



MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES

HOME | ABOUT US | PROGRAMS | PUBLICATIONS | NEWSROOM | GALLERY | JOBS | CONTACT US

Home > About the Ministry > Corporate Plans and Publications > 2013-2014 Accessibility Plan

Special Initiatives >

In This Section ▾

- ▶ About the Ministry Home
- ▶ Minister's Biography
- ▶ Messages and Statements from the Minister
- ▶ 2,4,5-T Herbicide and Health Concerns
- ▶ Register online for Natural Resources activities
- ▶ Ministry Organization
- ▶ Corporate Plans and Publications
- ▶ Results-based Plan 2013-14
- ▶ Results-based Plan 2012-13
- ▶ 2012-13 Accessibility Plan
- ▶ Corporate Publications
- ▶ Gallery

What We Do >

Explore Government >

Contacts >

2013-2014 Accessibility Plan

Ministry of Natural Resources

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Table of Contents

- [Introduction](#)
- [Section One: Report on Measures Taken in 2012 - 2013](#)
 - [Customer Service](#)
 - [Information and Communications](#)
 - [Employment](#)
 - [Built Environment](#)
 - [Procurement](#)
 - [Leadership in Accessibility](#)
- [Section Two: Measures Planned for 2013 - 2014](#)
 - [Customer Service](#)
 - [Information and Communications](#)
 - [Employment Accommodation](#)
 - [Built Environment](#)
 - [Leadership in Accessibility](#)
- [Section Three: Report on Legislative Review](#)
 - [Acts, Regulations and Policies Reviewed in 2012 - 2013](#)
 - [Acts, Regulations and Policies to Be Reviewed in 2013 - 2014](#)
- [Glossary of Terms and Acronyms](#)
- [How to Contact us](#)

Introduction

For over ten years, every ministry has set a course to prevent, identify and remove barriers for persons with disabilities. Ministries achieve this through the preparation of their annual Accessibility Plan (Plan) as required under the [Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 \(ODA\)](#). Recently, the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\)](#) established Ontario's roadmap to become accessible by 2025. It includes standards in areas such as: customer service, information and communications, employment, transportation, and the built environment. In 2010 the Ministry of Natural Resources complied with the requirements of the first standard on [customer service](#). In 2011, ministries began to meet the requirements of the other four standards found in the [Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation \(IASR\)](#). On January 1, 2012, the Ontario Public Service (OPS) published a single [Multi-Year Accessibility Plan \(MYAP\)](#). The MYAP included the following commitment:

The OPS endeavours to demonstrate leadership for accessibility in Ontario. Our goal is to ensure accessibility for our employees and the public we serve in our services, products and facilities. This Plan will build on these laws and the MYAP. It will outline how the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) will contribute to a barrier-free Ontario by 2025.

To access the 2012-2013 Accessibility Plans for MNR and other ministries, visit [Ontario.ca](#).

Section One: Report on Measures Taken in 2012 - 2013

The following lists the commitments made in last year's Plan and the measures taken.

Customer Service

- All new employees completed the necessary training for meeting the requirements specified in the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation (ASCS) including individuals who provide services on the ministry's behalf through third party agreement. While most staff completed their training online, those who required an alternate format received it. In addition to responding to employee requests for alternate formats, we anticipated the need for staff who are located in outlying areas (the far north and other locations without access to high-speed internet) and provided them with alternate formats as well (paper copy, DVD or by telephone).
- Reviewed and updated the client feedback feature (Contact Us) on the MNR public facing website in a continuing effort to be responsive to accessibility-related matters.
- Responded appropriately to feedback received from the public on accessibility-related matters. The Natural Resources Information Centre (NRIC) and MNR program areas remain committed to providing timely responses to feedback received on accessibility concerns.
- Continued to ensure notice disruption policies are in place when services are unavailable.
- Implemented the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and associated practices and procedures, in accordance with the requirements of the ASCS.
- Promoted the OPS Inclusion Lens as a tool for identifying areas for improvement with regard to accessibility in service delivery; ensuring barrier-free services and outdoor opportunities at Ontario's provincial parks reflects the ministry's ongoing commitment to applying an inclusion lens in its planning for visitor experiences.

