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accessibility plan

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Introduction

In June 2005, the Ontario government took a strong stand on accessibility when it passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) into law.

The AODA lays out a comprehensive road map to make Ontario accessible to all people through the development, implementation and enforcement of new, mandatory accessibility standards for some of the most important aspects of people's lives.

Five key areas have been identified for the first accessibility standards: customer service, transportation, information and communications, the built environment, and employment.

The accessible customer service regulations were approved by the Lieutenant-Governor and will come into force on January 1, 2008.

An initial proposed standard on accessible transportation has been developed by the Transportation Standards Development Committee. It was posted for public review on June 27, 2007 and will be available for public comment until September 28, 2007.

The Standards Development Committee that will draft the proposed information and communications standard was established and began meeting in April, 2007. The committees developing the accessible built environment and accessible employment standards have been selected and will begin meeting in the fall of 2007.

While the government is moving forward to implement the AODA, there will be a transition period where government and the broader public sector will continue to meet their obligations under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA). These obligations will remain in effect until they are repealed and replaced by standards under the new act.

Under the ODA, Ontario government ministries, municipalities, hospitals, school boards, colleges, universities and public transportation organizations are required to develop annual accessibility plans to make policies, practices, programs, services and buildings more accessible to people with disabilities. These plans must be made available to the public. Accessibility planning efforts to date have developed a strong foundation for the development of accessibility standards that will mean real and effective change.

This document is the fifth annual accessibility plan developed by the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue. It highlights the achievements of the 2006-07 plan and outlines the commitments for 2007-08 so that no new barriers are created and, over time, existing ones are removed.

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue intends to build on its achievements by implementing initiatives that support the government's commitment to continue to make Ontario an inclusive and accessible province where people of all abilities have a chance to fully achieve their potential.



Message from our Ministers



Greg Sorbara
Minister of Finance



Michael Chan
Minister of Revenue

Under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA), all public sector and broader public sector organizations are required by law to have an annual accessibility plan and to make it available to the public. This is the fifth year in which plans have been written and are being implemented by organizations such as ours across the province.

This year marks the second anniversary of the landmark Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, (AODA) – legislation that will require the development, implementation and enforcement of accessibility standards in key areas of daily living.

The accessible customer service regulations were approved by the Lieutenant-Governor on August 11, 2007 and will come into force on January 1, 2008.

An initial proposed standard on accessible transportation has been developed by the Transportation Standards Development Committee and was posted for public review between June 27 and August 31, 2007.

The Standards Development Committee that will draft the proposed information and communications standard was established and began meeting in April, 2007. The committees developing the accessible built environment and accessible employment standards have been selected and will begin meeting in the fall of 2007.

Here at the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue, we are building on the success of our previous four plans and continuing to look for ways to better meet the needs of people with disabilities who come into contact within these ministries, regardless of whether they are staff, members of the general public or ministry stakeholders.

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue are committed to improving accessibility through identifying, removing and preventing barriers, working together within our ministries, across government and in our relationships with our stakeholders.

In order to comply with the provisions of the Act, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue continue to educate staff on accessibility issues. Through ongoing employee training, we are committed to providing the best possible customer service to everyone.

This past year, Oshawa Public Inquiry Centre staff completed the “*May I Help You? Welcoming Customers with Disabilities*” training. Additionally, ODA and AODA information have been incorporated into the new employee and student orientation programs and we continue to provide new managers with online ODA training. In the built environment, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue worked in partnership with the Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC) to replace all entrance doors to the [Michael Starr Building in Oshawa](#) to improve accessibility, and all elevator controls were made ODA compliant.

We encourage you to read further about the initiatives our ministries have taken to ensure that accessibility issues and barriers have been prevented or removed. Should you have any comments or concerns about ODA or AODA, please contact [Lynn Portelance](#), Human Resources Branch, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Revenue at (905) 433-6142.

The Honourable Greg Sorbara
Minister of Finance

The Honourable Michael Chan
Minister of Revenue



Report on Achievements

2006 - 2007 Accessibility Improvement Initiatives

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue are pleased to report on the achievements for 2006–07. The following section provides a status report.

Customer Service

Commitment

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue commits to continuing customer service improvements through employee training.

