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Ministry of Economic Development and Trade 2009-2010 Accessibility Plan

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Introduction

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 sets out the roadmap to make Ontario accessible by 2025. Under this act, accessibility standards are being developed and implemented to break down barrier 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, beginning in Jan 2010 when the first standard — for customer service — comes into force.

Each year, the government sets the course to prevent, identify and remove barriers through annual access plans required under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA).

Building on last year's plan, the 2009-10 accessibility plans will continue moving the Ministry of Economic Development & Trade towards the goal of an accessible province for all Ontarians.

Since the last reporting period, the Ministry has continued to promote this goal and has been actively pre for the implementation of the new Accessibility Standards for Customer Service. Key accomplishments include the implementation of:

- Policies, practices and procedures on providing services to people with disabilities;
- A comprehensive training strategy that will ensure our staff are knowledgeable about how to provide excellent customer service to all Ontarians, regardless of ability;
- A new feedback mechanism that will allow the Ministry to solicit feedback on the accessibility of our services and commit to continuous improvement;

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- A process for notifying our customers of any disruption to the Ministry's facilities or assistive devices that could impact the overall accessibility of our services;
- The launch of a dedicated accessibility web page on our staff and corporate websites that will allow us to continue promoting the vision of a barrier-free Ontario by 2025; and
- Additional improvements to the accessibility of our facilities.

Links to all Government of Ontario Ministry Accessibility Plans are available at: http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/mcsc/english/ministry/accessibilityPlans/ministries_accplans

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Report on Status of Customer Service Requirements

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

To begin to transition OPS ministries to this regulation, this section has been added to the ODA Planning Template to highlight customer service initiatives.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New & Ongoing

The following paraphrases the original commitment made in the 2008-09 Plan and brings it into alignment with the requirements of O. Reg. 429/07, sections 3 (1) & (2):

The Ministry will ensure it has policies, practices and procedures on providing goods or services to people with disabilities and use reasonable efforts to ensure these policies are consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity.

Planned Action(s):

The Ministry will adopt the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy - which is consistent with the principle of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity - and communicate this Policy to staff.

The Ministry will also review and develop and / or amend its practices and procedures to ensure compliance with O. Reg. 429/07 and the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy.

Implementation Timeframe: October 2008 - December 2009

Results Achieved in 2008-09:

The Ministry communicated its support for the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy to all staff in a Departmental signed memorandum in July 2009.

The Ministry reviewed and developed and / or amended its customer service practices and / or procedures to meet the requirements of O. Reg. 429/07 and the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and communicated these changes to staff through in-house training sessions in the fall of 2009.

The Ministry also participated as an Advisory Member on the Standards Development Committee for the Customer Service Accessibility Standard. The Standard came into effect on January 1, 2008.

The Ministry will continue to monitor for changes to the Regulation and the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and ensure its practices and procedures are updated to reflect these changes and staff is appropriately informed.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New & Ongoing

The Ministry will ensure its policies address the use of assistive devices by people with disabilities to access services, or any available alternative measures that enable them to do so.

Planned Action(s):

The use of assistive devices by people with disabilities to access our services is fully addressed by the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy, which the Ministry will adopt.

Implementation Timeframe: October 2008 – December 2009

Results Achieved in 2008-09:

The Ministry communicated its support for the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy to all staff in a Dep signed memorandum in July 2009. The Ministry also provided training to designated staff and their back-on the use of ministry assistive devices and provided general information on assistive devices to all staff through in-house training sessions in the fall of 2009.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New & Ongoing

The Ministry will ensure our policies, practices and procedures require our organization to take a person's disability into account when communicating with the person.

Planned Action(s):

The requirement to take into account a person's disability when communicating with the person is covered by the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy, which the Ministry will adopt.

Implementation Timeframe: October 2008 – December 2009

Results Achieved in 2008-09:

The Ministry communicated its support for the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy to all staff in a Dep signed memorandum in July 2009.

The Ministry also provided information to all staff on how to welcome and serve customers with disabilities through the following channels: online OPS courses and videos, in-house training, and the posting of online resources.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New & Ongoing

The Ministry will permit people with disabilities to keep their service animals with them on the parts of our premises that are open to the public or other third parties, except where the animal is excluded by law, and include this commitment in our policies, practices and procedures.

