

MINISTRY OF TRAINING, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

*2010-2011
ODA Accessibility Plan*



Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Report on Accessibility Achievements for 2009-2010	3
Report on Accessible Customer Service Requirements	16
Information and Communication Commitments	18
Other Accessibility Commitments	23
Accessibility Improvement Initiatives to Identify, Remove or Prevent Barriers in preparation for AODA standards currently under development.	23
Act(s), Regulation(s), Policy(s) being reviewed to prevent Barriers to Persons with Disabilities	32
Glossary of Terms/Acronyms	33
For More Information	34

Introduction

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)* sets out the roadmap to make Ontario accessible by 2025. Under this act, accessibility standards are being developed and implemented to break down barriers in key areas of everyday life.

These standards will increase accessibility for people with disabilities in the areas of customer service, information and communications, employment, transportation and the built environment.

The government of Ontario is preparing to lead the way towards an accessible province. In 2010 the government of Ontario was the first public service organization to report compliance with the first standard — Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation (Ontario Regulation 429/07).

As we await additional standards under AODA, we are guided by the Ontario Human Rights Code and obligations set out in the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA)*.

Each year, the government sets the course to prevent, identify and remove barriers through annual accessibility plans required under the ODA.

Building on last year's plan, the 2010-11 accessibility plans will continue moving the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities towards the goal of an accessible province for all Ontarians.

Highlights from this year's plan include:

- To ensure the delivery of high levels of service to customers with disabilities, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities promoted the Ontario Public Service training modules to all staff in the ministry. The ministry will continue to require completion of the ***May I Help You?*** modules by all new staff.
- Last year, the ministry provided more than \$3.6 million in funding to help students with disabilities by issuing 9,867 Bursaries for Students with Disabilities. These

students may need additional supports such as disability-related services and equipment to succeed in postsecondary education.

- For the second year, the ministry also invested \$1.8 million in direct funding to support apprentices with disabilities. This funding provided apprentices with disabilities – who attended colleges in Ontario – with access to additional supports so they could participate in apprenticeship training programs including the Pre-apprenticeship Program and the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program. These funds were used by institutions to accommodate training to the specific needs of an individual. Items like large print text, special services such as interpreters, disability assessment and equipment modification to train apprentices with disabilities can help students achieve their full potential.

Through the ODA, accessibility planning has laid a strong foundation for the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to build on. This ministry will continue to help make Ontario more accessible for people with disabilities and a more inclusive society for all Ontarians.

To view other ministries' Accessibility Plans please visit: [Ontario.ca](https://www.ontario.ca)

Report on Accessibility Achievements for 2009-2010

The Ontario Public Service (OPS) is working to achieve an accessible and barrier-free province by 2025. The ministry committed to assess its policies, programs, practices, services, acts and regulations to identify, remove or prevent barriers to persons with disabilities. This section summarizes our accomplishments.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment:

In preparation for the implementation of the Customer Service Standard under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, the ministry will continue to address gaps identified in the 2008 initial review of the ministry's customer service practices.

Actions Taken:

To meet compliance obligations of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (O. Reg. 429/07):

- The deputy minister-approved compliance report was completed on deadline and sent to Ministry of Government Services.
- Our accessible customer service feedback process was updated. The process will continue to evolve when modifications are suggested.
- The feedback process allows customers to provide comments on accessibility of ministry services through the website, by email, phone or in-person.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment:

The ministry will promote OPS training modules to employees, to ensure delivery of high levels of customer service to customers with disabilities.

Actions Taken:

To continue delivery of high levels of customer service to customers with disabilities, in October, the ministry posted reminders to staff about the requirements to complete the *May I Help You?* modules and review our ministry-specific implementation guidelines.

Focus Area: Employment

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministries will continue to build on ministry managers' and employees' awareness of employment practices and continue to provide training opportunities to ensure improved accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Actions Taken:

The ministry issued a reminder to staff about training requirements and updated training materials online.

