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Ministry of Economic Development and Innovation 2011-2012 ODA Accessibility Plan

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Introduction

Each year, the Government of Ontario sets a course to prevent, identify and remove barriers for persons with disabilities. Every ministry participates through its annual accessibility plans, as required under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA).

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) is Ontario's roadmap to become barrier-free by 2025. It includes accessibility standards in:

▶ Business Advisory Services
▶ Wisdom Exchange
▶ Support Services
▶ E-Business
▶ Small Business Agency of Ontario (SBAO)
▶ Vintners Quality Alliance (VQA) - Wine Support Program
▶ Ontario Craft Brewers Opportunity Fund (OCBOF)
▶ Energy Connections
▶ Grenville Community Futures Development Corp - Self Employment Benefit Program
▶ Students and Young
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- Customer Service
- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Built Environment
- Transportation

This year the accessibility plans will help to inform planning requirements under the new Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) enacted last summer under the AODA. The IASR requires the Government of Ontario to develop a multi-year plan to prevent and remove barriers for persons with disabilities.

Our annual accessibility plan outlines the specific steps the government is taking to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Building on last year's plan, our 2011-12 accessibility plan will continue moving the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade toward the goal of an accessible province for all Ontarians. This plan was created when the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade existed as a separate entity, but moving forward all commitments will be monitored and implemented under the new Ministry of Economic Development and Innovation.

To view other ministries' Accessibility Plans please visit: Ontario.ca

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Section One: Report on Measures to Identify, Remove and Prevent Barriers in 2010-11

The Government of Ontario is working to achieve an accessible province by 2025.

In 2010-11, the government continued to comply with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service regulation and continued to implement initiatives to enhance accessibility in other areas: employment, information and communication, transportation, the built environment and procurement.

This document includes a summary of the initiatives the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade implemented in 2010-11.

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Customer Service

In 2010-11...

1) The Ministry ensured it had policies, practices and procedures on providing goods or services to people with disabilities and used reasonable efforts to ensure these policies were consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity.

- Continued 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.
- Reviewed, developed and amended its practices and procedures to ensure ongoing compliance with O. Reg. 429/07 and the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy.
- Monitored for changes to the Regulation and the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and ensured its practices and procedures were updated to reflect these changes and ensured staff was appropriately informed through communications and updates to our internet and intranet sites. Updates to the staff internet and intranet sites were made regularly as new information became available.

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

- The use of assistive devices by people with disabilities to access our services was fully addressed by the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy, which the ministry has adopted.
- The Ministry continued 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. Training sessions on assistive devices took place in May and July 2010.

3) The Ministry continued to ensure that our policies, practices and procedures required our organization to take a person's disability into account when communicating with the person.

- The requirement to take into account a person's disability when communicating with the person was covered by the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy, which the ministry has adopted.
- Managers received training to encourage new staff to take on-line OPS courses as part of the employee orientation and MyOPS Intranet sites.

4) The Ministry continued 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 was excluded by law, and included this commitment in our policies, practices and procedures.

- The requirement to permit service animals on our premises and include this commitment in our policies, practices and procedures was covered by the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy, which the ministry has adopted.
- If a service animal was excluded by law from our premises, the ministry would continue to ensure alternate measures were available to enable the person to access the ministry's services.
- There were no areas within the ministry where service animals were excluded by law; however, staff would continue to be offered information on how to resolve any conflicts of rights or interest, i.e. phobias, allergies, etc.

5) The Ministry would 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).

- The Ministry's Communications Branch supported accessibility requirements by making the information accessible and available online and establishing communication channels for public feedback.
- To date no feedback was received that would result to a change in the process.
- Continued to ensure the feedback was monitored by staff in the Communications and Public Affairs Branch 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 availability of this process is available through our ministry website.

6) The Ministry continued to ensure individuals designated under O. Reg. 429/07 as "obligated" staff were trained on providing 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 participated in developing their organization's policies, practices and procedures on providing goods or services.

