

MINISTRY OF FINANCE

2008-2009 Accessibility Plan



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Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Report on Status of Customer Service Requirements	2
Report on Other Accessibility Commitments	4
For More Information	10

Introduction

Ontario is making progress toward building an accessible province by 2025. The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) has laid the foundation to meet this goal. Under the AODA, Ontario is developing standards that will remove the barriers faced by people with disabilities.

On January 1, 2008, the first accessibility standard under the AODA came into force. Through the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, people of all abilities will be able to get the service they need. Public sector organizations, including the Ontario government, will need to comply with this standard by 2010. Private sector and non-profit organizations will need to comply by 2012.

Next year, more standards will be released in other important areas, including:

- Information and communications
- Transportation
- Employment
- The built environment.

The Ministry of Finance's sixth annual accessibility plan highlights 2007-2008's achievements to break down barriers for people with disabilities. It also outlines this ministry's commitments in the coming year to make programs, policies and services more accessible for all Ontarians.

This accessibility plan is unique, because it reflects our transition between the AODA and the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA). The ODA applies to the Ontario government and all broader public sector organizations. Under the ODA, the ministry develops annual accessibility plans to make its policies, programs, services and buildings more accessible to people with disabilities.

Through the ODA, accessibility planning has laid a strong foundation on which the Ministry of Finance can build. The ministry will continue to help make Ontario more accessible for people with disabilities and help achieve a more inclusive society for all Ontarians.

An executive summary of all Government of Ontario Ministry Accessibility Plans is available at,

http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass/english/pillars/accessibilityOntario/planning/ministries_accplans08.htm

Report on Status of Customer Service Requirements

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: Ongoing

Ministry of Finance commits to meeting the requirements¹ of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service in keeping with Ontario's legal and policy frameworks.

Planned Actions:

Ministry of Finance will develop a plan that will provide direction for the ministry in meeting the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.

The ministry will establish an Accessibility Committee with representatives from across the ministry which will include specialists in Information Technology, Communications, Financial Planning, Legal, Policy Development and Facilities Management to assist in the implementation of the plan.

Implementation Time Frame: September 2007 – March 2010

Results Achieved:

Ministry of Finance Accessibility Committee was established in July 2008 and the committee is assisting in identifying commitments which would move the ministry towards compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New

Ministry of Finance will implement training in accordance with the requirements¹ of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.

¹ To view the regulation (AODA) which specifies the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service go to www.e-laws.gov.on.ca and click on "Current Consolidated Law" and do a keyword search for "429/07".

Planned Actions:

Ministry of Finance will develop and implement a training plan to meet the requirements for accessible customer service. Training will be offered on a number of topics as outlined in the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service.

Ministry of Finance will provide a resource list on its accessibility intranet page of available training options related to accessible customer service as these become available.

Implementation Timeframe: January 2009- March 2010

Focus Area: Customer Service**Commitment: Ongoing**

Ministry of Finance commits to continuing to ensure that its meetings are accessible to persons with disabilities.

Planned Actions:

Ministry of Finance will continue to raise awareness amongst its employees of the OPS guidelines for planning accessible events.

Implementation Timeframe: September 2007 – March 2010**Results Achieved:**

Ministry of Finance has communicated the OPS guidelines for planning accessible events on its accessibility intranet site.

Report on Other Accessibility Commitments

Accessibility Improvement Initiatives to Identify, Remove or Prevent Barriers in preparation for AODA standards currently under development.

Focus Area: Employment

Impact: Program

Commitment: Ongoing

Ministry of Finance will promote career and leadership opportunities to employees in the feeder group to senior management who self-identify as persons with disabilities.

Planned Actions:

Ministry of Finance will develop and implement a ministry-specific diversity mentoring partnership program which offers mentoring opportunities with senior management for persons in feeder groups to senior management. Those eligible for the program would include persons with disabilities.

Implementation Timeframe: September 2007 – March 2010

Results Achieved:

Ministry of Finance developed and implemented a Diversity Mentoring Partnership Program in July 2008 which includes persons with disabilities. The ministry will evaluate the effectiveness of the program to determine its value.

Focus Area: Employment**Impact: Program****Commitment: Completed (September 2007 – November 2008)**

Ministry of Finance will recognize employees of the ministry who champion diversity within the ministry or wider OPS.

Planned Actions:

Ministry of Finance will include a criterion for promoting or advocating inclusiveness as part of its annual employee recognition program, the Stella Awards.

Implementation Timeframe: September 2007 – November 2008**Results Achieved:**

A criterion for promoting or advocating inclusiveness has been included in the ministry's annual employee recognition program, the Stella Awards.

Focus Area: Employment**Impact: Program****Commitment: Ongoing**

Ministry of Finance will continue to train new managers in accommodating job applicants through its management development programs. Training will also include information on the ODA/AODA and accommodating employees with disabilities.

