation is passed into law and compliance schedules are determined, the ministry will continue to comply with ODA standards for all new website additions. The ministry web coordinator will work closely with the other ministries and central agencies to ensure that the ministry is consistent in the OPS approach to web accessibility standards over time.

Implementation Timeframes: Ongoing implementation through to October, 2011.

[To Table of Contents](#)

Other Accessibility Commitments

Accessibility Improvement Initiatives to Identify, Remove, or Prevent Barriers in preparation for AODA standards currently under development

In anticipation of the upcoming standards, the Government of Ontario has planned several corporate accessibility initiatives in the following areas: transportation, employment, built environment, and others. The goal of these focus areas is to make it easier for people with disabilities to travel in Ontario, to ensure accessibility for people with disabilities across all stages of the employment life

cycle, and to break down barriers in buildings. Many of the corporate initiatives identified for 2010-2011 aim to support ministries in their journey towards compliance with the upcoming standards. To review a list of OPS corporate initiatives please refer to the Ministry of Government Services 2010-2011 Accessibility Plan.

Eliminating Barriers in Employment Policies, Processes, and Practices

Focus Area: Employment

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry will continue to identify and eliminate barriers in employment policies, processes, practices, or tools for people with disabilities.

Planned Action(s)

As part of the hiring process, the ministry will alert the public that accommodations are available on request and provide accommodations to all applicants during the entire hiring process.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing implementation through to October, 2011.

Employment Standards Development

Focus Area: Employment

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry will work with HR Ontario and other ministries to ensure a consistent and coordinated approach to meeting the accessibility employment standards of the new Integrated Accessibility Regulation.

Planned Action(s)

The ministry will work closely with other ministries, HR Ontario, and the OPS Diversity Office to ensure a consistent and effective approach to the accessibility employment standards as part of the new Integrated Accessibility Regulation. These actions will be supported through the strong adherence to all related legislative and regulatory instruments, including Bill 168 and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing implementation through to October, 2011.

Built Environment Considerations in Enhancing Accessibility of MNR-Related Recreational Activities

Focus Area: Built Environment

Commitment: New

The ministry will identify areas of improvement for built environments relative to enhancing accessibility of MNR public recreational activities.

Planned Action(s)

The ministry will undertake a broad review of the accessibility of current MNR public recreational activities. Areas for improvement will be identified, including recommendations to enhance accessibility of MNR recreational activities. Accessible built environment considerations are important in the overall review and recommendation of actions to be taken. Scope of implementation will depend on available resources.

Implementation Timeframe: Implementation September 2010 through to October, 2011.

Ministry Commitment to Built Environment

Focus Area: Built Environment

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry will meet the Ontario Building Code standards for barrier-free design of Ontario Government facilities in its facility acquisitions, construction, or significant renovation to existing or leased facilities.

Planned Action(s)

The ministry will undertake facility alterations and improvement projects across the province. These

projects are being designed and implemented to be in compliance to Ontario Building Code barrier-free standards.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing implementation through to October, 2011

Contribution to Regulation and Policy Development

Focus Area: Built Environment

Commitment: Ongoing

The MNR accessibility lead and the manager, Operations and Development (Ontario Parks), will participate in the OPS Built Environment Inter-Ministerial Committee (BE IMC).

Planned Action(s)

The OPS established a BE IMC to support the development of the AODA Built Environment Accessibility Standard. The accessibility lead and the manager, Operations and Development, Ontario Parks, will be active participants in the BE IMC.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing implementation through to October, 2011.

[To Table of Contents](#)

Act(s), Regulation(s), Policy(s) being reviewed to prevent Barriers to Persons with Disabilities

In support of the commitment to remove and prevent barriers for persons with disabilities, the Government of Ontario will continue to review all new legislation, regulation, and policies under development to identify and remove barriers.

Commitment to Implement OPS Inclusion Lens in Legislative and Policy Development

Focus Area: All

Commitment: Ongoing

The MNR will ensure that all new legislation, regulation, and policies will be reviewed to ensure that barriers to accessibility are identified and removed.

Planned Action(s)

The OPS developed an Inclusion Lens tool to assist the OPS to identify and remove barriers to accessibility. MNR staff were involved in the development and testing of the tool. The ministry will ensure that MNR staff involved in legislative, regulatory, and policy development will have training in the Inclusion Lens, leading to full application across the ministry in the review of new legislation, regulation, and policy.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing implementation through to October, 2011.

[To Table of Contents](#)

Glossary of Terms / Acronyms

ACSS- Accessible Customer Service Standards

AODA – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

ASCS – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

NRIC – Natural Resource Information Centre

ODA – Ontarians with Disabilities Act

OPS – Ontario Public Service

TTY – Tele Typewriter

[To Table of Contents](#)

For More Information

Questions or comments about the ministry’s accessibility plan are always welcome.

Please phone: Ron Evers, Accessibility Lead, 1-613-342-0952

General inquiry number: 1-800-667-1940

TTY number: 1-866-686-6072

1-800 number: 1-800-667-1940

E-mail: ron.evers@ontario.ca

Ministry website address: <http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/>

Visit the [Ministry of Community and Social Services Accessibility Ontario](#) web portal. The site promotes accessibility and provides information and resources on how to make Ontario an accessible province for everyone.

Alternate formats of this document are available free upon request from:

[ServiceOntario Publications](#)

Phone: 1-800-668-9938

TTY: 1-800-268-7095

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[To Table of Contents](#)

[HOME](#) | [SEARCH](#) | [CONTACT US](#) | [SITE MAP](#) | [FRANÇAIS](#) | [ONTARIO.CA](#)



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