



MINISTRY OF FINANCE

2013 - 14

Accessibility Plan

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2013 – 14 Accessibility Plan

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2013 - 14 Accessibility Plan

Introduction

For over ten years, every ministry has set a course to prevent, identify and remove barriers for persons with disabilities. Ministries achieve this through the preparation of their annual Accessibility Plan (Plan) as required under the [Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 \(ODA\)](#).

Recently, the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\)](#) established Ontario's roadmap to become accessible by 2025. It includes standards in areas such as: customer service, information and communications, employment, transportation and the built environment. In 2010 the Ministry of Finance complied with the requirements of the first standard on [customer service](#).

In 2011, ministries began to meet the requirements of the other four standards found in the [Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation \(IASR\)](#). On January 1, 2012, the Ontario Public Service (OPS) published a single [Multi-Year Accessibility Plan \(MYAP\)](#). The MYAP included the following 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 Plan will build on these laws and the MYAP. It will outline how the Ministry of Finance will contribute to a barrier-free Ontario by 2025.

To access this and other ministries' 2013 – 14 Accessibility Plans, visit [Ontario.ca](#).

Section One: Report on Measures Taken in 2012 - 13

The following is a list of the commitments made in last year's Plan and the measures taken.

Customer Service: Commitments

- 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 received by mail, e-mail, telephone or through its Internet site.
- The ministry is committed to ensuring that employees complete required or mandatory 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 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.

Customer Service: Measures Taken

- In June 2013, the ministry provided a Certificate of Assurance to the OPS Diversity Office that the ministry was compliant with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and Integrated Accessibility Standards regulations requirements that have come into effect.
- 1,687 ministry employees completed the mandatory IASR e-learning module and 1,719 completed the Working Together course on the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC). Close to 100 per cent of ministry employees have taken these two courses. Managers are following up with employees who have not taken the IASR e-learning module.
- As of July 31, 2013, 757 employees completed the “May I Help You?” modules, 303 ministry employees took the e-learning course “Diversity-Differences Matter: Diversity Foundations” and 58 ministry employees participated in training on the OPS Inclusion Lens.
- Since 2010, the ministry has had an accessible feedback process in place to respond to inquiries and suggestions from the public by mail, e-mail, and telephone (including TTY) on its Internet site.

Employment: Commitments

- 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.

Employment: Measures Taken

- The ministry applied the OPS Executive Recruitment Lens in the recruitment for two senior executive positions ensuring that inclusion and accessibility considerations were integrated into the interview process.
- The OPS Recruitment Centre included the following statement in all Ministry of Finance job ads:

The Ontario Public Service is an inclusive employer.

Accommodation is available under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

- Five ministry delegates attended the 2012 Ontario Job Opportunities Information Network (JOIN) conference. The theme was 'Dropping the Label', increasing accessibility awareness about hiring persons with disabilities.
- The ministry promoted continuous learning on diversity, inclusion and accessibility.
- The ministry offered employees with disabilities accessible alternate versions of online training courses.

- Over 100 managers, approximately 25 per cent of the ministry's managers, and 500 employees were trained on accessibility awareness and best practices associated with emergency management procedures, including individual evacuation assistance for employees with disabilities.
- As part of the ministry orientation process, new employees were informed that emergency evacuation assistance was available if required. The ministry has documented, as required, the individualized emergency response information for each employee who requires assistance during a building evacuation.
- The ministry's senior management has notified program area managers of the need to have documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities. A standard template for a documented individual accommodation plan was shared through the 2013 Certificate of Assurance process.
- 84 ministry employees were provided with ergonomic assessments or ergonomic advice through the OPS Centre for Employee Health, Safety and Wellness. Five of these health, safety and wellness service requests related to Occupational Health and Safety training and six related to wellness initiatives. Presentations were made by Cancer Care Ontario and two webcasts on mental health included the "Shifting Perceptions Initiative" and the "Adapting to Change Initiative".
- In 2012 - 2013, the ministry provided accommodation support for 64 employees returning to work related to an injury or illness and two ministry employees received a health re-assignment.
- The ministry's Objections and Appeals Branch continued to support flexible work from home arrangements.

Information and Communications: Commitments

- 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 IASR.
- The ministry will continue to encourage staff to incorporate accessibility considerations into the preparation of communications materials to ensure that products are accessible.

