



MINISTRY OF FINANCE

2012-2013

Annual Accessibility Plan

ISSN # 1708-3710

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Introduction

Each year, the Ontario Public Service (OPS) sets a course to prevent, identify and remove barriers for persons with disabilities. Every ministry participates through the preparation of 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 accessible by 2025. It includes accessibility standards in:

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

This year, the accessibility plans must also address the [Integrated Accessibility Regulation \(IASR\)](#) under the AODA enacted June 2011. The IASR required the OPS to develop a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) to prevent and remove barriers for persons with disabilities. The OPS published the [MYAP](#) on January 1, 2012. This included an OPS Statement of Commitment to demonstrate leadership for accessibility:

The OPS endeavours 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.

Building on the OPS Statement of Commitment, the OPS Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, and the ministry's former 2011-2012 Annual Accessibility Plan, the new 2012-13 Accessibility Plan will continue moving the Ministry of Finance and the OPS to the goal of demonstrating leadership in becoming an accessible province for all Ontarians.

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

To view every ministry's Annual Accessibility Plan, visit [Ontario.ca](#).

Section One: Report on Measures to Identify, Remove and Prevent Barriers in 2011-12

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

Since 2001, the OPS has been complying with ODA obligations and preparing an Annual Accessibility Plan, which it has made available to the public through the Government of Ontario's website.

Over the past ten years, the Ministry of Finance has continued to make strides in becoming more accessible, for example:

- During the 2011 and 2012 Ontario Budgets, 30 of the province-wide pre-budget consultations were held as virtual town halls, allowing citizens who may have difficulty travelling to or attending public events to participate on-line. These virtual town halls reached an audience of 371,187 people in Ontario.
- In 2010, the ministry added a diversity category to its Stella Awards of Excellence program.
- In 2009, the ministry held an Accessibility Fair in Oshawa, which was attended by over 100 employees.
- In 2008, the ministry held a Valuing Differences Forum, which was attended by more than 400 employees from across the province.
- In 2008, the ministry produced a diversity video which is now used as a resource by the OPS Diversity Office and available to all ministries in the government. To date more than 2000 OPS employees have viewed the video. Presentations of the video have also been made at various forums such as the meeting of the Human Resources Service Delivery Leadership Team.
- In 2006, the ministry ensured that a (toll-free) TTY number was listed in the contact section of its Internet site.

- In 2004, the ministry's Michael Starr building located at 33 King Street West in Oshawa underwent extensive renovations to its outdoor entrance and perimeter sidewalks. As part of the outdoor renovations, the sidewalks were repaved with ramps and accessible seating and tables were installed, ensuring that everyone had access to the building and outdoor common areas.
- In 2003, the ministry established an Accessibility Planning Working Group to make recommendations on how reception areas could be more compliant with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA). By the spring of 2004, the reception areas of both the Toronto and Oshawa Human Resources Branch locations were wheelchair-accessible.

In 2011-12, the government continued to comply with the [Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation](#). As well, it had begun applying initiatives to meet some of the [Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation](#) compliance requirements in the areas of employment, information and communications, transportation and procurement. The government continues to implement initiatives to enhance accessibility in other areas such as the built environment.

The following is a summary of the accessibility initiatives the [Ministry of Finance](#) and the former [Ministry of Revenue](#) implemented last year, as a result of the 2011-2012 annual accessibility plans. The Ministry of Revenue was incorporated into the Ministry of Finance in October 2011 and the Ministry of Finance will now report on achievements against previous commitments for both ministries.

Reporting on 2011-2012 AODA Obligations

Customer Service

- In 2011-12, the Ministry of Finance remained in compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 under the AODA and the applicable requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, Ontario Regulation 191/11 (IASR), which came into force in June 2011.
- The ministry filed a Certificate of Assurance, with the OPS Diversity Office, that attested to compliance with both the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation and the first set of IASR requirements that came into effect on January 2012.

- Since 2010, the ministry has had an accessible feedback process to respond to inquiries and suggestions from the public either by mail, e-mail, and telephone (including TTY) on its Internet site. To date, no feedback has been received through these channels.

Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)

Accessibility policies

- The ministry has posted information for the public on its Internet site including: the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy, and the steps to be taken in connection with a temporary service or facility disruption. Guides for employees on how to create documents in alternate formats are available on its intranet site.

Accessibility plans

- The 2012-13 Ministry of Finance Accessibility Plan is a public-facing multi-year accessibility plan that outlines the ministry's vision and how it intends to remove barriers to accessibility.

Procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities

- The ministry provides links to the Supply Chain Management's website on the procurement directive, tools, resources and checklists which include accessible information.

Self-service kiosks

- The ministry is aware of the need to incorporate accessibility features into self-service kiosks, if the ministry acquires kiosks.

Emergency and public safety information

- The ministry has made emergency information available in alternate formats such as the Office Security and Emergency Procedures Manual and site specific appendices.
- In case of evacuation, the ministry has prepared bilingual signage in alternate formats for posting on office doors to let staff and the public know that they cannot enter the building. During an emergency, a person (manager, employee or guard) pre-designated in the Continuity of Operations Plan for

the facility and/or in the site-specific Office Security and Emergency Procedures Manual will post the signs.

- The two main campuses for ministry staff are located at 33 King Street West in Oshawa (Michael Starr Building) and 95 Grosvenor Street/7 Queen's Park Crescent in Toronto (Frost Complex). Building security guards located at the Michael Starr Building and OPP Queen's Park Detachment at the Frost Complex have been trained in the "May I Help You?" modules to assist in communicating with persons with disabilities.
- The ministry promoted the federal government Emergency Preparedness Guide to staff during Emergency Preparedness Week which was held the week of May 7th, 2012.

New Internet and intranet sites

- The ministry communicated requirements in the new Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) to all web masters and web coordinators.
- The ministry maintains a schedule of new and major refresh of websites and web pages to meet IASR compliance.
- The ministry continues to review its intranet sites for business usefulness and works to ensure that all sites being refreshed are compliant with the new IASR standards.

Workplace emergency management

- The ministry has a process in place for staff in need of assistance during evacuations. The employee and manager develop a plan for notification and/or evacuation assistance depending on the employee's specific needs. The manager provides the Emergency Building Lead the names of individuals requiring assistance.
- Staff are reminded about evacuation assistance in memos that follow evacuations and/or drills. The process is also posted on the Security Services and Emergency Management Unit intranet site.
- A training and awareness event was held during Emergency Preparedness Week in May 2012, that included promoting emergency preparedness planning for people with disabilities and special needs.
- In May 2012, the ministry distributed the brochure, "Emergency Preparedness for People with Disabilities/Special Needs", to all offices with ministry staff.
- Emergency information sessions were held for new employees in all building locations.

Information and Communications

- The ministry ensured that persons with disabilities have equal access to information and are able to participate in online consultations.
- The ministry ensured that ministry-sponsored public events and meetings were accessible.
- The ministry ensured that it was prepared to provide communications support, publications and information to the public in multiple accessible formats upon request, in a manner that takes into account a person's needs due to their disability.
- To increase employee awareness, the ministry posted information on its intranet site regarding the availability of accessibility videos on how to create an accessible document, and when, and how to use Portable Document Format (PDF) documents.
- The ministry encouraged web editors to keep up to date on new developments and Internet/intranet standards and guidelines on accessibility through the Web Coordinator's Committee.

Employment

- The ministry worked in partnership with Strategic Human Resources Services Branch (SHRSB), OPS Recruitment Centres and OPS Executive Services to ensure that there were no barriers in employment policies, processes, practices or tools for persons with disabilities. This work included reviewing all new job descriptions and job advertisements to ensure compliance with ODA, AODA, IASR and Ontario Human Rights Code requirements.
- The ministry also enhanced managers' awareness of ODA/AODA obligations during the recruitment and hiring process through training and internal communications. This awareness included not only people with disabilities but all the enumerated grounds in the Ontario Human Rights Code.
- The ministry continued to ensure its managers received mandatory training on employment accommodation and that all learning opportunities were accessible.
- New employees were directed to the ministry's Accessibility web page as part of the ministry's orientation program. This page contains links to IASR requirements.
- The ministry arranged ergonomic assessments for staff upon request.
- For the second year, the ministry incorporated diversity, inclusion and accessibility commitments into senior management performance plans.
- Ministry employees were encouraged to participate in the ministry's Diversity

Mentoring Partnership Program, and 43 employees from under-represented groups were matched with executive mentoring partners.