Focus Area: Employment

Commitment: Ongoing

The Employment and Training Division (ETD) is committed to being informed of the needs of persons with disabilities by continuing to communicate directly with organizations that serve different disability types and through participation in conferences that focus on accessibility and persons with disabilities across the province.

Actions Taken:

Employment and Training Division (ETD) staff have attended several conferences and met with stakeholders to obtain a greater understanding of the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities. Examples of some conferences and events staff have attended include: Accessibility Expo 2010, Deaf Literacy Initiative 2010 Conference, the Canadian Mental Health Association Employment Forum and Audism and Deafhood Workshops.

Focus Area: Employment

Commitment: Ongoing

The Technology and Business Solutions Branch of the Learning Ministries will investigate the use of Web 2.0 technologies and other social networking tools in relation to their possible support of accessibility for OPS users in the workplace environment.

Actions Taken:

The Technology and Business Solutions Branch regularly investigated Web 2.0 technologies and their use as accessibility requirements arose in the workplace environment.

Focus Area: Employment

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministries will continue to promote the Emergency Preparedness Guide for People with Disabilities/Special Needs developed by Emergency Management Ontario, via the intranet and during Emergency Preparedness Week.

Actions Taken:

Discussions with our intranet web coordinator are ongoing to refresh the Emergency Management website. The website will include both the Accessibility Checklist along with the Emergency Preparedness Guide for People with Disabilities / Special Needs.

Focus Area: Information and Communication

Commitment: Ongoing

Ensuring the ability to communicate in a format that takes into consideration a disability and an individual's preferred method of communication is essential to the operation of the Employment and Training Division (ETD).

ETD will continue to accommodate people who are deaf and hard of hearing at meetings (e.g., interpreters, special equipment, and software). We will ensure that we meet the accommodation requirements for people with disabilities.

Actions Taken:

ETD has continued to support people who are deaf and hard of hearing by providing interpreters, special equipment and software. Captioning has also been provided upon request for Deaf individuals requiring this accommodation. Literacy and Basic Skills services provided through the E Channel initiative provide opportunities for increased accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Focus Area: Information and Communication

Commitment: Ongoing

Ensuring clear and precise communication with stakeholders and service providers is essential to the operation of the Employment and Training Division (ETD).

ETD will continue to ensure that ministry-initiated letters and other documents going to stakeholders and service providers meet the accessibility requirements for persons with

visions loss (e.g., enable text access for screen reader devices for persons experiencing loss of vision).

Actions Taken:

ETD continues to comply to ensure that ministry-initiated correspondence with stakeholders and service providers, including the Employment Ontario Partners Gateway (www.eopg.ca) website, is ODA-compliant (available upon request in HTML, PDF and/or plain text formats).

Focus Area: Information and Communication

Commitment: Ongoing

Case management and reporting is essential to the ministry to ensure accurate reporting of data and information between the ministry and service providers.

Timely and accurate information allows the ministry to monitor, review and improve communication with stakeholders.

Actions Taken:

The Service Provider Administration Application (SPAA), a module of the Employment Ontario Information Systems (EOIS) Contract Management System was launched July 2009. Subsequently, the EOIS Case Management System became available to ministry staff and service providers in June 2010. This system includes accessibility features for ease of use.

Focus Area: Information and Communication

Commitment: Ongoing

Lack of awareness of tools and resources on accessibility and the AODA can be a current and future barrier to the development of integrated, accessible I & IT business solutions.

The Technology and Business Solutions Branch of the Learning Ministries will continue its commitment to post on ClusterNET relevant AODA resource materials.

(ClusterNET is a cluster-wide intranet that allows cross-ministry collaboration and information-sharing of I & IT knowledge.)

Specifically, links to current AODA standards and policies, as well as tools for AODA-compliance will be made available for all staff across the five ministries of the cluster.

Timely and accurate information allows the ministry to monitor, review and improve communication with stakeholders.

Actions Taken:

The Technology and Business Solutions Branch fulfilled its commitment to post relevant AODA resource materials on ClusterNET.

Focus Area: Information and Communication

Commitment: Ongoing

Successful integration into the workplace for persons with disabilities requires a variety of support tools (i.e., software).