- Training curriculum included information on the 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.
- Ensured that the training included current policies, practices and procedures required under O. Reg. 429/07 and all topics listed in section 6 (2) of the Standard.
- Continued to raise awareness through different ministry venues, including: our Lunch and Learn series, our staff intranet site, general awareness training sessions, Train-the-Trainer session and TTY training for staff.
- Managers were provided training on the requirement to encourage new staff to complete a review of the materials and the e-learning courses within the first 30 days of employment. A Verification of Training Certificate was used to document compliance and this Certificate was maintained on file.
- Continued to assess training and compliance requirements under O. Reg. 429/07 and monitored for changes to the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and amended its training strategy and curriculum, as appropriate.

7) Ministry staff was trained on the requirement to post notices at conspicuous places on our premises, on our website, and by another reasonable method. Documents required by the Customer Service Standard are available upon request. Additionally, we provided those

documents in a format that took a person's disability into account.

- The requirement to post a notice about the availability of the documents required by the Customer Service Standard was covered by the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy, which the ministry adopted.
- Continued to assess training and compliance requirements under O. Reg. 429/07 and monitored for changes to the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and amended its training strategy and curriculum, as appropriate.

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Information and Communications

1) Information on the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA)*- AODA and related accessibility programs and services was included in the 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) was also promoted to managers.

- Continued to enhance and include additional information on our Ministry intranet site, as it became available, to ensure all new ministry employees have up-to-date-information and knowledge on accessibility.

2) The Ministry actively promoted the importance of using the correct terminology when communicating with or discussing persons with disabilities.

- Promoted the use of correct terminology to assist staff when communicating and interacting, with or about people, with different types of disabilities.
- Ensured staff was aware of communicating information in alternate formats to ensure all documents met the accessibility requirements. Further consultation was provided to staff on how to meet the standards and guidelines as required.

3) Visibility of the ministry's accessibility plans continued to be raised through our intranet site.

- Posted the ministry's accessibility plans and other relevant resource materials to the ministry intranet site for all staff to access.

4) Continued to monitor and evaluate the impact of changes to information and communications standards, as identified in the OPS Multi Year Accessibility Plan (2008-2013), and communicated and/or trained appropriate ministry staff, as necessary.

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Employment

1) Communicated the importance of embedding the values of accessibility, diversity and service excellence to all staff:

- The importance of diversity and inclusion was regularly communicated with the release of the MEDT Diversity & Inclusion Strategy and through the ongoing activities of the MEDT Diversity & Inclusion Working Group.
- The Ministry hosted two events to promote diversity and inclusion. A Lunch and Learn Session on May 4, 2011 on Positive Spaces and a Multicultural Day to promote ethnic diversity on June 27, 2011.

2) Increased staff awareness about the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, the Human Rights Code and accessibility issues in general.

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

3) Accommodated staff for a broad range of disabilities has been a priority.

- Continued to accommodate staff for a broad range of disabilities on a priority basis.

4) In the OPS Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2008-13), a number of corporate initiatives were identified that could impact employment / human resources.

- Under the new human resource service delivery model, changes to corporate policies and directives and to employment / human resources legislation were monitored and communicated to staff and managers directly via MyOPS and HRO communications.

5) The Ministry continued 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.

- Included information on emergency and evacuation planning for employees with disabilities/special needs.
- Held semi-annual fire warden training sessions in December 2010 & September 2011. During the training session, emergency and evacuation planning for employees with disabilities/special needs was discussed.
- The Ministry posted on its intranet site the emergency evacuation form for employees who require assistance during an emergency. This form allowed employees with a disability /special needs to self-disclose with the facilities management unit so in the event of a real emergency, the proper authorities would be notified and assistance would be provided to the employee.
- Also, as part of new employee orientation, employees were required to attend a meeting organized by the Corporate Services Division which detailed to new employees the services which are available in the ministry. During this orientation session, information was provided on the importance of having effective emergency plans and evacuation plans in place for employees with disabilities/special needs who self-disclose.

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Built Environment

1) On an ongoing basis, the ministry reviewed Facilities, policies and practices 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 have met or exceed Ontario Building Code and Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC) Standards for Barrier-free Design of Ontario Government Facilities (2006).

- On an ongoing basis, the ministry reviewed its facilities, policies and practices to identify and remove (or prevent the creation of new) architectural barriers for employees and customers.
- 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.
- Continued to monitor for changes to the AODA and the release of the Built Environment Standard.

2) All workspaces were designed and equipped to accommodate employees with a wide range of disabilities and/or functional limitations.