- The ministry developed its first Diversity and Inclusion strategy in consultation with the Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee. This strategy was presented to the ministry's senior management and then shared with all staff.
- As of June 2012, the ministry trained 94 per cent of employees on Bill 168 overview, and 93 per cent on the Ontario Public Service Workplace Discrimination and Harassment Policy (WDHP) and Workplace Violence Prevention Policy (WVPP).
- As of July 2012, approximately 480 ministry employees completed the "May I Help You?" modules and 67 employees participated in training on the OPS Inclusion Lens.

Built Environment

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

- The ministry worked closely with the property manager for the 33 King Street West, Oshawa facility and the property manager's consultants, on an accessibility study for the building.
- The ministry ensured that all facilities redesign projects complied with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 built environment.
- The ministry made every effort to ensure that changes were made with the least disruption possible to the public we serve while maintaining the security of our staff and operations.
- The ministry also completed a consolidation and reconfiguration of the Toronto Tax Office ensuring accessibility standards were met.
- The ministry's Facilities Management Unit consulted with managers and employees with accessibility issues to develop solutions to meet their needs.

Procurement

- Accessible procurement resources have been posted for staff reference on the Corporate Planning and Finance Branch intranet site.
- The ministry has promoted the use of the Meeting Accessibility Considerations in Procurement checklist, which was developed by the Ontario Public Service Supply Chain Management, as part of the procurement approval process.

- The Ministry of Finance Procurement Documentation Checklist, which includes a direct link to ODA requirements, was shared whenever the ministry provided procurement assistance in 2011-12.

Other

- Several divisions in the ministry added a diversity and inclusion category to their awards of excellence programs.
- The Deputy Minister appointed a representative from the ministry on the Ontario Public Service Disability Advisory Council.

Section Two: Measures Planned for 2012-13 and Beyond

Our Statement of Commitment:

The OPS endeavours 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.

This year, the Ministry of Finance Annual Accessibility Plan focuses on five areas. To demonstrate leadership in accessibility, our ministry is planning to undertake the activities described below. At a minimum, these initiatives will support compliance with the existing Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and Integrated Accessibility Standards under the AODA and other areas.

- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Built Environment
- Procurement
- Accessibility Training

Customer Service

The Ministry of Finance 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.

- In 2012-13, the Ministry of Finance will continue to ensure compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07 under the AODA and the applicable requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, Ontario Regulation 191/11 (IASR) which took effect in June 2011.
- The Ministry of Finance will continue to provide an accessible feedback process to document and respond to inquiries and suggestions either by mail, e-mail, and telephone on its Internet site.

Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)

Accessibility policies

- The ministry will continue to ensure that managers and staff are familiar with the OPS Accessible Customer Service policy and take a person's needs into consideration when providing customer service to a person with a disability.

Accessibility plans

- The ministry will continue to support the OPS Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) to 2025, which outlines the vision and plans for removing and preventing barriers to accessibility.

Procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities

- The ministry will work to ensure that new employees receive training about providing goods and services to people with disabilities as soon as practical after they are assigned to their job duties.

Self-service kiosks

- The ministry will ensure that accessibility features are incorporated into self-service kiosks, if the ministry acquires any.

Emergency and public safety information

- The ministry has launched two new online courses on emergency procedures and security awareness for all staff. Both courses are AODA compliant and provide information for people with disabilities during an emergency.
- The ministry will discuss accessible emergency response information during quarterly meetings with Emergency Building Leads.
- The ministry will continue to support accessibility awareness and best practices associated with emergency management procedures, plans and communications.

New Internet and intranet sites

- The Central Agencies Information and Information Technology Cluster will coordinate a compliance assessment and remediation schedule for all ministry websites to ensure AODA compliance within the mandated deadlines.