The Technology and Business Solutions Branch of the Learning Ministries will continue its commitment to the maintenance and updating as required, of the current checklist of software and applications, designed to facilitate the integration of persons with disabilities in day-to-day work activities.

Actions Taken:

This checklist remained available to all OPS staff on ClusterNET.

Focus Area: Information and Communication

Commitment: Ongoing

The Technology and Business Solutions Branch of the Learning Ministries will investigate the use of Web 2.0 technologies and other social networking tools in relation to their possible support of accessibility for OPS users in the workplace environment.

Actions Taken:

The Technology and Business Solutions Branch regularly investigated Web 2.0 technologies and their use as accessibility requirements arose in the workplace environment.

Focus Area: Information and Communication

Commitment: Ongoing

The Communications Branch will continue to ensure that the ministry's intranet and websites meet or exceed accessibility requirements.

Actions Taken:

The ministry's intranet and website meet all ODA requirements and remain compliant.

Focus Area: Information and Communication

Commitment: Ongoing

The Communications Branch will continue to ensure that ministry publications are available in alternate formats on the website.

Actions Taken:

The ministry posted alternate formats of publications on its website to meet accessibility needs.

Focus Area: Other

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry continues to support the government's commitment to the creation of accessibility standards as part of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA).

Actions Taken:

To support the government's commitment to the creation of accessibility standards under the AODA, the ministry provided input into development of upcoming accessibility standards in the areas of:

- Built environment
- Employment
- Information and communications
- Transportation

The ministry also recommended that the Ministry of Community and Social Services consult with our broader public service delivery partners to ensure the context and

circumstances of the education and training sectors were reflected in policy development.

Focus Area: Other

Commitment: Ongoing

Students with disabilities may need additional financial assistance to accommodate the disability/special need, and to help them succeed in postsecondary studies.

The ministry will provide direct financial assistance to students with disabilities through the Bursary for Students with Disabilities for disability-related services and equipment required to participate in postsecondary studies.

Through the Bursary for Students with Disabilities Attending Out of Country Postsecondary Institutions, the ministry will provide financial assistance to deaf, deafened, and hard of hearing students to attend postsecondary institutions outside Canada where the language of instruction is American Sign Language.

Actions Taken:

9,867 Bursaries for Students with Disabilities were issued in 2009-10 for a total of \$3.603 million.

44 Bursaries for Students with Disabilities Attending Out of Country Postsecondary Institutions were issued in 2009-10 for a total of \$1.14 million.

Focus Area: Other

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry will continue to provide support to the Postsecondary Advisory Committee on Disability Issues (PACDI) with the mandate of providing advice to the Minister on:

- education-related disability issues affecting publicly-funded postsecondary students with disabilities to ensure impact of ministry's funding can be maximized; and
- priority disability-related research initiatives.

Actions Taken:

PACDI meetings were held on December 1, 2009 and June 14, 2010.

Focus Area: Other

Commitment: Ongoing

In reviewing policy submissions, frameworks and proposals, the ministry will ensure that the needs/issues of persons with disabilities are considered.

Actions Taken:

Contributed to the development of a framework for the next generation of Multi-Year Accountability Agreements (MYAAs) the new framework will serve as a tool for demonstrating that public funds are being used efficiently in the pursuit of public policy goals, and in ways that complement the strengths and diversity of individual institutions.

- A proposed system-wide indicator under this framework relates to access and the long-term goal of more Ontarians pursuing a postsecondary education (PSE) credential. Under-represented students, including students with disabilities, have been identified as a strategic priority and a potential end-state indicator would measure PSE participation rates for Ontarians with disabilities.

Contributed to the development of an Access & Success Policy Research Framework to identify research priorities, expand existing evidence base, inform policy directions and ensure the government's priorities for access to and success in postsecondary education for under-represented groups, including students with disabilities, were met:

- Under the Reaching Higher Plan, the Access to Opportunities Strategy invested \$20 million in 2007-08, rising to over \$31 million in 2008-09, and \$55 million in 2009-10 and ongoing, to increase opportunities for Aboriginal Peoples, Francophones, students with disabilities and first-generation students.
- Access to Opportunities funding builds on previous targeted investments to support access-related programs and services for under-represented groups, including students with disabilities.