Status Completed

Action

In December 2006, all staff in the Oshawa Public Inquiry Centre completed the “*May I Help You? Welcoming Customers with Disabilities*” training.

Timeframe 2006 - 2007

Commitment

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue will ensure that materials posted to the ministry’s Internet sites are accessible

to users with the most common technology, and investigate further options to broaden accessibility.

Status Completed

Action

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue internet/intranet sites are ODA compliant and information is posted in PDF and HTML format. The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue have enhanced the user's ability to increase the font size for easier accessibility and incorporated an e-mail alert system enabling users to receive instant notification by e-mail of new publications posted on the sites.

Timeframe 2006 - 2007



Employment Accommodation

Commitment

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue will continue to monitor the application of staffing policies and processes to ensure that accessibility issues are properly addressed.

Status Ongoing

Action

Job applicants with accessibility issues are properly accommodated, as required. The Human Resources Branch provides advice and assistance on accessibility issues to managers for individual requests on employee accommodation during the interview process and provides information to new managers in the Management Development Training Program. A higher age limit of 29 years for persons with disabilities for the Summer Experience Program (SEP) is being enforced by Human Resources Branch.

Timeframe Ongoing

Commitment

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue will enhance ODA and AODA awareness for managers and employees.

Status Completed

Action

The Human Resources Branch has incorporated ODA and AODA into the new employee orientation program for new employees and students. 85% of all new managers have completed the on-line manager's ODA training as required. Notifications/reminders are sent out to new managers identifying the need to complete the ODA training.

Timeframe 2006 - 2007



Communications and Information

Commitment

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue will ensure that its publications are available in alternate formats.

Status Ongoing

Action

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue ODA planning lead is the ministries' contact person for advice and guidance on ODA and AODA issues, and is responsible for liaising with Publications Ontario to arrange for the production of alternative format documents as required.

Timeframe Ongoing

Commitment

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue will ensure that the ministry's websites display the main TTY number in its contact section.

Status Completed

Action

In 2006 the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue displayed the TTY number as part of the contact information on the ministry's websites.

Timeframe 2006

Commitment

The Ministry of Finance will support ministries in their planning to include consideration of accessibility and goals.

Status In progress

Action

Treasury Board Office reviewed the opportunities to support ministries in their planning to include consideration of accessibility and determined that consistent application could be best achieved through partnership with the Modernization Office in the development of an "accessibility lens" for use across the OPS.

Timeframe Ongoing

Rationale

The 2006-07 commitment will roll up into a new commitment under Acts and regulations for the 2007-2008 year.

“To ensure consistency across the OPS, The Ministry of Finance will participate and support the Modernization Office in the development of an “accessibility lens” for use in the context of corporate policy development.”

Commitment

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue will develop and implement an Accessibility Plan for the 2006-2007 year.

Status Completed

Action

Annual accessibility plan was completed in partnership with the Accessibility Planning Working Group members and the final plan is posted on the ministries internet & intranet sites. The working group identified, discussed and resolved accessibility issues.

Timeframe 2006 - 2007



Built Environment

Commitment

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue will ensure that government workspaces meet or exceed the Government’s accessibility requirements.

Status Ongoing

Action

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue worked with ORC to replace all entrance doors to the Michael Starr building in Oshawa to improve accessibility, and all elevator controls were made ODA compliant in March 2007.

In situations, where new floor space is acquired and renovated, and where existing floor space is renovated, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue Facilities Management Services will ensure that the floor space meets or exceeds the government’s accessibility requirements.

Timeframe Ongoing



Acts and Regulations

Commitment

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue will continue to promote accessibility awareness in the review of legislation.

Status Completed

Action

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue, Corporate & Quality Service Division has included the “Guide for Reviewing Policies Pursuant to ODA, 2001” on its websites and the Ministry of Finance, Office of the Budget and Taxation reviewed all new and existing personal income tax policies and legislation as required with respect to persons with disabilities.

Timeframe 2006 - 2007



Commitments – Measures to Prevent New Barriers

In the coming year, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue will continue to educate and inform employees about accessibility considerations and improvements to prevent new barriers. This will be accomplished through ongoing training and sharing of information so that accessibility issues are addressed. This section summarizes these commitments.