- This was an ongoing practice and priority in the ministry.

3) The Ministry continued to ensure that staff was aware of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2001 requirements on accessible procurement communicated through the ministry's intranet.

4) The Ministry continued to ensure, where feasible, that all ministry locations were accessible to staff, clients and the public.

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

Transportation

Not applicable to our ministry.

Other

- The Ministry continued to incorporate accessibility into our procurement practices

- Procurement training included ODA compliance requirements. Training took place in October 2010.
- Information on accessible procurement will continue to be posted to the intranet as it becomes available.

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Section Two: Measures Planned for 2011-12 and Beyond

This year, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade's accessibility plan focuses on four areas. These initiatives will support compliance with the existing Accessibility Standards for Customer Service. They will also help us enhance accessibility in other areas:

- Customer Service
- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Built Environment
- Transportation

Customer Service

The Ministry of Economic Development and Trade is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities receive accessible goods and services from us. This means they will receive goods and services with the same high quality and timeliness as others. The Ministry plans to continue with the following initiatives within the 2011-2012 timeframe.

1) The Ministry will continue to ensure its 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.

- 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.
- Continue to review, develop and amend its practices and procedures to ensure ongoing compliance with O. Reg. 429/07 and the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy.
- Monitor for changes to the Regulation and the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and ensure its practices and procedures is updated to reflect these changes and ensure staff is appropriately informed through communications and updates to our internet and intranet sites. Updates to the staff internet and intranet sites will be made regularly as new information becomes available.

2) The Ministry will continue to ensure its policies will 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.

- 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 continue to adopt.
- 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. The ministry plans to conduct refresher training to managers and new employees in 2011-12.

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

- The requirement to take into account a person's disability when communicating with the person will continue to be covered by the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy, which the ministry has adopted.
- The Ministry will continue to encourage new staff to take on-line OPS courses as part of the employee orientation site.

4) 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 was excluded by law, and include this commitment in our policies, practices and

procedures.

- 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 and 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.

5) The Ministry will continue to 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 or otherwise).

- The Ministry will continue to ensure that 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 continues to advertise the availability of this process through its website.

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

- Training curriculum includes information on the 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.
- Continue to ensure that the training includes current policies, practices and procedures required under O. Reg. 429/07 and all topics listed in section 6 (2) of the Standard.
- Continue to raise awareness through different ministry venues, including: information sessions, the Lunch and Learn series and staff intranet site.
- New staff will continue to 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 was maintained on file.
- Continue to assess training and compliance requirements under O. Reg. 429/07 and monitor for changes to the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and amended its training strategy and curriculum, as appropriate.

7) The Ministry will continue to post notices at conspicuous places on our premises, on our website, and 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.

- 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.
- 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.

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Information and Communications

The Ministry of Economic Development and Trade is committed to making government information and communications accessible to people with disabilities. The information we provide and the ways we communicate are key to delivering our programs and services to the public.

1) Information on the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA)*- AODA and related accessibility programs and services will continue to be included in the employee orientation intranet site and

the ODA: Maximizing the Contribution of Employees with Disabilities e-learning course (available through the OPS Centre for Leadership & Learning) will also be promoted to managers.

- Continue to enhance and include additional information in its orientation intranet site as it becomes available, to ensure all new ministry employees have up-to-date-information and knowledge on accessibility.
- Continue to play an active role in the development of the Information and Communication Standard under the new Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR).
- On an ongoing basis, the Ministry will also participate on the Disability Advisory Council to work with other ministries and organizations regarding matters pertaining to persons with disabilities.

2) The Ministry will continue to actively promote the importance of using the correct terminology when communicating with or discussing persons with disabilities.

- Continue to promote the use of correct terminology to assist staff when communicating and interacting, with or about people, with different types of disabilities.
- Ensure staff members are aware of communicating information in alternate formats to ensure all documents meet the accessibility requirements.
Further review will be undertaken once the new Accessible Information and Communication Standard come into force.

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

- The Ministry will continue 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 as the new Accessible Information and Communication Standard comes into force.

4) The Ministry will continue to 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 trained appropriate ministry staff, as necessary.