Contributed to the ongoing development of a Growth Plan for Northern Ontario to establish a long-term strategic vision and direction for government action in the north. Proposed policy priorities for the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario include:

- educational support systems for under-represented groups to increase literacy, improve learning readiness and increase participation;
- a labour development approach to increase opportunities for northerners to participate in the workforce with particular focus on displaced workers and under-represented groups; and

- investments in education infrastructure to reflect Northern Ontario's labour market needs, improve access for under-represented populations, and incorporate leading-edge technologies.

The ministry's Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Program is committed to enhancing and improving services to persons with disabilities through its Employment Ontario Network:

- The needs of all adult literacy learners with disabilities are accommodated by individual service agencies in all streams (Anglophone, Francophone, Native and Deaf).
- In order to inform the ministry's potential needs of Deaf stream for LBS, \$200,000 was allocated to complete a capacity assessment of the Deaf stream for LBS learners in 2009/10. This funding will help the deaf stream examine its capacity for LBS learners.
- \$500,000 was allocated in 2009/10 for the development and implementation of the Deaf E-Channel. This initiative began the process of making LBS services available to deaf adults who cannot access face to face LBS services. This initiative also supports Anglophone, Francophone and Aboriginal e-channel providers.
- A guiding principle of all current policy development related to adult education and literacy is accessibility: learner pathways are clear; learning opportunities are widely available and accommodate different learning cultures and styles; delivery methods are flexible; and there is access to training supports.

Apprenticeship and Trade Certification:

A Provisional Certificate/Letter of Provision was updated and implemented May 1, 2010 (Policy 170).

- The purpose of a Provisional Certificate of Qualification or Letter of Permission is to enable a person to work unsupervised for a prescribed period in a compulsory/restricted trade while preparing to write the certification examination.
- The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) is committed to the provision of reasonable accommodation to Certificate of Qualification examination for candidates with physical, emotional, learning or linguistic barriers who may not have the ability or test-taking skills needed to challenge the examinations for certification under standard conditions.
- The updated policy has embedded MTCU's commitment to meeting the requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA).

Focus Area: Other

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry will continue to support through funding from the Employment and Training Division, the Deaf Literacy Initiative.

Actions Taken:

The Employment and Training Division (ETD) has supported the Deaf Literacy Initiative on projects including: the Deaf Capacity Assessment and Literacy and Basic Skills Assessment Tools for the Deaf. ETD has collaborated with the Deaf Stream for culturally relevant contributions to the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum (OALC).

Focus Area: Other

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry is committed to increasing apprenticeship registrations across Ontario.

The April 2008 Budget contained a three year commitment of \$75 million for the expansion of apprenticeship and \$45 million for the Apprenticeship Enhancement Fund, including support for Apprentices with Disabilities. (\$1.8 million in 08/09)

Actions Taken:

For the second year, the ministry provided funding of \$1.8 million to Support for Apprentices with Disabilities (SAWD). SAWD Program Guidelines were revised to allow for new eligible expenditures to support apprentices with disabilities.

Focus Area: Other

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry will continue to support organizations with a specific focus of delivering training and employment supports to persons with disabilities through funding from the Employment and Training Division (ETD).

Actions Taken:

The ministry, through the Employment and Training Division, has continued to support organizations with a specific focus of delivering training while continuing to review employment supports for persons with disabilities.

Focus Area: Other

Commitment: Ongoing

French Language Services & Regional Coordination (FLS&RC) Unit of the Service Delivery Branch is to conduct an assessment of accessibility to provincial training and employment programs within Employment Ontario.

The results of the analysis are to be documented and used to increase awareness and identify gaps within delivery of our Employment Ontario programs.

Accessibility assessments include the following streams: Aboriginal, Francophone, Persons with Disabilities, Older Worker and Newcomers.