Workplace emergency management

- The ministry will continue to work with managers to ensure employees with disabilities have emergency evacuation assistance if required.
- The ministry will continue to ensure that new managers are made aware of the individualized emergency response initiative for employees with disabilities.
- As part of the ministry orientation process, new employees will continue to be informed that emergency evacuation assistance is available if required.
- As part of the ministry obligation to maintain documented individual accommodation plans, the ministry will document, as required, the individualized emergency response information for each employee.

Information and Communications

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

- The ministry will continue to provide virtual town halls as part of the pre-budget consultations to allow citizens who may have difficulty attending in person to attend online.
- The ministry will ensure that accommodations for persons with disabilities are made available on request for major public meetings.
- The ministry will continue to ensure that its public website meets accessibility standards.
- The ministry will continue to comply with the guidelines and procedures for meeting public requests for publications and information in accessible formats.
- The ministry will encourage employees to complete the OPS e-learning videos on creating accessible PDF and Word documents and other subjects related to the IASR.
- The ministry will continue to encourage staff to incorporate accessibility considerations into the preparation of communications materials to ensure that products are accessible.

Employment

The Ministry of Finance is committed to fair and accessible employment practices that attract and retain talented employees with disabilities. OPS employees with disabilities know that they can participate fully and meaningfully in services and employment.

- Beginning in 2013, the ministry will comply with the employment-related requirements of the IASR (e.g. recruitment s.22-24; employee accommodation s.25, 26 & 28; employees returning to work s.29; and performance management, career development and redeployment s. 30-32).
- The ministry, in partnership with the OPS Recruitment Centres and OPS Executives Services, will ensure that all job applicants are offered and provided with requested accommodation throughout the recruitment process.
- The ministry will develop and have in place a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.
- The ministry will provide employees with disabilities with accommodations to do their job including assistive devices, communications supports and ergonomic assessments.
- The ministry will adhere to the return to work process to facilitate the return to work of employees who were absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodations in order to return to work.
- The ministry will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities and any accommodation plans in relation to performance management, career development, redeployment and any job change.

Built Environment

The Ministry of Finance is committed to greater accessibility in, out of and around the Michael Starr Building, Frost Complex and its seven other locations in the province.

- The ministry will ensure that all office locations comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 built environment.
- The ministry made every effort to ensure that the consolidation of offices at 2 Simcoe Street South, and 40 King Street West into the Michael Starr Building by December 2012 are made with the least disruption possible to the public we serve while maintaining the security of our staff and operations.
- In redesigning space, the ministry will use a common design, inclusive of accessibility needs and features, making space more open and accessible to employees.
- Boardrooms will be located to common corridors closer to elevators to allow for easier access by employees.

Procurement

The Ministry of Finance is committed to integrating accessibility considerations into our procurement processes.

- The ministry will continue to raise awareness about Accessible Procurement in the OPS through different venues including: the Intranet site, staff emails, the Controllershship Newsletter and presentations to the ministry's Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee and the ministry's Financial Practices Forum.
- The ministry will continue to incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services, facilities, except where it is not practicable. If it is not practicable, an explanation will be documented in the procurement file.
- The ministry will continue to actively offer accommodations to all vendors with disabilities, upon request, to ensure that the RFP process itself does not create barriers for vendors with disabilities.
- Accessibility requirements will be included in the ministry Request for Proposals (RFPs) for procurement of goods, services and facilities.
- The ministry will include the standard accessibility language which has been provided by Supply Chain Management on their website, under Tools and Templates –Accessibility.

Accessibility Training

The Ministry of Finance is committed to integrating accessibility training into the Learning Plan development process.

- The ministry is committed to ensuring that employees complete training, appropriate to their duties, on the requirements of the IASR and on the requirements of the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities as soon as practical in 2013.
- The ministry, in its 2012-13 Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, recommends that each employee take a diversity, inclusion or accessibility course in the coming year.
- A list of potential e-learning and classroom courses will be shared with all employees. This list will include the "May I Help You" modules, the OPS Inclusion Lens, training on PDF and Word documents and IASR.
- The ministry will keep a training record showing the details of training taken by employees including training dates and what training was provided.

