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Office of Francophone Affairs 2015 Accessibility Plan

How the Office of Francophone Affairs (OFA) identified and removed barriers in the Ontario Public Service in 2015 and future accessibility commitments for 2016.

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Executive summary

Under the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA)*, ministries are required to produce, and make available to the public, annual plans that identify how ministries will identify and remove barriers to accessibility.

Like all ministries, the Office of Francophone Affairs (OFA) complies with the [Accessibility Standards for Customer Service \(ASCS\)](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_070429_e.htm) (http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_070429_e.htm) and the [Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation \(IASR\)](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_110191_e.htm#BK3) (http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_110191_e.htm#BK3). These regulations establish phased-in requirements in the following accessibility standards:

- Customer Service
- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Transportation
- Design of Public Spaces

In 2012, the Ontario Public Service (OPS) released its first multi-year accessibility plan entitled [Accessibility in the Ontario Public Service: Leading the Way Forward](https://dr6j45jk9xcmk.cloudfront.net/documents/105/ontarioaccessibilityplanen.pdf) (<https://dr6j45jk9xcmk.cloudfront.net/documents/105/ontarioaccessibilityplanen.pdf>).

The Office of Francophone Affairs' 2015 AODA Plan celebrates the tenth anniversary of the AODA and demonstrates how the measures taken in 2015 and proposed for 2016 support the key outcomes and deliverables of the OPS MYAP as we continue on our path to an accessible Ontario in 2025.

Section one: report on measures taken by the ministry in 2015

The Office is committed to accessibility for people with disabilities in our services and programs. One of the ways we do this is by complying with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Services.

Below is a list of accomplishments and examples of training and awareness initiative completed in 2015 that aim to increase staff ability to provide accessible customer services and accommodate people with disabilities:

Customer service

OPS MYAP key outcome

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

Measures taken by OFA in 2015

Training and resources

2015 commitment:

- The OFA will continue its commitment to ensure that all staff, including management, complete the mandatory training outlined in the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service Regulation
- OFA staff to complete the OPS Inclusion lens training
- Continue to ensure that accessibility is considered in internal policies, procedures and practices when conducting business with stakeholders. This will include inquiring about special requirements, accommodation needs and/or dietary restrictions in invitations to meetings, conferences and other events.

Measures taken:

- All OFA managers and staff were required to take training about the Information and Communications Standards and 100% of OFA employees have completed this training. The training is available through the Centre for Leadership and Learning, LearnOn. It covers accessible formats and communications supports, accessible websites, and accessible emergency information. The course was added to the OFA's mandatory training requirements
- To date, many, but not all OFA employees have taken the OPS Inclusion Lens e-learning. OFA will ensure that all staff has completed the training by March 31, 2016
- Accessibility requirements continue to be integrated into the OFA operational planning and OPS business processes, including the advisory committee meetings, conferences and receptions. Clients' invitations ask recipients to indicate if they have special needs, accommodation requirements and/or dietary restrictions.

Customer service feedback

The Office welcomes feedback (such as positive feedback, complaints, and suggestions for improvement) about accessibility for people with disabilities. This feedback is reviewed to assist the office improve accessibility in its services, programs and employment. Feedback may be provided in-person, in writing or by phone or TTY.

2015 commitment:

- The OFA will review and analyze accessibility feedback received from our customers in order to facilitate continuous improvement in OFA's programs and services.

Measures taken:

- The Communications Branch tracks all feedback that is received about accessibility through the OFA's general inquiry phone line and TTY, email account, and letters. Feedback is provided, in writing, by the

Communication Branch in consultation with the appropriate branch. The OFA has received no feedback or complaints in 2015.

Information and communications

MYAP key outcome

Information and Communications are available in accessible formats or with necessary supports to all OPS staff and customers.

Measures taken by OFA in 2015

Effective January 1, 2014, under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), the Ontario Public Service (OPS) ministries must provide accessible formats and communications supports when requested for someone with a disability and inform people about making requests.

This section focuses on commitments and measures taken that support compliance with these requirements.

Training and resources

2015 commitment:

- Continued consideration of accessibility requirement in the preparation and dissemination of OFA communication materials and planning initiatives. Four (4) employees will be trained on how to make documents accessible by December 2015.

Measures taken:

- The accessibility lead promoted online training modules about creating accessible documents that are offered through the Centre for Leadership and Learning, LearnON, during an all staff meeting. To date, 6 employees have taken the training.

Providing accessible formats and communications supports

Effective January 1, 2014, under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR), the Ontario Public Service (OPS) ministries must provide accessible formats and communications supports when requested, for someone with a disability and inform people about making requests.