Planned Action(s):

The requirement to permit service animals on our premises and include this commitment in our policies, practices and procedures is covered by the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy, which the Ministry will adopt.

Implementation Timeframe: October 2008 – December 2009

Results Achieved in 2008-09:

The Ministry communicated its support for the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy to all staff in a Dep signed memorandum in July 2009.

The Ministry also provided information to all staff on how to welcome and serve customers with disabilities who are accompanied by a service animal through the following channels: online OPS courses and videos, in-house training, and the posting of online resources.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New & Ongoing

If a service animal is excluded by law from our premises, the Ministry will ensure that alternate measures are available to enable the person to access our goods or services.

Planned Action(s):

There are no areas within our Ministry where service animals are excluded by law; however, staff will be information on how to resolve any conflicts of rights or interest, i.e. phobias, allergies, etc.

Implementation Timeframe: October 2008 – December 2009

Results Achieved:

The Ministry provided information to all staff on how to resolve potential conflicts through in-house training sessions in the fall of 2009. Additionally, frontline staff was provided with a helpful Q&A document on service animals that was developed by the Ministry of Attorney General.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New & Ongoing

The Ministry will permit people with disabilities to enter the parts of our premises that are open to the public and other third parties with their support person, and provide notice of any fee charged for the support person. We will include this commitment in our policies, practices and procedures.

Planned Action(s):

The requirement to permit support persons on our premises is covered by the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy, which the Ministry will adopt. There are no fees charged for admission to our facilities.

Implementation Timeframe: October 2008 – December 2009

Results Achieved in 2008-09:

The Ministry communicated its support for the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy to all staff in a Departmental signed memorandum in July 2009.

The Ministry also provided information to all staff on how to welcome and serve customers with disabilities who are accompanied by a support person through the following channels: online OPS courses and videos, in-house training, and the posting of online resources.

Additionally, frontline staff was provided with a helpful Q&A document on support persons that was developed by the Ministry of Attorney General.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New & Ongoing

The Ministry will post a notice at a conspicuous place on our premises, on our website, or by another reasonable method, of any temporary disruption in facilities or services that people with disabilities usually use to access our organization's services, including the reason, duration and any alternatives available.

Planned Action(s):

The Ministry will develop and implement an Interim Service Disruption Notification Protocol that will address the requirements of O. Reg. 429/07 and the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and communicate that Protocol to staff through in-house training sessions in the fall of 2009.

Implementation Timeframe: October 2008 – December 2009

Results Achieved in 2008-09:

The Ministry took a two-phased approach to achieving this commitment:

First, the Ministry audited its facilities to determine where accessible features and services existed and if where alternatives were available. This data was used to build an "accessibility profile" for each location. These profiles will allow ministry staff to quickly identify and direct (or redirect) our customers to existing and alternate accessible facilities and services and to include this information in our service disruption notices.

Second, the Ministry developed and implemented an Interim Service Disruption Notification Protocol for staff to follow and communicated this through in-house training sessions which took place in the fall of 2009.

NOTE: This interim protocol may be replaced or augmented by the release and implementation of an OPS Service Disruption Notification Protocol.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New & Ongoing

The Ministry will establish and document a process to receive and respond to feedback on how our service provided to people with disabilities, including actions that our organization will take when a complaint is received.

Planned Action(s):

The Ministry will develop and implement a feedback process that will address the requirements of O. Reg. 429/07 and the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and communicate that Process to staff through in house training sessions in the fall of 2009.

Implementation Timeframe: October 2008 – December 2009

Results Achieved in 2008-09:

The Ministry has developed and implemented a feedback process and communicated it to staff through in training sessions which was offered in the fall of 2009. The Ministry will be advertising the availability of process through its website and through onsite posters in key areas.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New & Ongoing

The Ministry will make information about its feedback process readily available to the public, including how feedback may be provided (e.g. in person, by telephone, in writing, by email, on diskette or otherwise).

Planned Action(s):

The Ministry will design its feedback process so that it is accessible through multiple channels and advertise availability of this process through its website and onsite marketing, i.e. posters.

