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# Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change 2014 Progress Report on Accessibility

How the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change identified and removed barriers in the Ontario Public Service in 2014 and future accessibility commitments for 2015.

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## Message from the Deputy Minister

I am pleased to introduce the 2014 Progress Report on Accessibility for the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change.

The Ontario Public Service is committed to meeting the goal of a barrier-free Ontario for persons with disabilities by 2025. At the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change we support this goal as a public service organization, an employer, a policy maker, and a service provider.

The ministry's 2014 Progress Report on Accessibility outlines what we have accomplished in 2014 and how we will continue to drive forward with our goals by identifying commitments for 2015 that support both our employees and the public we serve.

The report sets out practical and clear actions the ministry has taken and those it will continue to take in working toward meeting the standards outlined in the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#). Our actions focus on four key areas:

customer service

- information and communications
- employment
- built environment

The Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change will continue to work with partner ministries across government to identify, remove and prevent barriers for persons with disabilities both in the workplace and for Ontarians who access our services.

We will also continue to educate employees on best practices related to accessibility and ensure all staff have the support and tools needed to do their job, and provide the best possible service to the public.

As we move forward, the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change will look for more ways to better meet the needs of people with disabilities across the province. I look forward to continuing this important work.

Paul Evans

Deputy Minister

Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change

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## Introduction

For over eleven years, the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change has set a course to prevent, identify and remove barriers for persons with disabilities through the preparation and implementation of our Annual Accessibility Plan as required under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 established standards in areas such as: customer service, information and communications, employment, transportation and the built environment.

In 2010, the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change complied with the first set of requirements under the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07.

In 2011, the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change began to meet the requirements of the other standards of the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11.

On January 1, 2012, the Ontario Public Service published a single Multi-Year Accessibility Plan. The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan included the following commitment:

The Ontario Public Service endeavors to demonstrate leadership for accessibility in Ontario. Our goal is to

ensure accessibility for our employees and the public we serve in our services, products and facilities.

The Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change continues to align our Annual Accessibility Plan with the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and to build on our regulatory responsibilities contributing to a barrier-free Ontario by 2025.

To access this and other ministries' 2014 Accessibility Plans, visit [Ontario.ca](http://Ontario.ca).

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## Section one: report on measures taken by the ministry in 2013-2014

### Customer service

#### Multi-year accessibility plan key outcome:

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

#### Measures taken by the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change in 2013-2014:

- Identify what accessible devices are available on site to people with disabilities and ensure staff are aware of how to use them.
  - The ministry has TeleTYpe technology in place at the Public Information Centre and the Spills Action Centre. Staff at both sites have been trained on the use of the TeleTYpe technology. This training is supplemented by the e-learning training video "Mission Possible: It's Your Call: Using TeleTYpe technology and the Bell Relay System to communicate with someone who is "Deaf, deafened, or hard of hearing", which all employees are encouraged to take.
  - The ministry developed an accessibility tips campaign which includes tips on the use of TeleTYpe technology. The campaign, will be launched in early 2015.
- Ensure notice disruption policies are in place when services are unavailable.
  - The Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change has developed a Service Disruption Notification Protocol which is identified in the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change Building Committee Guide. Building leads at all Ministry of Environment and Climate Change locations have been appointed and are provided with annual training, which outlines their roles and responsibilities regarding the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change Service Disruption Notification Protocol.
  - The ministry's Emergency Management and Security intranet site has been updated to make resources easily available, including a Service Disruption Notice template and the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change Service Disruption Notification Protocol.
- Analyze feedback received or lack of it.
  - The ministry received five (5) accessibility-related inquiries through the Public Information

Centre. All five were responded to on the same date as received; complying with the timeframes set out in the Ontario Public Service Common Service Standards. Only two of the inquiries related to ministry-specific issues; the other three responses were redirected to the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario.

- Review ministry policies, decision-making processes and administrative procedures using the Ontario Public Service Inclusion Lens.
  - The Ontario Public Service Inclusion Lens is a tool available to all staff for the purpose of changing the way we think and do business that supports the development and delivery of inclusive public services. The Ontario Public Service Inclusion Lens was used during the review of regulations in the ministry to mitigate and minimize accessibility barriers.
- Survey staff and customers to identify barriers and make recommendations on accessible services.
  - The Ontario Public Service Employee Engagement Survey, which includes accessibility considerations, was conducted at the start of 2014. The ministry-specific results of the survey were shared with staff in the fall and recommendations for improving our accessibility score are under development.
- Ensure that the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change Diversity & Inclusion and Accessibility leads take the Ontario Public Service Inclusion Lens train-the-trainer sessions.
  - The ministry's Diversity & Inclusion and Accessibility Leads have taken the Ontario Public Service Inclusion Lens training. Through outreach sessions the ministry's leads promote the e-learning course, which is available to all staff, and encourage staff to take the training.