Other

- The Deputy Minister will continue to have an appointed representative as a member of the Ontario Public Service Disability Advisory Council.
- The ministry will continue to work with the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario and the OPS Diversity Office to ensure that Ontario continues to be recognized as one of the best diversity employers in Canada.

Section Three: Review of Acts, Regulations and Policies

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

Acts, Regulations and Policies Reviewed in 2011-12

Acts and Regulations

The Ministry of Finance is committed to ensuring that the Acts and regulations we administer are reviewed for potential accessibility barriers.

- In 2011-12, the ministry in consultation with the its Legal Services Branch, reviewed two pieces of legislation for potential accessibility barriers using the OPS Inclusion Lens. One act was reviewed on behalf of the Ministry of Finance and one act was reviewed on behalf of the former Ministry of Revenue.

Acts, Regulations and Policies to Be Reviewed in 2012-13

Acts and Regulations

- The ministry has a legislative review schedule which includes a review of all acts by 2015 and all legislation by 2020 which will include applying the OPS Inclusion Lens. By the end of 2013, the ministry will be reviewing approximately twenty acts for potential accessibility barriers using the OPS Inclusion Lens.

The OPS Diversity Office and the Ministry of the Attorney General have developed a coordinated approach to continue with the review of government legislation for accessibility barriers. In this next phase, high impact statutes that meet the following criteria will be reviewed:

- Statutes that affect persons with disabilities directly
- Statutes that provide for the delivery of widely applicable services or programs

- Statutes that provide benefits or protections, or
- Statutes that affect a democratic or civic right or duty.

This phase of the review will be completed by the end of 2014. The government has decided to review these statutes because it is anticipated that changes in these areas will have the highest impact on those Ontarians who have accessibility needs. We will continue to report on the review in our annual accessibility plan.

Identifying, Removing and Preventing Barriers with the OPS Inclusion Lens

In 2011, the Ontario Public Service (OPS) launched the OPS Inclusion Lens. The OPS Inclusion Lens is an analytical tool that helps staff incorporate elements of inclusion into their work through an enhanced understanding of diversity and accessibility. The Inclusion Lens can be used when initiating a project or reviewing policies, programs, legislation, guidelines and procedures. The OPS Inclusion Lens can assist in identifying, removing and preventing barriers to accessibility and other dimensions of diversity.

In 2011-12, the Ministry of Finance completed the following activities:

- Trained ministry employees in the policy units in the Financial Services Commission of Ontario (FSCO) on the OPS Inclusion Lens.
- Held a workshop on the OPS Inclusion Lens for ministry employees in Oshawa in conjunction with the Annual TOPS Forum.
- Guided planning of meetings with pension stakeholders by using the OPS Inclusion Lens in FSCO's Pension Division to choose accessible locations and to prepare presentations.
- Assessed service to FSCO stakeholders by using the OPS Inclusion Lens in FSCO's Corporate Policy and Public Affairs Branch for two of its consumer outreach projects: a website survey and telephone survey.
- Piloted the use of the OPS Executive Recruitment Lens in two competitions for new Assistant Deputy Ministers in the Ministry of Finance.

In the future, our ministry will:

- Continue to encourage all staff to take training on the OPS Inclusion Lens, so that it may be integrated into all aspects of their work.
- Embark on a detailed review and update of FSCO's business area continuity of operations plans. As part of this review, FSCO will introduce the OPS Inclusion Lens and its applications to their branch and division BCP representations.
- Have the Office of the Budget and Treasury Board work with the OPS Diversity Office on steps to include the OPS Inclusion Lens in guidelines for Treasury Board submissions.

Glossary of Terms/Acronyms

AODA – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

IASR – Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation

MYAP – Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

MOF – Ministry of Finance

OPS – Ontario Public Service

ODA – Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001

WCAG - Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

For More Information

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

General inquiry number: 1-866-ONT-TAXS (1-866-668-8297)

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

E-mail: FinanceCommunications.fin@ontario.ca

Ministry website address: www.ontario.ca/finance

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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ISSN # 1708 -3710

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