Actions Taken:

The Employment and Training Division continued to assess and promote accessibility to provincial training and employment programs within Employment Ontario. FLS&RC Unit met program leads of programs to discuss accessibility needs and legal requirements as per the Ontario Human Rights, ODA and anticipated AODA.

Focus Area: Other

Commitment: Ongoing

French Language Services & Regional Coordination Unit (FLS&RCU) will develop and implement an action plan that includes increasing awareness and identifying gaps within delivery of our Employment Ontario programs.

Accessibility assessments include the following streams: Aboriginal, Francophone, Persons with Disabilities, Older Worker and Newcomers.

Actions Taken:

In anticipation of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* guidelines, and throughout the recent Employment Ontario transformation, FLS&RCU continued to identify actions that can be taken to address gaps in service for persons with disabilities.

For example, the Employment and Training Division (ETD) addressed gaps within the Second Career program through modifications in June, 2010, to the support the needs of persons with disabilities. Duration of academic upgrading and skills training can be extended to meet the special needs of this target group and, if required, the current

maximum agreement of \$28,000 can be exceeded to provide accommodations for persons with disabilities.

Focus Area: Other

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry acknowledges the need for different branches and divisions of the ministry to share information pertaining to persons with disabilities to ensure that clients are obtaining appropriate service from the government and that any shortcomings or gaps can be addressed collectively.

Actions Taken:

The Employment and Training Division (ETD) has actively participated in interdivisional, interministerial and other relevant discussion groups that are particular to subject matter which pertains to a type of disability, or that deals with exchange of knowledge to ensure that clients are obtaining appropriate services from the government. The Ontario Mental Health Association Knowledge Exchange Network and the Autism Spectrum Disorders Interministerial Working Group are examples of such collaboration.

Ongoing collaboration is a priority to ensure that any shortcomings or gaps are addressed collectively.

Programs Branch within the Strategic Policy and Programs Division continues to look for opportunities to improve policies and ensure ODA accessibility by collaborating with staff in the Employment and Training Division, in particular with the Delivery Support Unit in Service Delivery Branch, Regional Offices and the Apprenticeship Working Group.

Focus Area: Other

Commitment: Ongoing

Information technology goods and services (hardware/software) may pose barriers if there are no processes to check for ODA compliance.

The Technology and Business Solutions Branch of the Learning Ministries will continue its commitment to OPS procurement guidelines to ensure that accessibility has been considered in the procurement of goods and services.

Actions Taken:

The AODA Procurement Requirements Checklist is a formal part of procurement process.

Focus Area: Other**Commitment: Ongoing**

The Legal Services Branch will ensure that acts, regulations, guidelines and standards reflect the principles of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* (ODA).

Actions Taken:

All existing statutes and regulations have been reviewed by the Legal Services Branch

Focus Area: Other**Commitment: Ongoing**

The Legal Services Branch in the ministry commits to assess any new acts or regulations to ensure that they are compliant with the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*.

Actions Taken:

New legislation has been reviewed.

Report on Accessible Customer Service Requirements

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07) came into force on January 1, 2008. All OPS ministries were required to comply with the regulation by January 1, 2010.

The OPS was the first public organization to file their compliance report with the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario in January 2010. In order to sustain compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation, it is vital that ministries continue to look for opportunities through their accessibility planning process, to embed accessibility in all areas of planning, programs and policies.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment:

The ministry will continue to be in compliance with the Customer Service Standard under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

Planned Action(s):

- Sample audits of progress toward branch compliance and training logs will be completed, issues identified and resolution strategies implemented.
- The ministry will host conversations for staff to provide practical tips on accommodations staff can make to provide better service to persons with disabilities.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing from January 2011

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment:

The ministry will promote OPS training modules to employees, to ensure delivery of high levels of customer service to customers with disabilities.

Planned Action(s):

The ministry will continue to work to embed requirements to complete training modules within new employee orientation information.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing from January 2011**Focus Area:** Customer Service**Commitment:**

With the goal of providing more accessible services, the ministry will review and continuously improve the process to receive and respond to feedback on the accessibility of its services.