## Information and communications

### Multi-year accessibility plan key outcome:

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

### Measures taken by the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change in 2013-2014:

- Continue to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines standards.
  - The ministry's Internet site was transitioned to Ontario.ca this year. Ontario.ca is Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 Level AA compliant.
  - All documents created after January 1, 2012 are in the process of being converted to accessible PDFs.
  - The website "feedback/contact us" pages link to the Ontario Public Service Accessible Customer Service policy and state the offer to arrange for accessible formats and communications supports upon request.
- Train webmasters on accessible websites and staff on web-ready documents.
  - The ministry webmaster and staff involved in web development were trained on how to create

accessible documents.

- Communicate the availability of accessible formats and communication supports to the public by January 1, 2014.
  - The Ontario.ca website “feedback/contact us” page outlines the Ontario Public Service Accessible Customer Service policy and states the offer to arrange for accessible formats and communications supports upon request.
- Commit to have ministry representation at the Job Opportunities Information Network conference.
  - Several members of the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change Accessibility Working Group attended the 2013 and 2014 Job Opportunities Information Network conferences held December 1st and 3rd respectively in commemoration of the United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities.
- Provide staff training on processes and protocols on how to address requests for alternate formats and communications supports.
  - The ministry developed a series of accessibility tips outlining types of alternate formats, how they’re used, and how to develop alternate formats. The campaign will be launched in early 2015.
  - The revised Ontario Public Service Accessible Customer Service Policy was reiterated to staff highlighting the 2014 requirements.
- Update accessible format standards and templates based on best practices.
  - The ministry is in the process of finalizing standardized templates for publicly posted materials including publications, newsletters, etc. The new templates are designed to support the creation of accessible documents.

## Employment

### Multi-year accessibility plan key outcome:

Ontario Public Service employees with disabilities participate fully and meaningfully in their employment.

### Measures taken by the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change in 2013-2014:

- Ensure the availability of accessible formats and communication supports for employees.
  - The ministry offers alternate formats upon request and/or as identified in employee accommodation plans.
- Increase awareness of employment accommodation directives, policies and plans with managers and develop protocols and procedures to implement recommendations resulting from 2013 management review.
  - The Ontario Public Service Employee Accommodation and Return to Work Operating Policy and a list of management specific tools and resources were communicated through email to all managers in the fall of 2014.

- The Ontario Public Service Employee Accommodation and Return to Work Operating Policy and list of tools and resources supporting staff were communicated through email to all employees in the fall of 2014.
- Support mentor/sponsor programs.
  - The ministry continues to participate in partnership with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Ministry of Labour in implementing the Ontario Public Service Diversity Mentoring Partnership Program. The goals of the program are to contribute to the vision of creating and sustaining an inclusive Ontario Public Service. The program encourages awareness of the issues faced by employees of varying background and experience including employees with disabilities and fosters inclusion and diversity at all levels.
- Share senior management's accessibility performance commitments with staff.
  - Ministry of Environment and Climate Change senior management inclusion/accessibility performance commitments were shared with all staff through our publication of the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Inclusion Plan.
  - All Ministry of Environment and Climate Change management were required to take the e-learning course "Inclusive Leadership". This course is intended to understand the impact of diversity including accessibility at work and its role in creating a culture that is inclusive.
- Conduct and analyze the Ontario Public Service Employee Engagement Survey results to assess potential barriers to employees with disabilities.
  - The Ontario Public Service Employee Engagement Survey which includes accessibility considerations was conducted at the start of 2014. The ministry-specific results of the survey were shared with staff in the fall and recommendations for improving our accessibility score are under development.
- Revise performance plan templates to include accessibility commitments for staff and managers.
- Develop communications to all levels of management and staff advising of their respective accessibility commitments and encourage them to add them to their performance plans.
- Encourage all managers to have discussions with their staff about accessibility commitments.
  - Email communication went out late spring 2014 to all Ministry of Environment and Climate Change management providing templates with inclusion and accessibility commitments for managers and staff.
  - Bi-annual email communication was distributed to all managers encouraging conversation with staff on including accessibility commitments and learning on staff performance plans.

## Design of public spaces (built environment)

### Multi-year accessibility plan key outcome:

There is greater accessibility into, out of and around Ontario Public Service facilities and public spaces.

