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Ministry of Economic Development and Trade 2010-2011 Accessibility Plan

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

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 Economic Development and Trade (MEDT) towards the goal of an accessible province for all Ontarians.

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Report on Accessibility Achievements for 2010-2011

Focus Area: Customer Service

Results Achieved 2009-2010:

- 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 delivered two TTY refresher training sessions in collaboration with the OPS Diversity Office. The sessions were delivered to main and back-up staff who manage the ministry's TTY lines.
- The ministry delivered a targeted refresher training session on O. Reg. 429/07 and associated OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy to administrative and frontline staff.
- The ministry reinforced awareness via the ministry's Senior Management Committee on the ongoing responsibilities of program areas to maintain compliance with O. Reg. 429/07 and associated OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy.
- The ministry refreshed its accessibility presence on both the staff intranet site and public-facing internet site with new and improved information.
- The ministry has offered quarterly procurement training to all staff on an as-need basis with information about barrier-free procurement processes. The last training session took place in April 2010.
- Information on accessible procurement has been posted to the intranet.

Focus Area: Employment

Results Achieved in 2009-2010:

- The New Employee Information Session (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" and identifies and prioritizes information gathering and learning opportunities for new employees in the areas of accessibility, diversity and service excellence.
- On an ongoing basis, the ministry reviews the program to identify opportunities for continuous improvement.
- The ministry has continued to work to accommodate employees with a diverse range of accessibility needs. The ministry has followed best practice of providing workplace ergonomic assessments to all staff upon request. The ministry has taken appropriate action based on all assessments made.
- In 2009/10, the Strategic Human Resources Business Unit (SHBU) monitored ongoing changes to OPS HR policies and directives and identified an opportunity to actively support two significant corporate initiatives that will positively impact employment/human resources, specifically:

1. The OPS Wellness Strategy's Healthy Living, Safe and Healthy Workplace and Supportive Work Culture priorities, by:

- establishing a cross-functional, cross-ministry team to develop a Bill 168 **Compliance Plan**;
- establishing and chairing a **Bill 168 Task Team** to oversee the implementation of those compliance activities, to ensure the ministry meets its Workplace
- discrimination and Harassment Prevention (WDHP) and Workplace Violence Prevention (WVP) obligations;
- establishing new **Joint Health & Safety Committees**, as required, to comply with the Occupational Health & Safety Act; and

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facilitating the identification and implementation of employee engagement initiatives that support **better work-life balance**, including compressed work week, summer hours, etc.

2. The OPS Diversity Strategic Plan, by:

- delivering an enhanced, reciprocal **Diversity Mentorship Program** within the ministry; and
- establishing and chairing a **Diversity and Inclusion Working Group** to identify and recommend a ministry strategy that will allow us to deliver excellent public service and support all employees in achieving their full potential.

Focus Area: Built Environment

Results Achieved in 2009-2010:

- The ministry participated as an Advisory Member on the Standards Development Committee for the Accessible Built Environment Standard.
- In the fall of 2009, the ministry installed push buttons, cameras, and / or automatic door openers in three new areas at our 900 Bay, Hearst Block, Toronto location:
 - 1) The Office of the Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy & Programs Division;
 - 2) The Strategic Policy & Programs Division;
 - 3) The Strategic Human Resources Business Unit
- Five rooms have been built and lever handles were installed on the doors at our 900 Bay, Hearst Block, Toronto location.

Focus Area: Information & Communication

Results Achieved in 2009-2010:

- 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
 - 2) dedicated web page on the ministry's staff intranet site.
- The ministry participated as an Advisory Member on the Standards Development Committee for the Accessible Information and Communication Standard.
- The "*Talk About Disabilities – Use the Right Word*" guide was included as an appendix with the in-house O. Reg. 429/07 training materials and staff were provided with illustrated examples at these mandatory sessions.
- Information and resources related to the Ontarians with Disabilities Procurement Requirements guidelines and checklist continue to be available and promoted through the ministry's staff intranet site.
- In September 2009, the ministry launched a dedicated accessibility web page on its staff intranet site. The ODA Plans were moved to this new page and highlighted as a key item.
- The ministry's internet site has a dedicated web page for the 2010 - 2011 Accessibility Plan.
- The ministry TTY lines and/or telecommunication relay services adhere to guidelines.

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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, and continue to embed accessibility in all areas of planning, programs and policies.

Focus Area: Customer Service
Commitment: Ongoing

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 continue to adopt the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy - which is consistent with the principles 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 ongoing compliance with O. Reg. 429/07 and the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy.

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 through Deputy Memorandum and updates to our internet and intranet sites.

Implementation Timeframe: November 2010 – October 2011

Focus Area: Customer Service
Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry will continue to ensure its policies address the use of assistive devices by people with disabilities to access our 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 has adopted.

The ministry will continue to provide training to designated staff and their back-ups on the use of ministry assistive devices and provided general information on assistive devices to all staff through in-house training sessions.

Implementation Timeframe: November 2010 – October 2011

Focus Area: Customer Service
Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry will continue to 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 has adopted.