Information and Communications: Measures Taken

- In April 2013, pre-budget consultations in Ottawa, Kitchener, Greater Toronto Area North, and Downtown Toronto were also held as virtual town halls, allowing citizens who may have had difficulty travelling to or attending public events to participate on-line. These virtual town halls reached an audience of 130,170 people in Ontario.
- All invitations to public events during the pre-budget consultation included a statement offering to accommodate persons with disabilities:

Please advise when you register if you require any accommodation under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

- Sign language interpreters were arranged for the Toronto pre-budget consultation.
- Seating arrangements at 2013 pre-budget consultations also took into account space required for easier mobility by persons with disabilities.
- Assessments of external Internet sites were completed as planned. All new websites met the accessibility standards of the IASR.
- All content on the ministry's public web site met accessibility standards for people with low vision or vision impairments, and it was readable by screen reading devices. The 'html' format included a navigable heading structure, table structure and descriptions and appropriate alternative text descriptions for images.

- For the 2013 Ontario Budget, the news releases and highlights brochure were translated into 25 languages using accessible tagged PDFs.
- An accessible brochure was produced for the [Healthy Homes Renovation Tax Credit website](#). This tax credit is designed to help qualifying seniors 65 years or older in Ontario with the cost to making their home safer and more accessible.
- All reports published on-line relating to the Auto Insurance Anti-Fraud Task Force contained accessible diagrams (i.e. word-based versions of charts and diagrams instead of image-based ones).
- All ministry program areas were provided with email information on how to create accessible PDF and Word documents in January 2013. Information was also posted on the MOF Intranet site.
- Approximately 25 ministry employees took the OPS “Mission Possible” courses learning how to make Microsoft Word documents and PDFs accessible. Only ministry employees who are responsible for internal and external communications are encouraged to take these courses.
- The ministry’s Communications Services Branch collaborated with the I & IT Accessibility Centre of Excellence to provide basic training to communications staff on source tools such as NVDA and PAC Checker, the use of “alt text” for chart/image accessibility requirements and the use of document paragraph styles for tagging and proper document structure.
- The I&IT Central Agency Cluster refreshed all staff computers to include Microsoft Office 2010. This suite of programs has many helpful accessibility features that make it easier for people with disabilities to use these products. Microsoft Office 2010 also allows document authors to make information and communications materials more accessible at the source.

Built Environment: Commitments

- The ministry will ensure that all office locations comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 built environment.
- The ministry will make every effort to ensure that the consolidation of offices at 2 Simcoe Street South and 40 King Street West in Oshawa in 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.

Built Environment: Measures Taken

- Accessibility improvements were incorporated into the design of the ministry's new Quiet Room at 33 King Street West in Oshawa which opened in 2013.
- Where existing floor space was renovated, the ministry's Facilities Management Services worked with Infrastructure Ontario to meet the Guidelines for Barrier-Free Design of Ontario Government Facilities.
- Relocations into the Michael Starr Building in Oshawa were completed outside of normal business hours so that every effort was taken to minimize disruptions to staff and the public.
- Several new accessible boardrooms were constructed on the 1st floor of the Michael Starr Building in Oshawa for staff to meet with clients. There is also the option for staff to meet with clients in a higher security and accessible interview room.

- In all redesign projects, the ministry's Facilities Management Services took an "all access" approach with design. All entrances received power door actuators with multi-level controls and corridor widths were increased for easier mobility.
- The design of the Michael Starr Building in Oshawa included common kitchenette areas on all floors that have been built incorporating standards set out in the OPS Guidelines for Barrier-Free Design of Ontario Government Facilities which meets and exceeds barrier-free requirements in the Ontario Building Code (OBC). There are now twenty seven meeting rooms of various sizes located in common areas that are accessible for all ministry employees. All meeting rooms have been built to 2012 OPS Guidelines for Barrier-Free Design of Ontario Government Facilities and also include accessible signage that has universal graphic symbols, sharp contrasts, raised tactile lettering and grade 1 Braille.

Procurement: Commitments

- 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.

Procurement: Measures Taken

- The ministry continued to raise awareness on Accessible Procurement at a number of staff events and training sessions such as: the Financial Practices Forum, program area meetings and through articles on the ministry's Intranet website. The ministry's divisional procurement leads continued to review procurement documentation to verify that that the OPS Accessibility Checklist was appropriately completed.
- Accessibility criteria and features were incorporated into documentation when procuring goods, services and facilities except where it was not practicable.
- The ministry included standard accessibility language as provided by Supply Chain Management Division in procurement documentation. For example, the following text is used in Requests for Proposals (RFPs):

Under the Ontario Human Rights Code, all persons with disabilities have the right to equal treatment in employment, services, goods, facilities, housing, contracts and membership in trade and vocational associations. The Government of Ontario has a duty, as an employer and as a service provider, to ensure people with disabilities are accommodated, short of undue hardship.

The Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA), 2001 provides direction to provincial and municipal governments and other specified organizations to improve opportunities for Ontarians who have disabilities. The following categories for products and services are to be considered: software applications; documentation; instruction material; support services; and training.

- Accessibility requirements were included in all Request for Proposals (RFPs) in the ministry. For example: The Investigations and Inspections Branch procurement for an Investigative Management System included criteria to meet the procurement requirements under the AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR).

Other: Commitments

- 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.

Other: Measures Taken

- Accessibility was an organizational priority and the ministry continued to do its part to identify, prevent and to remove barriers and to make the organization even more accessible for persons with disabilities.
- The ministry worked in partnership with Cabinet Office to launch the 2012-13 Diversity Mentoring Partnership program. Approximately 45 employee mentees from underrepresented groups, including persons with disabilities were mentored by volunteer Assistant Deputy Minister and Director level mentors.
- The ministry continued to have a manager familiar with the AODA legislation represent the ministry on the OPS Disability Advisory Council.

Section Two: Report on Measures Planned for 2013 - 14

Last year, the OPS published a [Multi-Year Accessibility Plan \(MYAP\)](#) that outlines how the government will identify, prevent and remove barriers for persons with disabilities. In this section, although we highlight the deliverables and timelines of the MYAP until 2016, the Ministry of Finance is only reporting on measures it will take or initiate during the 2013 -14 reporting period.

Customer Service: MYAP Outcomes and Deliverables

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

- New staff trained on accessibility.
- Accessibility criteria built into decision-making, project management, procurement, technology, infrastructure, I & IT and training.
- Increased awareness in OPS of accessibility best practices in customer service and the workplace.
- Staff and customer feedback sought on accessibility innovations and improvements.
- Inclusion Lens applied to all policies and practices.
- Accessibility is part of all OPS business.

Customer Service: Ministry Proposed Measures for 2013-14

- The Ministry will continue to ensure that new employees are trained on IASR and OHRC requirements.
- Selected staff will be asked to take a new e-learning course on the Information and Communications and managers to complete the on-line course on Employment Standards.

- An education session on accessibility considerations and documentation associated with procurement will be presented annually at Financial Practices Forum. Posters in alternate formats will continue to be posted to advise the public of service disruptions.
- Procedures will be in place to enhance the safety of a visitor with a disability during an evacuation of ministry facilities.
- The ministry will continue to engage employees in dialogue and to solicit client feedback on accessibility improvements and solutions.
- New applications of the OPS Inclusion Lens will be identified to ensure that it is used as a tool in core decision-making processes and the development of new programs, policies and initiatives.
- The ministry will continue to provide clients, stakeholders and members of the public with disabilities an equitable and effective customer service experience that accommodates their needs.

Employment Accommodation: MYAP Outcomes and Deliverables

People with disabilities who are OPS employees participate fully and meaningfully in services and employment.

- Conduct management review on accommodation for employees with disabilities.
- Increased awareness in OPS of accessibility best practices in customer service and the workplace.
- Senior managers have accessibility performance commitments.
- Best practices on employment accommodation and return to work implemented.
- Better accommodation for employees with disabilities resulting from management review.
- Managers and staff have accessibility performance commitments.

Employment Accommodation: Ministry Proposed Measures for 2013-14

- The ministry will continue to ensure that accommodation for persons with disabilities is offered and provided as required.
- Communications will be developed and shared with staff to help them to understand accessibility best practices in customer service and the workplace.
- All of the ministry's senior managers will be encouraged to include inclusion commitments in their performance plans.
- The ministry will continue to increase management and employee awareness of employment accommodation directives, policies, plans and best practices.
- As ministry managers become familiar with the Employment Standard through the 2013 OPS e-learning course, they will create better accommodation for employees with disabilities.
- Ministry middle managers will be encouraged to develop cultural competencies by participating as volunteer mentors in the 2013-14 Diversity Mentoring Partnership program.

Information and Communications: MYAP Outcomes and Deliverables

Information and Communications are available in accessible formats to all OPS staff and customers.

- Accessibility criteria built into decision-making, project management, procurement, technology, infrastructure, I & IT and training.
- Accessibility Expo continues annually.
- Communications, websites, technology solutions and documents employ accessibility best practices.