Information and Communications

- Improved ministry information products, especially those dealing with recreational activities (e.g., Ontario Parks Guide, Ontario Fishing Regulations Highlights, and Ontario Hunting Regulations Summary, the ministry's three most popular publications). Each year these documents undergo a multi-team review and update, including how best to integrate feedback on accessibility.
- All new websites conformed to WCAG 2.0 Level AA as required (excluding live captions and audio descriptions) by January 1, 2012.
- In support of the OPS Accessibility@Source information campaign, MNR communicated to staff on the requirements for:
 - Including accessibility considerations in procurement practices;
 - Creating accessible documents; and
 - OPS policies for accessible employment (OPS Employment Accommodation and Return to Work Operating Policy).The ministry's Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) informed employees of new resources and of the mandatory training requirement on accessibility. In addition to staff emails, the information was posted on the ministry staff website.
- Staff of the Strategic Human Resources Business Branch received training on some common barriers to accessibility within documents, and best practices for creating documents that are friendly for everyone, including those who use assistive devices.
- Updated content on the internal accessibility website with information on the mandatory training requirements on IASR for all employees, and added links to select instructions and tip sheets on how to create quality accessible documents.
- Responded to public requests for publications in accessible formats according to the guidelines and procedures. Advised staff on how to meet this requirement and provide alternate formats that best address client needs.
- Raised staff awareness on the need to consider accessibility for persons with disabilities when planning public meetings; provided 'how to' resources on the employee website.
- Continued to update ministry internal forms to ensure compliance with AODA (e.g., Delegation of Authority forms).

Employment

As an employer, the ministry is working to attract and retain talented employees including those with disabilities; MNR met accessibility requirements in the following areas:

- Recruitment processes;
- Employee accommodation and supports;

- Accommodation where needed for employees returning to work after an extended medical leave; and
- Supported employees who receive employment accommodation, relative to performance management, career development and redeployment.

MNR ensured the mandatory training on accessibility for all staff on the topics of IASR and employment accommodation under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Built Environment

- The ministry ensured that alterations to existing facilities and any new construction were designed and implemented in compliance with the Guidelines for Barrier-free Design in Ontario Government Facilities (these standards are equivalent to or higher than the Ontario Building Code barrier-free design requirements).
- Ontario Parks is committed to upgrading its facilities and infrastructure relative to barrier-free access for persons with disabilities (e.g., increasing door width and installing handrails inside comfort stations); in 2012-2013 the following facilities were upgraded:
 - Algonquin - Tea Lake Mini Comfort Station Building
 - Arrowhead - Comfort Station
 - Arrowhead - Roofed Accommodation - Cabin
 - Charleston Lake - Comfort Station
 - Lake Superior - Composting Toilet
 - Mikisew - Administrative/Registration Office
 - Murphys Point - Roofed Accommodation - Cabin
 - North East Zone - Various Parks - Barrier Free Campsites
 - Pinery - Roofed Accommodation - Cabin
 - Quetico - Comfort Station
 - Silent Lake - Comfort Station
 - South West Zone - Various Parks - Barrier Free Campsites

Procurement

Supported by the tools and templates provided by the MGS Supply Chain Management Division (SCMD) and [Management Board of Cabinet Procurement Directive - 2012](#), the ministry:

- Included accessibility considerations in its procurement and evaluation practices, consistent with the *SCMD Guidelines for Meeting Accessibility Obligations in Procurement*.
- Incorporated accessibility criteria in procurement planning and documentation.
- Considered accessibility for persons with disabilities in all goods and services purchased for ministry or public use.

Leadership in Accessibility

Employee Training

The ministry fulfilled this year's training requirements (as specified in AODA regulation) by ensuring that:

- All employees completed two OPS courses on Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) as required (Working Together - the OHRC and the AODA, and IASR in the OPS); the ministry achieved 100 per cent completion rate.
- In addition, all new staff (regular and fixed-term employees including summer students) received training on how to plan for and provide accessible services and information products (May I Help You I & II).
- Employees are encouraged to complete additional learning and awareness material provided by the OPS Diversity Office, such as the Accessibility@Source information campaign comprised of topical resources and learning material.

Service Provider Training

The ministry ensured that all new hunter education instructors, in their role as service providers on behalf of the ministry, received the required training (two OPS courses on IASR); 32 individuals became instructors in 2013.

The hunter education instructors will often assist students with various disabilities including physical, mental and learning issues. The instructors actively accommodate the needs of individuals, often dedicating personal time and effort in order to individually help students gain the education they seek.

Accessibility Feedback

The Ministry of Natural Resources is responsive to feedback received on accessibility. In 2012-2013, we continued to provide feedback mechanisms for the public through a range of communication channels including:

- Electronic contact through the ministry internet site,
- Telephone contact through the Natural Resources Information Centre (NRIC) including TTY and
- Contact by correspondence and facsimile.