The ministry continues to encourage new staff to take on-line OPS courses as part of the new employee orientation.

Implementation Timeframe: November 2010 –October 2011

Focus Area: Customer Service
Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry will continue to 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 has adopted.

The ministry will continue to collect feedback through meeting evaluations. The ministry continues to analyze feedback received to identify concerns.

If a service animal is excluded by law from our premises, the ministry will continue to ensure alternate measures are available to enable the person to access the ministry's services.

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

Implementation Timeframe: November 2010-October 2011

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: 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):

To date no feedback has been received that would result to a change in the process. The ministry will continue to ensure the feedback is monitored through communications through multiple channels and advertise the availability of this process through a general inquiry line, a TTY line, in-person and through a dedicated e-mail address. The ministry will be advertising the availability of this process through its website.

Implementation Timeframe: November 2010 – October 2011

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry will continue to ensure individuals designated under O. Reg. 429/07 as "obligated" staff are trained on 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'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.

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

Planned Action(s):

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

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 for changes to the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and amend its training strategy and curriculum, as appropriate.

Implementation Timeframe: November 2010 – October 2011

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: Ongoing

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 adopted.

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

Implementation Timeframe: November 2010 – October 2011

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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 person with disabilities when creating, procuring, conveying, receiving or distributing information and communications to the public.

Focus Area: Information & Communication

Commitment: Ongoing

Information on the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA)- AODA 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 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.

The ministry will continue to play an active role in the development of the Information and Communication under the new Integrated Accessibility Regulation (IAR) and participate in the Information and Communication Accessibility Standards Development Committee.

Implementation Timeframe: November 2010 – October 2011

Focus Area: Information & Communication

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 into force.

Implementation Timeframe: November 2010 – October 2011

Focus Area: Information & Communication

Commitment: Ongoing

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

Planned Action(s):

The ministry will continue to post the ministry's accessibility plans and other relevant resource materials to 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: November 2010 – October 2011

Focus Area: Information & Communication

Commitment: New & Ongoing

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, as necessary.

Planned Action(s):

Once the Integrated Accessibility Regulation (AIR) comes into effect we will review how it affects the following processes:

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 Integrated Accessibility Regulation (IAR)

Implementation Timeframe: November 2010 – October 2011

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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 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, ensure accessibility for people with disabilities across all stages of the employment life cycle and 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 corporate initiatives please refer to the Ministry of Government Services 2010-2011 Accessibility Plan.

Focus Area: Employment

Commitment: Ongoing

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):

Continue to 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.

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.

Implementation Timeframe: November 2010 – October 2011

Focus Area: Employment
Commitment: Ongoing

To increase staff awareness about the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, the Human Rights Code 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.

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

Implementation Timeframe: November 2010 – October 2011

Focus Area: Employment
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: November 2010 – October 2011

Focus Area: Employment
Commitment: Ongoing

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 (SHRBU) 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 will continue to include – but would not 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.

Going forward, the SHRBU will continue to monitor for changes to OPS HR policies and directives and look for additional opportunities to support corporate initiatives that could impact employment/human resources.

Implementation Timeframe: November 2010 – October 2011

Focus Area: Employment
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):

The ministry will continue to include information on emergency and evacuation planning for employees with disabilities/special needs.

The ministry will continue to offer in-house training for Fire Wardens twice a year on the emergency and evacuation planning for employees with disabilities/special needs and are offered

copies of related forms and helpful resources.

Implementation Timeframe: November 2010 – October 2011

Focus Area: Built Environment

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.

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):

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.

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

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

Implementation Timeframe: November 2010 – October 2011

Focus Area: Built Environment

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: November 2010 – October 2011

Focus Area: Built Environment

Commitment: Ongoing

To ensure staff are aware of the Ontarians With Disabilities Act, 2001 and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 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 communicated through the ministry's intranet.

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

Implementation Timeframe: November 2010 – October 2011

Focus Area: Built Environment

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: November 2010 – October 2011

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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, and policies under development to identify and remove barriers.

Focus Area: Built Environment

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry will review any new Act(s) and or Regulation(s) or Policy(s) that are being developed to identify and remove any barriers to persons with disabilities.

Planned Action (s):

The ministry will ensure that the Inclusion Lens developed by the OPS Diversity Office is utilized when reviewing and developing new policies, programs and regulations.

Implementation Timeframe: November 2010 – October 2011

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Glossary of Terms/Acronyms

Additional Information:

Your ministries Accessibility Plans should contain plain language. However if there is a need to use acronyms or government terminology you should be providing definitions and or descriptions in this section of the plan.

AODA – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

OPS – Ontario Public Service

ODA – Ontarians with Disabilities Act

SHRBU – Strategic Human Resources Business Unit

ORC – Ontario Realty Corporation

NEIS - New Employee Information Session

IAR – Integrated Accessibility Regulation

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For More Information

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

- **General inquiry number:** 416-325-6666
- **1-800 general inquiry number:** 1-866-668-4249
- **TTY number:** 416-325-4402
- **E-mail:** medt.accessibility@ontario.ca

- **Ministry website address:** www.ontario.ca/economy

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 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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