Customer service

- The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue will continue to improve customer service through on-going training and information sharing.
- The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue will inform staff of the requirements of the new AODA proposed Customer Service Standards.

Employment Accommodation

- The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue will continue to accommodate applicants with accessibility issues.
- The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue will participate, as required, in the development of the AODA proposed Employment Standards.

Communications and information

- The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue intranet/internet websites will continue to be reviewed to ensure accessibility.

- The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue will participate, as required, in the development of AODA proposed Communication Standards.

Built environment

- The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue will continue to meet or exceed the government's accessibility requirements for any renovations to existing or newly acquired floor space.
- The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue will participate, as required, in the development of AODA proposed Built Environment Standards

Acts and regulations

- The Ministry of Finance will participate and support the Modernization Office in the development of an “accessibility lens” for use in the context of corporate policy development.



Commitments – Barriers to be Addressed

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue have made significant progress in implementing measures to identify, address and prevent barriers to accessibility in the workplace. The employees of the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue intend to build on its previous commitments and have identified new commitments for the 2007-08 year, through the activities detailed below.

Customer service

Barrier:

Access to customer service for persons with disabilities.

Commitment:

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue will continue to communicate the requirement for new managers to complete the ODA On-line training package and promote the use of the “*May I Help You? Welcoming Customers with Disabilities*” training course to frontline staff in the Ministry of Revenue.

Responsibility:

- Tax Revenue Division

- Corporate & Quality Service Division

Timeline:

2007 - 2008

Barrier:

Increase employee awareness of Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA)

Commitment:

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue will incorporate ODA in its New Employee Orientation Program and promote the on-line tutorial offered by the Centre for Leadership and Learning “*May I Help You? Welcoming Customers with Disabilities.*”

Responsibility:

- Tax Revenue Division
- Corporate & Quality Service Division

Timeline:

2007 – 2008



Employment accommodation

Barrier:

Access to employment and accommodation for job applicants and employees.

Commitment:

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue will include a component in the Management Development Training Program for new managers on accommodating employees and job applicants who have disabilities.

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue will continue to monitor the application of staffing policies and processes to ensure that accessibility issues are properly addressed.

Responsibility:

- Corporate & Quality Service Division

Barrier:

Access to information technology

Commitment:

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue will continue to ensure that the requirement of the Procurement Directive for Goods and Services related to Ontarians with Disabilities Act when purchasing information technology goods or services is adhered to.

Responsibility:

Central Agencies I&IT Cluster

Timeline:

2007 - 2008



Communications and information

Barrier:

Access to on-line information

Commitment:

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue's web team will take the Advanced PDF design course, to learn how to properly tag PDF files for increased accessibility.

Responsibility:

Communications and Corporate Affairs Branch

Timeline:

2007-2008

Barrier:

Access to external/internal information

Commitment:

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue's web team will continue to provide online information in accessible formats. The team will continue to take training on the Internet trends and technologies that affect the accessibility of electronic information.

Responsibility:

Communications and Corporate Affairs Branch

Timeline:

2007-2008

Barrier:

Awareness of accessibility requirements

Commitment:

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue will develop and implement an annual Accessibility Plan for the following year.

Responsibility:

Corporate & Quality Service Division

Timeline:

2007-2008

Barrier:

Access to publications

Commitment:

The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue will ensure that its publications are available in alternate formats.

Responsibility:

Corporate & Quality Service Division

Timeline:

2007-2008



Built environment

Barrier:

Access to buildings

Commitment:

In situations where Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC) is undertaking capital work to buildings they own, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue will work with ORC to ensure there is compliance with ODA requirements.

Responsibility:

Corporate & Quality Service Division

Timeline:

2007 - 2008



Acts and Regulations

Barrier:

Accessibility consideration in ministry planning.

Commitment:

To ensure consistency across the OPS, the Ministry of Finance will participate and support the Modernization Office in the development of an “accessibility lens” for use in the context of corporate policy development.

Responsibility:

Treasury Board Office

Timeline:

2007- 2009

For More Information

Questions or comments about the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Revenue accessibility plan are always welcome.

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Visit the Ministry of Community and Social Services Accessibility Ontario web portal at: www.mcass.gov.on.ca/accessibility/index.html. The site promotes accessibility and provides information and resources on how to make Ontario a barrier-free province.

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