## Measures taken by the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change in 2013-2014:

- Increase awareness of the Guidelines for Barrier Free Design of Ontario Government Facilities.
  - The ministry applies the Guidelines for Barrier-Free Design of Ontario, which exceeds requirements under the Ontario Building Code for renovations, relocations and new construction.
  - Accessibility tips have been developed to educate staff on barrier-free design. The campaign will be launched in early 2015.
- Hold semi-annual training sessions for building fire wardens who are responsible for emergency and evacuation planning including that of employees with disabilities/special needs.
  - The ministry worked with property management and conducted fire warden training sessions in the fall. The ministry developed and communicated the Emergency Evacuation Handbook, which includes information on the evacuation of persons with disabilities.
- Post on the ministry intranet site the emergency evacuation form for employees who require assistance during an emergency.
  - The ministry's "Persons Requiring Assistance" form was communicated to all staff and posted on the ministry's intranet site.
- Prepare for Ontario Public Service requirements under the January 1, 2015 Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11 standard 'Design of Public Spaces'.
  - The Guidelines for Barrier Free Design of Ontario Government Facilities was posted on the ministry's intranet site and communicated to key ministry staff involved in the development of space.
  - Accessibility tips were developed to educate staff on barrier-free design. The campaign will be launched in early 2015.
- Complete audits of government buildings and services.
  - Audit was put on hold pending the updates to the Public Space Standards and changes to the Ontario Building Code taking effect January 1, 2015.
- Increase managers' awareness of accessible built environment obligations set out in the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11, Ontario Building Code and Guidelines for Barrier Free Design of Ontario Government Facilities.
  - A training module, tools and resources are in development by the Ontario Public Service Diversity Office and will be rolled out across the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change in early 2015.

## Other commitments

### Multi-year accessibility plan key outcomes:

Ontario Public Service staff are able to identify barriers to accessibility, in Ontario Public Service policies,

programs, services and facilities, and actively seek solutions to prevent or remove them on a continuing basis throughout the organization.

The Ontario Public Service endeavours to demonstrate leadership for accessibility in Ontario.

## Measures taken by the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change in 2013-2014:

- Establish an internal advisory team that includes employees with disabilities.
  - The ministry has an accessibility working group, which includes individuals with disabilities.
- Establish regular meetings of internal advisory team and senior management team to provide ongoing input and advice.
  - The ministry's accessibility working group through the accessibility lead and the Disability Advisory Council representative inform senior management on new and ongoing initiatives as they arise, such as making recommendations on who should be provided with specialized training on the new Design of Public Spaces standard and the updated barrier-free design requirements of the Ontario Building Code.
- Continue to develop and publish annual accessibility plans.
  - The 2014 Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change Annual Accessibility Plan was developed in an accessible format and posted on Ontario.ca and the ministry's intranet site.
- Develop strategies that will assist the ministry meet the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11 and other accessibility obligations in areas such as web accessibility, procurement, and the accessible built environment.
  - The ministry is in the process of developing a training guide on web accessibility.
  - The ministry continues to use the Management Board of Cabinet Procurement Directive, which incorporates the Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11 requirements.
  - The ministry works with Infrastructure Ontario to apply the Guidelines for Barrier Free Design of Ontario Government Facilities in our new and ongoing projects.
  - The ministry developed a Days of Significance communications initiative, which included articles on National Access Awareness Week (June 3-7), World Mental Health Week (October 6-10), the International Day for Persons with Disabilities (December 3) and Universal Human Rights Month (December).

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## Section two: report on measures proposed by the ministry for 2015

### Customer service

### Multi-year accessibility plan key outcomes

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

## Measures proposed by the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change for 2015:

- Investigate expanding ministry's existing TeleTYpe technology to desktop software. This software enables multiple users to type messages back and forth to one another instead of talking and listening, replacing the current TeleTYpe technology hardware devices.
- The ministry will continue to:
  - promote and track e-training including:
    - May I Help You? Welcoming Customers with Disabilities
    - May I Help You? Supplementary: Ten Things You Need to Know about Accessible Customer Service
    - Mission Possible: It's Your Call: Using a TeleTYpe technology and the Bell Relay System to communicate with someone who is Deaf, deafened, or hard of hearing
    - Mission Possible: Your Turn to Lead: Guiding a person who has a dog guide or white cane
    - Mission Possible: Interpreters, Intervenors, Attendants, Oh My! Interacting with someone when a support person is present
  - promote the use of the Ontario Municipal Social Services Associations Guide to Conducting Accessible Meetings and Guide to Accessible Public Engagement to staff encouraging its use both for internal and external meetings.
  - promote accessibility programs and initiatives including the Days of Significance Program, Accessibility at Source and the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change Accessibility Tips Campaign.