Section Two: Measures Planned for 2013 - 2014

Last year, the OPS published a **Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP)** that outlines how the government will identify, prevent and remove barriers for persons with disabilities. In this section, although we highlight the deliverables and timelines of the MYAP until 2016, the Ministry of Natural Resources is only reporting on measures it will take or initiate during the 2013-2014 reporting period.

Customer Service

MYAP Outcome: People with disabilities who are OPS customers receive quality goods and services in a timely manner.

MYAP Deliverables and Timelines

2013 - New staff trained on accessibility.

2013 - Accessibility criteria built into decision-making, project management, procurement, technology, infrastructure, I & IT and training.

2013 - Increased awareness in OPS of accessibility best practices in customer service and the workplace.

2014 - 2016 - Inclusion Lens applied to all policies and practices.

2014 - 2016 - Accessibility is part of all OPS business.

Ministry Proposed Measures 2013 - 2014

- Continue to implement the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and associated practices and procedures, in accordance with the requirements of the ASCS.
- All new staff will receive the ministry's required training within two weeks of their start date (May I Help You I & II; Working Together - the OHRC and the AODA; Introduction to the IASR in the OPS; Differences Matter; Workplace Discrimination and Harassment Prevention).
- In addition, new managers will continue to take "Inclusive Leadership: Leading Diversity."
- Beginning in December 2013, all managers will also be required to take the online training "Using the OPS Inclusion Lens."
- Employees in the Natural Resources Information Centre are training on the use of a TTY system.
- Continue to implement a service disruption protocol to fully meet the requirements of the ASCS.
- Staff provide appropriate responses to all ministry feedback related to accessibility.
- MNR's Accessibility Lead will continue to advise program areas on the effective design of programs, services and processes, ensuring that the needs of persons with disabilities are considered up front.
- All employees in the ministry's Corporate Initiatives Unit, Strategic Human Resources Business Branch, have been trained on using the OPS Inclusion Lens in their role as ministry subject matter experts and program advisors in Inclusion and Accessibility.

2014 - 2016

- As part of the 2014 OPS employee survey, staff will be asked if their accommodations needs are being met.
- Select staff in MNR's Strategic Human Resources Business Branch will take the OPS Inclusion Lens train-the-trainer sessions, as available.
- Require all managers to take the OPS Inclusion Lens training by December 31, 2014.

Information and Communications

MYAP Outcome: Information and Communications are available in accessible formats to all OPS staff and customers.

MYAP Deliverables and Timelines

2013 - Accessibility criteria built into decision-making, project management, procurement, technology, infrastructure, I & IT and training.

2013 - Accessibility Expo.

2014 - 2016 - Communications, websites, technology solutions and documents employ accessibility best practices.
2014 - 2016 - Accessibility Expo continues annually.

Ministry Proposed Measures
2013 - 2014

- Continue to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) standards.
- Continue to use accessibility criteria in the ministry's procurement activities and provide advice to project managers.
- Encourage staff to attend OPS sessions on creating web-ready and accessible documents.
- Communicate availability of accessible formats and communication supports to the public by January 1, 2014.
- Send delegates to the annual Expo/JOIN conference (Toronto) in order to stay current on the topic of employment for persons with disabilities.

2014 - 2016

- Continue to use accessible format standards and templates based on best practices.
- Train staff on ministry protocols, the procurement process and using specific accounting codes for dealing with requests for alternate formats and when arranging for communication supports as part of hosting accessible events.
- Send delegates to the annual Expo/JOIN conference (Toronto) in order to stay current on the topic of employment for persons with disabilities.
- Promote staff awareness of accessibility within the ministry through use of OPS-wide information opportunities.
- By January 1, 2016 all MNR websites (internal and public-facing) will conform to WCAG 2.0 Level AA (except live captions and audio descriptions).

Employment Accommodation

MYAP Outcome: People with disabilities who are OPS employees participate fully and meaningfully in services and employment.

MYAP Deliverables and Timelines

2013 - Increased awareness in OPS of accessibility best practices in customer service and the workplace.
2013 - Senior managers have accessibility performance commitments.
2014 - 2016 - Best practices on employment accommodation and return to work implemented.
2014 - 2016 - Managers and staff have accessibility performance commitments.