Implementation Timeframe: October 2008 – December 2009

Results Achieved in 2008-09:

The Ministry has designed its feedback process to be accessible through multiple channels, including: a) a toll-free enquiry line, a TTY line, online, in-person, and through a dedicated e-mail address. The Ministry will be advertising the availability of this process through its website and through onsite posters in key areas.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New & Ongoing

The following paraphrases the original commitment made in the 2008-09 Plan in order to bring it into alignment with the final requirements of O. Reg. 429/07, sections 6 (1) & 6 (2):

The Ministry will ensure that individuals designated under O. Reg. 429/07 as "obligated" staff are trained providing your goods or services to people with disabilities, including: a) every person who deals with the public or other third parties on behalf of your organization; and b) every person who participates in developing your organization's policies, practices and procedures on providing goods or services?

The Ministry will also ensure that this training includes current policies, practices and procedures required by O. Reg. 429/07 and all topics listed in section 6 (2) of the Standard.

Planned Action(s):

Develop a training strategy that requires all staff to complete the following training:

- 1) May I Help You? E-learning Module #1;
- 2) May I Help You? E-learning Module #2; and
- 3) In-house Training on the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy.

Taken together, these 3 modules will meet 100% of the training requirements under O. Reg. 429/07 and

OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy.

The Ministry will also continue to raise awareness through different ministry venues, including: New Employee Information Sessions, our Lunch and Learn series, and our staff intranet site.

Implementation Timeframe: October 2008 – December 2009

Results Achieved in 2008-09:

In June 2009, the Ministry co-hosted a Lunch and Learn on O. Reg. 429/07 with the OPS Diversity Office

The Ministry also updated the New Employee Information Session presentation materials to include information on O. Reg. 429/07.

In September 2009, the Ministry re-launched its accessibility webpage on the staff intranet site with new improved information.

The Ministry also conducted mandatory in-house training sessions on the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and recommended that staff complete the 2 e-learning courses as a preparation. By September 30, 2009, approximately 75% of all staff had completed the two e-learning courses.

New staff will also be advised of the Ministry's training requirements and encouraged to complete a review of the materials and the e-learning courses within the first 30 days of employment. A Verification of Training Certificate will be used to document compliance and this Certificate will be maintained on file.

The Ministry will continue to assess training and compliance requirements under O. Reg. 429/07 and monitor changes to the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and amend its training strategy and curriculum, as appropriate.

NOTE:

1) In the 2008-09 Plan, the Ministry identified a commitment to alert third-party service providers of the accessibility standards for customer service and adjust its contract language and performance management metrics to ensure compliance. Through a subsequent Ministry gap analysis and clarification of the term "third party", it was determined the Ministry has no such relationships. The Ministry continues, however, to comply with OPS Procurement Directive and Operating Policy and leverage the procurement templates and access checklist that have been provided by Supply Chain Management.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New & Ongoing

The Ministry's training curriculum will include information on our organization's current policies, practices and procedures, as required under the Customer Service Standard, and all of the topics listed in section 6(2) of the standard.

Planned Action(s):

The Ministry will ensure its in-house training curriculum includes information on our organization's current policies, practices and procedures, as required under the Customer Service Standard, and all of the topics listed in section 6(2) of the standard.

Implementation Timeframe: October 2008 – December 2009

Results Achieved in 2008-09:

The Ministry designed its in-house training curriculum to meet all of the requirements of O. Reg. 429/07 under the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy. As an enhancement, it also included information on employment accommodation, barrier-free recruitment, ministry assistive devices, planning accessible meetings, and evacuation planning for people with disabilities.

The Ministry will continue to assess training and compliance requirements under O. Reg. 429/07 and monitor changes to the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and amend its training strategy and curriculum, as appropriate.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New & Ongoing

The Ministry will ensure it has a written training policy that includes: 1) a summary of the contents of our training; and, 2) details of when the training is to be provided. Additionally, the Ministry will maintain records of the dates that training was provided and how many people were trained.

Planned Action(s):

The Ministry will develop a training strategy and method for tracking attendance that will meet the requirements of O. Reg. 429/07 and the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy.