## Information and communications

### Multi-year accessibility plan key outcome:

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

## Measures proposed by the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change for 2015:

- Deliver a training program for ministry staff on creating accessible documents (e.g. reports, guidance materials, brochures, etc.) and providing communications supports.
- The ministry will continue to:
  - promote and track e-training including:
    - The Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11 Information and

## Communications Standards

- Mission Possible: A Word about WORD: Making Microsoft WORD Documents accessible
- Mission Possible: Turning the Page: Making Portable Document Format documents accessible
- Mission Possible: Connecting the Dots: How to prepare documents for Braille transcription
- Plain Language Online
- promote and leverage the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change and Ontario Public Service programs and initiatives, such as the Information and Information Technology Accessibility Centre of Excellence and Accessibility at Source initiative.

## Employment

### Multi-year accessibility plan key outcome:

Ontario Public Service employees with disabilities participate fully and meaningfully in their employment.

### Measures proposed by the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change for 2015:

- Showcase intranet articles featuring employees with disabilities and their perspectives.
- Implement recommendations stemming from the ministry-specific results of the Ontario Public Service Employee Engagement Survey.
- The ministry will continue to:
  - use the Ontario Public Service Executive Recruitment Inclusion Lens tool and the Barrier-Free Guides for recruitment, which include how to write barrier-free employment ads, prevent barriers in application screening, and removing barriers from the recruitment selection process.
  - promote and track e-learning including:
    - Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11 Employment Standards
    - Diversity - Inclusive Leadership: Leading Diversity
    - Ontario Public Service Recruitment Process
- promote the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change and Ontario Public Service programs and initiatives, such as the Ontario Public Service Employee Accommodation and Return to Work Operating Policy and Accessibility at Source.
- promote the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change one-window approach on employment accommodation to managers.

## Design of public spaces (built environment)

### Multi-year accessibility plan key outcome:

There is greater accessibility into, out of and around Ontario Public Service facilities and public spaces.

### Measures proposed by the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change for 2015:

- Track and promote Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11 Built Environment e-learning training for all staff.
- The ministry will continue to:
  - promote the Guidelines for Barrier Free Design of Ontario Government Facilities.
  - work with building leads, landlords and Infrastructure Ontario to maintain and improve upon accessibility features.

## Other outcomes deliverables

### Multi-year accessibility plan key outcome:

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

### Measures proposed by the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change for 2015:

- The ministry will continue to:
  - promote the use of the Ontario Public Service Inclusion Lens.
  - promote and track e-learning including:
    - Diversity – Using the Ontario Public Service Inclusion Lens
    - Diversity – Differences Matter: Diversity Foundations
    - The Integrated Accessibility Standards, Ontario Regulation 191/11 in the Ontario Public Service
    - Let's Start with Words
    - Working Together: The Ontario Human Rights Code and The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
    - Preparing Procurement Documents
    - Fundamentals of Procurement: Buying with Confidence
  - engage management and staff to lead accessibility initiatives to encourage discussions at ground level.

- promote and support employee participation in accessibility networks including the Disability Advisory Council and the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change Accessibility Working Group.
- promote and support participation of employees with disabilities as both mentors and mentees in the Diversity Mentoring Program.
- encourage and support participation in accessibility conferences, workshops and volunteer opportunities.
- promote the ministry's Accessibility Plan and Inclusion Plans and challenge staff to incorporate the '10 things you can do now.'
- encourage staff to include accessibility training, workshops, awareness sessions and employee-led initiatives in learning their annual learning plans.

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## Section three: addressing the identification of barriers in Acts, regulations, policies, programs, practices and services

In support of our commitment to improve accessibility for people with disabilities, the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change will continue to review government initiatives, including Acts, regulations, policies, programs, practices and services for the purposes of identifying and removing barriers.

- The ministry is committed to ensuring that all ministry Acts and regulations are reviewed and drafted to ensure that potential accessibility barriers are removed. In the coming year, Legal Services Branch employees will conduct a review of Ontario Regulation 227/07 Service of Documents made under the Environmental Protection Act. Legal Services Branch employees will continue to use the Ontario Public Service Inclusion Lens as a tool in assessing accessibility issues in any new Acts and regulations.
  - The ministry reviewed O. Reg. 227/07 and identified a potential barrier. An amendment was drafted in 2013 to remove that barrier.
- In support of the government's commitment to improving accessibility for persons with disabilities, the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change will continue to review legislation, regulations and policies, to identify and remove barriers to accessibility.
  - Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Legal Services Branch is committed to the use of the Ontario Public Service Inclusion Lens when developing new regulations and legislation and to the retroactive review of same.

Updated: September 28, 2015

[Ontario Public Service Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#)

[Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001](#)

[Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#)

[Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation](#)

[Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation](#)

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## Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change

The Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change protects and improves the quality of the environment. We also coordinate Ontario's actions on climate change in the name of healthier communities, ecological protection and economic prosperity.

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