Planned Actions:

Through its Management Development Program, Ministry of Finance will continue to ensure that new managers are made aware of the requirement to accommodate employees who are persons with disabilities and the ODA/AODA.

Implementation Timeframe: September 2007 – March 2010

Results Achieved:

Ministry of Finance's Management Development Program continues to raise awareness of employment accommodation among its newly appointed managers through its module on the OPS Employment Accommodation and Return to Work Policy.

Focus Area: Information & Communications**Impact: Service****Commitment: Ongoing**

Ministry of Finance commits to continuing to provide accessible electronic information to internal and external clients/customers.

Planned Actions:

Ministry of Finance's web team will continue to provide electronic information externally and internally in accessible formats. The team will continue to keep themselves up-to-date on Internet trends and technologies that affect the accessibility of electronic information.

The Ministry will include resource tools and educational materials on accessible formats on its accessibility intranet webpage and will continue to raise awareness of the needs of staff who have visual impairments when memos or documents are circulated by e-mail within the ministry or OPS-wide.

Implementation Timeframe: September 2007 – March 2010**Results Achieved:**

The web team has continued to receive training on accessible electronic issues.

An electronic reminder was issued in May 2008 to managers to share information with staff who are responsible for creating PDF memos for general distribution to ministry and/or OPS staff, and with staff who have a visual impairment and use text recognition. The reminder addressed the need for all memos and documents that are circulated ministry or OPS-wide to be accessible to screen reader devices. These reminders will continue to be issued routinely. Ministry of Finance's Management Development Program Resource Handbook now includes a fact sheet on best practices for circulating memos and documents by e-mail including guidelines on the production and distribution of accessible PDF documents.

Focus Area: Information & Communications**Impact: Service****Commitment: Ongoing**

Ministry of Finance will continue to ensure that its publications are available in alternate formats.

Planned Actions:

Ministry of Finance ODA and AODA Planning Lead will continue to be the ministry's 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 alternate format documents as required.

Implementation Timeframe: September 2007 – March 2010**Results Achieved:**

Ministry of Finance ODA and AODA Planning Lead has arranged alternative formats from Publications Ontario upon request, and continues to provide advice and guidance on ODA and AODA issues.

Focus Area: Information & Communications**Impact: Program****Commitment: Completed (September 07 – November 2008)**

Ministry of Finance will implement a more inclusive approach to identifying barriers to accessibility by encouraging employees to provide feedback on accessibility issues within the workplace.

Planned Actions:

Ministry of Finance will create an on-line method on its accessibility intranet page to facilitate employees' identification of barriers to accessibility.

Implementation Timeframe: September 07 – November 2008

Results Achieved:

An on-line method is available on the ministry's accessibility intranet page for employees to forward their comments and to identify barriers to accessibility. This is expected to encourage employees to become more engaged and aware of accessibility issues.

Focus Area: Built Environment**Impact: Policy****Commitment: Ongoing**

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

Planned Actions:

Where new floor space is acquired and where existing floor space is renovated, the Ministry of Finance, Facilities Management Services will work with ORC to comply with ODA requirements.

Implementation Timeframe: September 2007 – March 2010**Results Achieved:**

Ministry of Finance, Facilities Management Services worked with ORC to implement ODA requirements where new floor space was acquired and existing floor space was renovated within ministry premises.

Focus Area: Built Environment**Impact: Service****Commitment: New**

Ministry of Finance will determine if there is an adequate number of open passage wheelchair accessible meeting areas at its ministry premises to meet its needs.

Planned Actions:

Ministry of Finance, Facilities Management Services will compile and communicate information on its inventory of open passage wheelchair accessible meeting areas within ministry locations. As part of its ongoing services, Facilities Management Services will respond as necessary to any additional requests for these rooms to meet ministry's needs.

Implementation Timeframe: January 2009 – March 2010

Focus Area: Built Environment**Impact: Service****Commitment: Ongoing**

Ministry of Finance, Facilities Management Services will continue to assess the functionality of devices which provide access for persons with disabilities within ministry premises, e.g., power door actuators, against available accessibility building standards, pending release of the AODA Built Environment standards.

Planned Actions:

Facilities Management Services will review all ministry premises and include the following activities:

1. Review existing access control devices within ministry premises to determine if upgrading to a multi-functional device is warranted.
2. Where new devices are to be installed within ministry premises, Facilities Management Services will specify devices which are compliant with standards under the American Disabilities Act (ADA) until the release of future AODA standards.

These projects will be completed as new projects arise at each location.

Implementation Timeframe: September 2007 – March 2010

For More Information

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

Please phone: (905) 433-6079

General inquiry number: (905) 433-6000

TTY number: 1-800 263-7776 Toll-Free (Ontario)

1-800 number: 1-800-263-7965 (English)
1-800-668-5821 (French)

E-mail: Anne.Peters@ontario.ca

Ministry website address: ontario.ca/finance

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.

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

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