Implementation Timeframe: October 2008 – December 2009

Results Achieved in 2008-09:

The Ministry developed a Training Strategy that meets all of the requirements of O. Reg. 429/07 and the Accessible Customer Service Policy, and addressed the attendance tracking requirement as follows:

- 1) Monthly electronic reports from the Centre for Leadership & Learning (CFL) for up-to-date information on who had completed the e-learning courses (May I Help You? Modules #1 & 2);
- 2) The use of sign-in sheets at the in-house session that were conducted in the fall of 2009; and
- 3) The use of a Verification of Training Certificate, on a go-forward basis, for all new employees who come on board and review the training requirements with their management.

The Ministry will continue to assess training and compliance requirements under O. Reg. 429/07 and make changes to the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and amend its training strategy and curriculum, as appropriate.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New & Ongoing

The following paraphrases the original commitment made in the 2008-09 Plan in order to bring it into alignment with the final requirements of O. Reg. 429/07, sections 8 (1) & (2) and 9 (1):

The Ministry will post a notice at a conspicuous place on our premises, on our website, or by another reasonable method, that the documents required by the Customer Service Standard are available upon request. Additionally, we will provide those documents in a format that takes a person's disability into account.

Planned Action(s):

The requirement to post a notice about the availability of the documents required by the Customer Service Standard is covered by the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy, which the Ministry will adopt.

Implementation Timeframe: October 2008 – December 2009

Results Achieved in 2008-09:

The Ministry communicated its support for the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy to all staff in a Departmental signed memorandum in July 2009. This Policy will be posted on our website and is being made available in alternate formats by the OPS Diversity Office. The Ministry has also posted a notice about the availability of the feedback process and made the process available through multiple channels / formats.

The Ministry will continue to assess training and compliance requirements under O. Reg. 429/07 and make changes to the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and amend its training strategy and curriculum, as appropriate.

NOTES:

- 1) The 2008-09 commitment to continue offering alternate formats and meet or exceed World Wide Web Consortium criteria is ongoing.
- 2) The 2008-09 commitment to continue offering TTY services in Human Resources was revisited, as a direct result of the OPS HR Transformation and the implementation of the new HR service delivery model. The TTY service has been relocated to the Ministry's Business Planning & Finance Branch. The commitment to offer TTY to our Communications and Public Affairs Branch is ongoing.
- 3) The 2008-09 commitment to acquire business cards in Braille has been deferred, pending the release of the OPS Vendor of Record Agreement that identifies qualified service providers and conditional on the establishment of a Ministry business case.
- 4) The 2008-09 commitment to promote the importance of planning accessible meetings and events was met by the decision to include information on this topic as an enhancement to the in-house O. Reg. 429/07 training curriculum.

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Report on Other Accessibility Commitments

Accessibility improvement initiatives to identify, remove or prevent barriers in preparation for AODA stand currently under development.

Employment:

Focus Area: Employment

Impact: Program

Commitment: New

Communicate to staff the importance the Ministry and the OPS places on accessibility, diversity and service excellence and embed these values in the Ministry's orientation program (New Employee Information Session).

Planned Action(s):

Cross-promote the values of accessibility, diversity and service excellence to all new employees through enhancements to the Ministry's New Employee Information Session (NEIS) and enhancements to the New Employee Orientation Checklist.

Implementation Timeframe: September 2008 - March 2011

Results Achieved in 2008-09:

The NEIS materials were updated in July 2009 to provide new employees with information on O. Reg. 429/07. The orientation checklists were also updated in July 2009 and posted to the Ministry's intranet site in September 2009. This enhanced checklist includes a new category called "Your First Month on the Job" which identifies and prioritizes information gathering and learning opportunities for new employees in the areas of accessibility, diversity and service excellence.

The Ministry will continue to monitor and share new developments, resources and training opportunities with staff, as appropriate, in order to highlight our commitment to accessibility, diversity and service excellence and embed those values in our Ministry's culture.

Focus Area: Employment

Impact: Program & Service

Commitment: Ongoing To increase staff awareness about the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* and accessibility issues in general.

Planned Action(s):

This is an ongoing practice in the ministry. Further review will be undertaken once the new Employment Accommodation Standard comes into force.

Implementation Timeframe: October 2008 – March 2010

Results Achieved in 2008-2009:

In the fall of 2009, the Ministry leveraged the in-house training sessions on O. Reg. 429/07 to cross-promote ODA. Ministry staff was reminded that it has been mandatory since 2001 for all OPS managers to complete an e-learning course entitled ODA: Maximizing the Contribution of Employees with Disabilities. As a direct result of this effort, the completion rates for ODA rose 6 percentage points between August and September 2009.