Information and Communications: Ministry Proposed Measures for 2013-14

- The ministry will continue to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) standards as per the IASR through I & IT architectural governance, inclusion in I & IT procurement processes and IT project management quality control.
- A minimum of six managers from the ministry will attend the annual Ontario Job Opportunities Information Network (JOIN) conference in November 2013 and staff will also be encouraged to attend via webcast.
- The ministry will continue to ensure websites and other online communications tools meet AODA standards.
- Remediation schedules will be developed to ensure that the standards for web sites are met by the deadline. Revised public websites will be implemented commencing in January 2014.
- For sites that meet the standard, the ministry will continue to review changes to maintain compliance to standard.
- The ministry will continue to provide the Emergency Information and Reporting Hotline number in alternative formats (e.g. braille).
- The ministry will continue to partner with the OPS Diversity Office and the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario to support provincial ministry involvement in an annual Accessibility Expo.

Built Environment: MYAP Outcomes and Deliverables

There is greater accessibility into, out of and around OPS facilities and public spaces.

- Continue to develop strategies for addressing infrastructure barriers.
- OPS ready to implement requirements of IASR standards on Public Spaces.

Built Environment: Ministry Proposed Measures for 2013-14

Government Facilities

- The ministry is on track to meet the 2015 requirement for the design of public spaces and all redesign will be consistent with the recommendations of Infrastructure Ontario's Guidelines for Barrier-Free Design of Ontario Government Facilities.
- The ministry will continue to work diligently with service providers, Infrastructure Ontario and building management to remove and prevent built environment barriers.

Public Spaces

- The ministry will continue to meet the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for the Design of Public Spaces and ensure compliance by January 1, 2015.
- All renovations to existing ministry facilities will include accessibility features to public spaces as identified in the AODA's built environment standard.

Leadership: MYAP Outcomes and Deliverables

The OPS endeavours to demonstrate leadership for accessibility in Ontario.

- Ongoing consultations with persons with disabilities.
- Ministries continue to publish annual accessibility plans.
- Accessibility continues as strong organizational commitment.

Leadership: Ministry Proposed Measures for 2013-14

- The ministry will continue to make an active offer to accommodate persons with disabilities at public events during the 2014 pre-budget consultation:

- o Seating arrangements will take into account space required for easier mobility by persons with disabilities
 - o Sign language interpreters will be offered and arranged upon request.
- The 2013-14 Ministry of Finance Accessibility Plan will be publically posted on the ministry web site in December 2013.
- The ministry will continue to develop strategies that help build an accessible organization that is healthy and accessible for employees and clients.

Section Three: Report on Legislative Review

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

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.

The *Ontario Guaranteed Annual Income Act* was identified as a high impact statute and will be reviewed by the end of 2014. The government has decided to review this statute because it is anticipated that changes in this area will have the highest impact on those Ontarians who have accessibility needs. This phase of the review will be completed by the end of 2014. We will continue to report on the review in our annual accessibility plan.

In addition to the government-wide legislative review strategy, the ministry is pursuing its own legislative review schedule which includes a review of all acts by 2015 and all regulations by 2020 using the OPS Inclusion Lens to identify and to remove barriers.

Acts, Regulations and Policies Reviewed in 2012 - 13

- In 2012 -13, the ministry in consultation with its Legal Services Branch reviewed 20 pieces of legislation for potential accessibility barriers using the OPS Inclusion Lens.

Acts, Regulations and Policies to Be Reviewed in 2013 - 14

- By the end of 2013, the ministry will have reviewed 50 acts for potential accessibility barriers using the OPS Inclusion Lens.

Glossary of Terms and/or Acronyms

AODA – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

ASCS – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation

CAC – Central Agencies Cluster

EA – Employment Accommodation

IASR – Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation

I &IT – Information and Infrastructure Technology

IO – Infrastructure Ontario

MOF – Ministry of Finance

MYAP – Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

ODA – Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001

OPS – Ontario Public Service

TTY – Telephone Typewriter or Telecommunication Device for the Deaf

WCAG - Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

MOF - Ministry of Finance

MOF 2013 -14 Accessibility Plan

How to Contact us

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

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

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

E-mail: FinanceCommunications.fin@ontario.ca

Ministry website address: www.ontario.ca/finance

Visit the [AccessOn](#) web portal found on the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade's website. [AccessOn](#) promotes accessibility and provides information and resources on how to make Ontario an accessible province for everyone.

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