Ministry Proposed Measures
2013 - 2014

- Promote OPS policy on preventing barriers in employment through the OPS Accessibility@Source information campaign on OPS policies, practices and resources.
- Increase manager awareness of employment accommodation directives, policies and plans through the support of OPS awareness initiatives.
- Ensure that managers understand how to make accessible formats and communication supports available to employees.
- Include performance commitments on inclusion (which includes accessibility) for all managers and executives.
- Encourage 360 degree feedback of managers specifically on their behaviour and leadership with respect to inclusion.
- Include accessibility commitments for staff and managers in annual performance development process.

2014 - 2016

- Analyze MNR's results from the OPS Employee Survey to assess if employees are being appropriately accommodated.

Built Environment

MYAP Outcome: There is greater accessibility into, out of and around OPS facilities and public spaces.

MYAP Deliverables and Timelines

2013 - Continue to develop strategies for addressing infrastructure barriers.

2014 - 2016 - OPS ready to implement requirements of IASR's Design of Public Spaces Standards.

Ministry Proposed Measures

2013 - 2014

Government Facilities

- The ministry is committed to greater accessibility within and around the buildings and public spaces it occupies.
- All planned facility alterations and improvement projects, as well as any new construction, are designed and implemented in compliance with Infrastructure Ontario's (IO) Guidelines for Barrier-free Design of Ontario Government Facilities.
- Complete a significant number of Ontario Parks facility and infrastructure projects specifically to upgrade access for persons with a disability (e.g., increasing door width and installing handrails inside comfort stations) as follows:
 - Algonquin - Comfort Station Retrofit (2)
 - Arrowhead - Roofed Accommodation - Cabin
 - Arrowhead - Winterized Comfort Station
 - Bon Echo - Roofed Accommodation - Cabin
 - Kakabeka Falls - Entry Control Office
 - Long Point - Comfort Station (2)
 - Missinaibi - Entry Control Office
 - Rondeau - Comfort Station
 - Samuel de Champlain - Comfort Station
 - Voyageur - Comfort Station
 - Wasaga Beach - Nancy Island Building Renovations

2014 - 2016

Public Spaces

- We will be compliant on and after July 1, 2014 to IASR Design of Public Spaces Standards. For example, new recreational trails in provincial parks that are in scope with regulation will be developed in compliance with these new requirements.
- Increase manager awareness of built environment obligations in the IASR, the Ontario Building Code and Infrastructure Ontario's (IO) Guidelines for Barrier-free Design of Ontario Government Facilities.

Leadership in Accessibility

MYAP Outcome: The OPS endeavours to demonstrate leadership for accessibility in Ontario.

MYAP Deliverables and Timelines

2013 - Ongoing consultations with persons with disabilities.

2013 - Ministries continue to publish annual accessibility plans.

2014 - 2016 - Accessibility continues as strong organizational commitment.

Ministry Proposed Measures

2013 - 2014

- Establish an internal accessibility working team that includes employees with disabilities, reporting to the ministry's inclusion leadership group (both to be established in 2013-2014).
- Establish regular meetings of the working team to provide ongoing input and advice to executive leaders.
- Continue to support participation of the ministry's member on the OPS Disability Advisory Council.
- Continue to support MNR accessibility lead to participate in OPS accessibility forums and network.

2014 - 2016

- Increase awareness among staff of mental illness in the workplace by promoting OPS resources and program initiatives.

Section Three: Report on Legislative Review

In support of our commitment to improve access for people with disabilities, the Ministry of Natural Resources will continue to review government acts and regulations to identify, remove and prevent

barriers to accessibility.

Acts, Regulations and Policies Reviewed in 2012 - 2013

The ministry reviewed legislation based on its established schedule. Consistent with corporate directions, staff relied on the OPS Inclusion Lens to identify any potential barriers to people with disabilities, and vetted the work through legal counsel.

Acts, Regulations and Policies to Be Reviewed in 2013 -2014

MNR will continue its review of legislation, according to the ministry's schedule.

Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

- AODA - Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- ASCS - Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation
- IASR - Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation
- MNR - Ministry of Natural Resources
- MYAP - Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
- OPS - Ontario Public Service
- ODA - Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001
- SCMD - Supply Chain Management Division
- TTY - Telephone Typewriter or Telecommunication Device for the Deaf
- WCAG - Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

How to Contact us

Questions and/or comments about the Ministry of Natural Resources Accessibility Plan are always welcome.

Please contact the Ministry of Natural Resources at:
Telephone - Toll free: 1-800-667-1940 (Monday to Friday 8:30 am to 5:00 pm, except statutory holidays)

- TTY number: 1-866-686-6072
- Fax: 1-705-755-1677
- E-mail: NRIC.accessibility.mnr@ontario.ca
- Ministry website address: <http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca>

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.

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