Information on ODA continues to be available on our staff intranet site, promoted through New Employee Information Sessions and new employee orientation checklists, and included in O. Reg. 429/07 training materials.

Focus Area: Employment

Impact: Service

Commitment: Ongoing

Accommodating staff for a broad range of disabilities will be a priority.

Planned Action(s):

The Ministry will continue to accommodate staff for a broad range of disabilities on a priority basis.

Implementation Timeframe: September 2008 - March 2011

Results Achieved in 2008-09:

The Ministry continued to raise awareness among managers about the employment barriers faced by people with disabilities and about the benefits of creating a more diverse and inclusive workplace. This was primarily achieved by including information on barrier-free recruitment as an enhancement to the Ministry's in-house Reg. 429/07 training curriculum.

All Ministry managers were required to attend a mandatory Train-the-Trainer session on O. Reg. 429/07 September of 2009. As part of this training, they received tips on barrier-free recruitment and were presented with the results of the recent successful partnership between HR Ontario and Ability Edge – a national internet program for graduates with disabilities.

Focus Area: Employment

Impact: Policy

Commitment: New

In the OPS Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2008-13), a number of corporate initiatives were identified that could impact employment / human resources. The Ministry's Strategic Human Resources Business Unit will monitor for changes to corporate policies and directives, and to employment / human resources legislation, and look for opportunities to support corporate communication on these changes.

Planned Action(s):

As noted in the OPS Multi Year Accessibility Plan (2008-2013), this monitoring could include – but would be limited to – the following:

- 1) Inclusive Workplace Policy Framework;
- 2) OPS Wellness Strategy;
- 3) Employment Accommodation Fund;
- 4) OPS HR Policies and Directive; and
- 5) Changes resulting from the enactment of the AODA Employment Standard.

Implementation Timeframe: September 2008 - March 2011

Results Achieved: To be reported on in next year's ODA Plan.

Focus Area: Employment

Impact: Program

Commitment: Ongoing

Continue to raise awareness among managers about the importance of having effective emergency plans and evacuation plans in place for employees with disabilities / special needs who self-disclose.

Planned Action(s):

Include information on emergency and evacuation planning for employees with disabilities / special needs as an enhancement to the Ministry's in-house O. Reg. 429/07 training curriculum.

Implementation Timeframe: September 2008 – March 2011

Results Achieved:

All Ministry managers were required to attend a mandatory Train-the-Trainer session on O. Reg. 429/07 fall of 2009. As part of this training, they received information on emergency and evacuation planning for employees with disabilities / special needs and were provided copies of related forms and helpful resource

Built Environment

Focus Area: Built Environment

Impact: Policy & Program

Commitment: Ongoing

Facilities, policies and practices will be reviewed on an ongoing basis in order to identify and remove (or prevent) barriers to employment and ensure every employee is able to achieve their full potential.

Planned Action(s):

The following paraphrases the original commitment made in the 2008-09 Plan, under "Employment", in order to reflect that "facilities, policies and practices" will primarily be impacted by the release of the Accessible Environment Standard and not the "Employment Accommodation Standard":

On an ongoing basis, the Ministry will review its facilities, policies and practices to identify and remove (or prevent the creation of new) architectural barriers for employees and customers.

The ministry will also play an active role in the development of the new Accessible Built Environment Standard and participate in the Accessible Built Environment - Standards Development Committee.

Implementation Timeframe: October 2008 – March 2010

Results Achieved in 2008-2009:

The Ministry continued to monitor for changes to the AODA and the release of the Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC) Interim Design Standard and the Accessible Built Environment Standard.

The Ministry participated as an Advisory Member on the Standards Development Committee for the Accessible Built Environment Standard.

Focus Area: Built Environment

Impact: Policy & Program

Commitment: Ongoing

All newly built or renovated spaces will meet or exceed Ontario Building Code and Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC) Standards for Barrier-free Design of Ontario Government Facilities (2006).

Planned Action(s):

The ministry will continue to ensure that all renovated spaces meet these standards. The Ontario Realty Corporation will be updating the current ORC barrier-free design standards. These standards are expected to meet or exceed the new Accessible Built Environment Standard.