2015 commitment:

- Continue consideration of accessibility requirement in the preparation and dissemination of OFA communication materials and planning initiatives
- Committed to provide accessible customer service to people with disabilities by offering document in alternate formats upon request
- Accessibility Lead participation to meetings, conference, and symposium offered through the OPS Diversity Office
- Communications Branch, in partnership with I&IT will continue to conduct tests of the OFA website to ensure compliance with the accessible website requirements under the IASR.

Measures taken:

- Information received from the Diversity Office, by the OEA Accessibility Lead, was shared with OEA staff
- The OEA Accessibility Lead attended the Accessibility Showcase 2015, in celebration of the 10th anniversary of the AODA. MEDEI was the host of the event and in conjunction with the official Parapan American Games, this was an occasion to discover innovative technology and assistive devices developed by Ontario companies that help improve the lives of people with disabilities
- The Office's Communications Branch, in partnership with I&IT, conducted web accessibility testing of the OEA main public website
- Cabinet Office has confirmed the transfer of the OEA website to the new Ontario.ca platform, which requires web content to meet accessible website standards.

Employment

MYAP key outcome

OPS employees with disabilities participate fully and meaningfully in their employment.

This section includes commitments and measures taken for increasing awareness and knowledge about supporting inclusive and accessible workplaces.

Measures taken by OEA in 2015

2015 commitment:

- Managers will receive additional training about the Employment Standard to support the ministry's compliance with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, and improve understanding about workplace accommodation for employees with disabilities
- Ensure discussions with the Recruitment Centre prior to commencement of hiring process to ensure there are no potential barriers in employment policies, processes and practices for people with disabilities
- Continued implementation of procedures and quality assurance measures to ensure that all candidates are informed throughout the hiring process that accommodation, alternate formats and communication support are available upon request.

Measures taken:

- All managers were required to complete the online training about the Employment Standard under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation by June 30, 2014
- All managers and supervisors were also required to take training on the topic of preventing workplace discrimination and harassment
- Discussions with Recruitment Centre occur on an on-going basis to ensure accessibility and employment accommodation best practices are followed.

Mentoring for career and inclusion program

2015 commitment:

- In September 2015, the Ministry of Attorney General extended their mentoring program called Mentoring for Career and Inclusion Program (MCIP) to OEA staff. In the application form, participants were invited to self-identify as being a member of one of five under-represented groups, including people with disabilities
- The Program is intended, through mentor and partner discussions, that mentors will have an opportunity to understand organizational culture from the perspective of employees under-represented in senior

management and understand the experiences, challenges, and barriers that may be faced by employees different from themselves. Partners will have the opportunity to increase their understanding of organizational culture and successful career management through regular interactions with a more senior individual with whom they may not have otherwise connected.

Measures taken:

- The OEA Accessibility/Diversity Lead invited MAG Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator to an OEA staff meeting to present and discuss MAG's MCIP program. One OEA staff registered to the program and was partnered with a senior individual and regular meetings have been scheduled.

Built environment

MYAP key outcome

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

Measures taken by OEA in 2015

2015 commitment:

- OEA to schedule a meeting with Accommodation Unit to explore the possibility of installing an automatic door at the main entrance of its office, to provide greater accessibility to people with reduced mobility.

Measures taken:

- OEA met with the Accommodation Unit to explore the installation of an automatic door at the main entrance of its office. Due to potential asbestos in the outside wall of the main office entrance, it was decided that when the need arise, OEA will ensure that proper accommodation needs are implemented. OEA is scheduled to move its office in June 2016 and will ensure accommodation needs exists in new office space.

General outcomes

MYAP key outcome

OPS staffs are able to identify barriers to accessibility, in OPS policies, programs, services and facilities, and actively seek solutions to prevent or remove them on a continuing basis throughout the organization.

Measures taken by OEA in 2015

2015 commitment:

- Continue communication through OEA website to inform the public that documents are available in alternate formats upon request
- Seek guidance from Supply Chain Ontario on accessible procurement practices
- Encourage staff to use the OPS Inclusion Lens when developing OEA policies, programs and and Request for Proposals (RFPs)

Measure taken:

- OEA included on their Internet site (English/French) that alternate formats will be made available upon request
- OEA communicated with either the Procurement Unit at MAG or Supply Chain Ontario for guidance on procurement practices
- OPS Inclusion Lens was used when policies, programs and/or RFPs were developed or reviewed.