- Since the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) has come into effect we will review how it affects the following processes:

Changes to existing I&IT related policies and guidelines:

- new criteria for acquiring/enhancing Interactive Voice Response systems;
- new OPS Standard for Business Applications;
- new OPS standard for accessible intranets and internets;
- revisions to the process for custom business applications; and
- changes resulting from the enactment of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)

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Employment

The Ministry of Economic Development and Trade is committed to fair and accessible employment practices that attract and retain talented employees with disabilities.

1) The Ministry will continue to look for opportunities to promote and embed the values of accessibility, diversity and inclusion in its employment practices:

- Hiring Managers will continue to ensure new employees are made aware of the training and information available to them on accessibility, diversity and service excellence through the orientation section on Staffnet and MyOPS.
- Additionally, the importance of diversity and inclusion will be regularly communicated with the release of the MEDT Diversity & Inclusion Strategy and through the ongoing activities of the MEDT Diversity & Inclusion Working Group.

2) The Ministry will continue 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.

- Information on ODA and AODA will continue to be available on the ministry's intranet site, promoted through communications and included in ASCS training materials.
- Continue to accommodate staff for a broad range of disabilities on a priority basis.

3) The Ministry will continue to monitor the OPS Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2008-13), to identify area that could impact employment / human resources.

4) The Ministry will 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.

- 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.
- Upgrade its emergency management intranet site to include more information on emergency planning for employees with disabilities/special needs.

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Built Environment

The Ministry of Economic Development and Trade is committed to greater accessibility in, out of and around the buildings we use.

1) On an ongoing basis, the ministry will continue to review Facilities, policies and practices 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 have met or exceed Ontario Building Code and Infrastructure Ontario (IO) Standards for Barrier-free Design of Ontario Government Facilities (2006).

- The Ministry will continue to review its facilities, policies and practices to identify and remove (or prevent the creation of new) architectural barriers for employees and customers.
- Continue to monitor for changes to the AODA and the release of the Built Environment Standard.

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

- This is an ongoing practice and priority in the ministry. Further review will be undertaken once the new Built Environment Standard comes into force.

3) The Ministry will continue to ensure that staff are aware of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, 2001 requirements on accessible procurement communicated through the ministry's intranet site.

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

4) The Ministry will continue to ensure, where feasible, that all ministry locations are accessible to staff, clients and the public.

- 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.

Transportation

Not applicable to our ministry.

Other

In addition to the activities outlined above, in 2011-2012 and beyond the Ministry of Economic Development and Innovation will undertake the following activities:

- Support any new corporate initiatives introduced during the year.
- Support the implementation of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation and

ensure overall ministry compliance with the requirements.

- The Ministry will continue to incorporate accessibility into our procurement practices and continue to include ODA compliance requirements as part of procurement training.
- Represent the ministry's employees with disabilities through participation in the OPS Disability Advisory Council, which helps the OPS to prepare for the new integrated accessibility standards, under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), by providing a consumer perspective as implementation plans are being put into place. The Council will also help to further develop leadership capacity of employees with disabilities in the OPS, with a broader goal of supporting the journey towards a barrier-free Ontario by 2025.

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Section Three: Review of Acts, Regulations and Policies

In support of our commitment to improve accessibility for people with disabilities, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade will continue to review government initiatives, including legislation and policies, to identify and remove barriers.

Acts, Regulations and Policies Reviewed in 2010-11

Acts and Regulations

In April 2011, the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade participated in training for multidisciplinary teams from all ministries on how to use the OPS Inclusion Lens to review laws for accessibility barriers. Going forward, the OPS Diversity Office and the Ministry of the Attorney General are working together to support a coordinated approach to legislative review across government.

Inclusion Lens

In 2011, the Ontario Public Service launched the Inclusion Lens. The Lens is an innovative tool to help address diversity and accessibility. With this tool, ministries can identify and address potential barriers to people with disabilities, and others that may be present in existing or proposed legislation, policies, programs, practices or services.

The Ministry continued to ensure that the Inclusion Lens developed by the OPS Diversity Office was utilized when reviewing and developing new policies, programs and regulations.

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

Glossary of Terms / Acronyms

AODA – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

OPS – Ontario Public Service

ODA – Ontarians with Disabilities Act

IASR – Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation

SHRBU – Strategic Human Resources Business Unit

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For More Information

Questions or comments about the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade 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 an accessible province for everyone.

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

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