Further review will be undertaken once the Accessible Built Environment Standard comes into force.

The ministry will play an active role in the development of the Accessible Built Environment Standard and participate in the Accessible Built Environment Standards Development Committee.

Implementation Timeframe: October 2008 – March 2010

Results Achieved in 2008-09:

In 2008-09, the Ministry acquired and / or renovated key office spaces, including: areas within the Hears at 900 Bay in Toronto, 375 and 393 University in Toronto, and a new regional office in Kingston.

All renovations met Ontario Building Code Requirements, and met - or exceeded - Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC) Standards for Barrier-free Design of Ontario Government Facilities (2006) and / or the ORC Interim Design Standard.

The Ministry will continue to monitor for changes to the AODA and the release of the Built Environment Standard.

Focus Area: Built Environment

Impact: Policy & Program

Commitment: Ongoing

All workspaces will be designed and equipped to accommodate employees with a wide range of disabilities and/or functional limitations.

Planned Action(s):

This is an ongoing practice and priority in the ministry.

Further review will be undertaken once the new Built Environment Standard comes into force.

Implementation Timeframe: October 08 – March 10

Results Achieved in 2007-2008: This is an ongoing activity within the ministry.

Focus Area: Built Environment

Impact: Service

Commitment: Ongoing

To ensure, where feasible, that all ministry locations are accessible to staff, clients and the public.

Planned Action (s):

The Ministry's Service Management & Facilities Branch will continue to review this issue on an ongoing basis.

Further review will be undertaken once the Accessible Built Environment Standard comes into force.

Implementation Timeframe: October 2008 – March 2010

Results Achieved in 2008-2009:

In the fall of 2009, the Ministry installed push buttons, cameras, and / or automatic door openers in three areas at our 900 Bay, Hearst Block, Toronto location:

- 1) The Office of the Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy & Program Division;
- 2) The Strategic Policy & Program Division; and
- 3) The Strategic Human Resources Business Unit.

Focus Area: Built Environment

Impact: Service

Commitment: New

Monitor and evaluate the impact of changes to built environment standards, as identified in the OPS Multi-Accessibility Plan (2008-2013), and communicate these changes to appropriate ministry staff.

Planned Action(s):

As noted in the OPS Multi Year Accessibility Plan, this monitoring could include – but would not be limited to – the following:

- 1) Release of the Pilot Accessible Design Standard for Ontario government facilities;
- 2) Application of accessibility criteria for the retrofit of Ontario government buildings;
- 3) A new Accessible Signage and Way-Finding Standard;
- 4) Changes to OPS Leasing Standards;

- 5) Changes to the Real Property and Accommodation Directive; and
- 6) Changes resulting from the enactment of the Accessible Built Environment Standard.

Implementation Timeframe: September 2008 – March 2011

Results Achieved: To be reported on in next year's ODA Plan

Information & Communication

Focus Area: Information & Communication

Impact: Policy & Service

Commitment: Ongoing

The following amalgamates and paraphrases two of the original commitments from the 2008-09 Plan to the current name for both the Standard and the Standards Development Committee and more concisely addresses the actions taken:

Information on the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA)* and related accessibility programs and services will be included in new employee orientation manuals and the ODA: Maximizing the Contribution of Employees with Disabilities e-learning course (available through the OPS Centre for Leadership & Learning) will be promoted to all managers.

Planned Action(s):

The ministry will continue to enhance and include additional information in its orientation manuals, as it becomes available, to ensure all new ministry employees have up-to-date information and knowledge on accessibility.

Further review will be undertaken once the Accessible Information and Communication Standard comes in force.

The ministry will play an active role in the development of the new Accessible Information and Communication Standard and participate in the Information and Communication Accessibility Standards Development Committee.

Implementation Timeframe: October 2008 – March 2010

Results Achieved in 2008-2009:

Between June and October 2009, the Ministry updated and enhanced the accessibility information contained in the: 1) New Employee Information Session; 2) New Employee Orientation Checklist; and 3) dedicated web page on the Ministry's staff intranet site.

The Ministry also participated as an Advisory Member on the Standards Development Committee for the Accessible Information and Communication Standard. The final proposed Standard has been submitted to the Minister of Community and Social Services for consideration as law.