Section two: report on measures proposed by the ministry for 2016

Customer service

MYAP key outcome

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

Measures proposed by OEA for 2016

Promoting awareness of fragrance sensitivities

- The OEA will plans to promote awareness of fragrance sensitivities.

Accessibility customer service policy

- Review and update the OEA Accessible Customer Service Policy. This will serve as a reminder to staff about accessibility requirements, such as accessible information and communications and accessible websites.

Information and communications

MYAP key outcome

Information and Communications are available in accessible formats or with necessary supports to all OPS staff and customers.

Measures proposed by OEA for 2016

Accessible Websites and Documents

The OEA will comply with the accessible website requirements under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR). This includes ensuring that all public websites and new or substantially updated internal websites meet the accessibility standards outlined in the IASR.

- The OEA will continue to build accessible content for the ministry's public website and meet accessibility standards as web content is updated, as part of the transition of the OEA's website to the new Ontario.ca platform
- Continue capability to offer documents in alternate formats on websites or when electronically sent to stakeholders
- Continue implementation of accessibility best practices.

Employment

MYAP key outcome

OPS employees with disabilities participate fully and meaningfully in their employment.

Measures proposed by OFA for 2016

- Continue to require that management have a performance commitment that supports accessibility, diversity and inclusion in their performance plan
- The OFA will continue to implement procedures and quality assurance measures to ensure that all candidates are informed throughout the hiring process that accommodation, alternate formats and communication support are available
- Continue implementation of accessibility and employment accommodation best practices.

Built environment**MYAP key outcome**

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

Measures proposed by OFA for 2016

- Ensure OFA's compliance with the new Design of Public Spaces accessibility standards, the new barrier-free requirements in the Building Code, and the Guidelines for Barrier-free Design of Ontario Government Facilities

General outcomes**MYAP key outcome**

OPS staffs are able to identify barriers to accessibility in OPS policies, programs, services and facilities, and actively seek solutions to prevent or remove them on a continuing basis throughout the organization.

Measures proposed by OFA for 2016

- The OFA will continue to implement procedures. The Accessibility Lead will continue to participate in the Accessibility Executive Steering Committee (AESC) at MAG and offer accessibility support to the OFA about preventing and removing barriers.

Section three: addressing the identification of barriers in legislation**Introduction**

The ODA establishes that a ministry's accessibility plan shall include the measures in place to address the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to persons with disabilities in the Acts, regulations, policies, programs and services administered by the ministry.

In 2005, the government introduced the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, with the goal of making Ontario accessible by 2025. In support of this goal, the government subsequently committed to review Ontario legislation to identify and address accessibility barriers, and undertook a coordinated review of 51 statutes considered to have a high impact on persons with disabilities. This review has now been completed.

Our Office remains committed to the goal of ensuring that Ontario legislation does not create barriers to persons with disabilities. We will continue to report through our accessibility plan, the actions taken to identify and remove barriers in ministry Acts, regulations, policies, programs and services and those to be reviewed in the coming year.

Actions taken in the past year

The Office of Francophone Affairs took the following actions to address barriers in its Acts, regulations, policies, programs, practices and services in response to identified barriers:

Measures taken:

- To date, the OFA has reviewed its two Acts (*French Language Services Act* and *Franco-Ontarian Act*) and no barriers to persons with disabilities were found.

Upcoming plans for review

- Ensure that measures or tools (i.e., OPS Inclusion lens, surveys or checklist) are in place, as part of the process to embed considerations for accessibility barriers when existing regulations, policies, programs practices and services undergo a review
- The OFA will emphasize the use of tools, such as OPS Inclusion lens, surveys or checklist, when assessing proposals of new Acts, regulations, policies and programs and services, to determine their effect on persons with disabilities.

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Related

[Multi-year accessibility plan for the Ontario Public Service
\(https://www.ontario.ca/document/accessibility-ontario-public-service-leading-way-forward\)](https://www.ontario.ca/document/accessibility-ontario-public-service-leading-way-forward)

[Ontario's accessible customer service policy \(https://www.ontario.ca/page/accessible-customer-service-policy\)](https://www.ontario.ca/page/accessible-customer-service-policy)

[Services and supports for people with developmental disabilities
\(http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/en/mcsc/programs/developmental/index.aspx?utm_source=shortlinks&utm_medium=web&utm_campaign=q2r\)](http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/en/mcsc/programs/developmental/index.aspx?utm_source=shortlinks&utm_medium=web&utm_campaign=q2r)

[How to make websites accessible \(https://www.ontario.ca/page/how-make-websites-accessible\)](https://www.ontario.ca/page/how-make-websites-accessible)