The Ministry will continue to monitor for changes to the AODA and the release of the Accessible Information and Communication Standard.

Focus Area: Information & Communication

Impact: Service

Commitment: Ongoing

The importance of using the correct terminology when communicating with or discussing persons with disabilities will be actively promoted and the "Talk About Disabilities - Use the Right Word" guide (from the Ministry of Community and Social Services) will be posted to our ministry intranet site.

Planned Action(s):

The ministry will continue to promote the use of correct terminology to assist staff when communicating and interacting with or about people with different types of disabilities. Further review will be undertaken once the new Accessible Information and Communication Standard comes in force.

Implementation Timeframe: October 2008 – March 2010

Results Achieved in 2008-2009:

The “*Talk About Disabilities – Use the Right Word*” guide was included as an appendix with the in-house Reg. 429/07 training materials and staff were provided with illustrated examples at these mandatory sess

Focus Area: Information & Communication

Impact: Program

Commitment: Ongoing

To ensure staff are aware of the *Ontarians With Disabilities Act*, 2001 requirements on accessible procurement and use the Ontarians with Disabilities Procurement Requirements Checklist as a guideline.

Planned Action (s):

The ministry will continue to ensure that staff is aware of *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2001 requirements on accessible procurement.

Further review will be undertaken once the new Accessible Information and Communication Standard comes into force.

Implementation Timeframe: October 08 – March 10

Results Achieved in 2008-2009:

Information and resources related to the Ontarians with Disabilities Procurement Requirements guidelines checklist continue to be available and promoted through the Ministry's staff intranet site.

Focus Area: Information & Communication

Impact: Program

Commitment: Completed

Visibility of the ministry's accessibility plans will be raised through a modification of our intranet site.

Planned Action(s):

The ministry will continue to post the ministry's accessibility plans and other relevant resource materials on the ministry intranet site for all staff to access.

Further review will be undertaken once the new Accessible Information and Communication Standard comes into force.

Implementation Timeframe: October 2008 – March 2010

Results Achieved in 2008-2009:

In September 2009, the Ministry launched a dedicated accessibility web page on its staff intranet site. The Plans were moved to this new page and highlighted as a key item.

Similar changes are planned for the Ministry's internet site and will be reported in next year's plan. Characterize the internet site will be consistent with OPS-identified best practices.

The Ministry will continue to monitor for changes to the AODA and the release of the Accessible Information and Communication Standard and modify its websites, as necessary.

Focus Area: Information & Communication

Impact: Program and Service

Commitment: New

Look for opportunities to further improve on the accessibility of ministry information and communication for customers with disabilities.

Planned Action(s):

Engage the divisional representatives on the Ministry Accessibility Committee in a review of their current customer outreach efforts in order to determine whether or not there is a justification for:

- 1) Expanding the use of TTY lines and / or telecommunication relay services; and
- 2) Preparing key marketing materials in alternate format(s).

Implementation Timeframe: September 2008 – March 2011

Results Achieved: To be reported on in next year's ODA Plan.

Focus Area: Information & Communication

Impact: Service

Commitment: New

Monitor and evaluate the impact of changes to information and communications standards, as identified in the OPS Multi Year Accessibility Plan (2008-2013), and communicate and / or train appropriate ministry staff, necessary.

Planned Action(s):

As noted in the OPS Multi Year Accessibility Plan, this review could include – but would not be limited to – the following:

- 1) Changes to existing I&IT related policies and guidelines;
- 2) New criteria for acquiring/enhancing Interactive Voice Response systems;
- 3) New OPS Standard for Business Applications;
- 4) New OPS standard for accessible intranets and internets;
- 5) Revisions to the process for custom business applications; and
- 6) Changes resulting from the enactment of the Accessible Information & Communication Standard.

Implementation Timeframe: September 2008 – March 2011

Results Achieved: To be reported on in next year's ODA Plan.

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For More Information

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

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Visit the [Ministry of Community and Social Services Accessibility Ontario](http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass/english/pillars/accessibilityOntario/) web portal (<http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass/english/pillars/accessibilityOntario/>). The site promotes accessibility and provides information and resources on how to make Ontario a barrier-free province.

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

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