To date, the ministry has received no feedback about the accessibility of services.

Planned Action(s):

The ministry will:

- analyze feedback received, and
- develop recommendations for modifications to feedback process and/or delivery of services.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

Information and Communication Commitments

Information and the methods of communication are key to delivering many government programs and services to the public. It is essential that we provide the same quality and service to everyone in the province.

In anticipation of the pending standards guiding Information and Communications, the Government of Ontario is continuously looking for opportunities to prevent and remove barriers to person with disabilities when creating, procuring, conveying, receiving or distributing information and communications to the public.

Focus Area: Information and Communication

Commitment: Ongoing

Ensuring the ability to communicate in a format that takes into consideration a disability and an individual's preferred method of communication is essential to the operation of the Employment and Training Division (ETD).

ETD will continue to accommodate people who are deaf and hard of hearing at meetings (interpreters, special equipment, and software). We will ensure that we meet the accommodation requirements for people with disabilities.

Planned Action(s):

ETD will continue to accommodate people who are deaf and hard of hearing at meetings and engagement sessions. Videoconferencing from ETD to external service providers, including Deaf literacy agencies, will be utilized to enhance accessibility and promote efficient communication systems between the ministry and stakeholders representing persons with disabilities.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing from November 2010

Focus Area: Information and Communication

Commitment: Ongoing

Ensuring clear and precise communication with stakeholders and service providers is essential to the operation of the Employment and Training Division (ETD).

ETD will continue to ensure that ministry-initiated letters and other documents going to stakeholders and service providers meet the accessibility requirements for persons with vision loss (e.g., enable text access for screen reader devices for persons experiencing loss of vision).

Planned Action(s):

ETD will continue to be proactive in providing accessible format documents and to support enhanced information sharing and communications for persons with disabilities. ETD will continue to accommodate and work with pending Information and Communication standards of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* as they become law.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

Focus Area: Information and Communication

Commitment: Ongoing

Case management and reporting is essential to the ministry to ensure accurate reporting of data and information between the ministry and service providers.

Timely and accurate information allows the ministry to monitor, review and improve communication with stakeholders.

Planned Action(s):

ETD will continue to utilize accessible case management systems and processes to monitor, review and improve communications with stakeholders.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

Focus Area: Information and Communication

Commitment: Ongoing

The Communications Branch will continue to ensure that the ministry's intranet and websites meet or exceed accessibility requirements.

Planned Action(s):

Communications Branch will continue to ensure that the ministry's intranet and websites are ODA-compliant.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

Focus Area: Information and Communication

Commitment: Ongoing

The Communications Branch will continue to ensure that ministry publications are available in alternate formats on the website.

Planned Action(s):

Publications will continue to be posted in HTML, PDF and/or plain text formats on the websites.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

Focus Area: Information and Communication

Commitment: Ongoing

Lack of awareness of tools and resources on accessibility and the AODA can be a current and future barrier to the development of integrated, accessible I & IT business solutions.

The Technology and Business Solutions Branch of the Learning Ministries will continue its commitment to post on ClusterNET relevant AODA resource materials.

(ClusterNET is a cluster-wide intranet that allows cross-ministry collaboration and information-sharing of I & IT knowledge.)

Specifically, links to current AODA standards and policies, as well as tools for AODA-compliance will be made available for all staff across the five ministries of the cluster.

Timely and accurate information allows the ministry to monitor, review and improve communication with stakeholders.

Planned Action(s):

The Technology and Business Solutions Branch will continue to expand the accessibility resource area of ClusterNet and conduct yearly reviews to ensure accuracy of content including AODA standards, policies, videos and tools for AODA support and compliance.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

Focus Area: Information and Communication

Commitment: Ongoing

Successful integration into the workplace for persons with disabilities requires a variety of support tools (i.e., software).

The Technology and Business Solutions Branch of the Learning Ministries will continue its commitment to the maintenance and updating as required, of the current checklist of software and applications, designed to facilitate the integration of persons with disabilities in day-to-day work activities.

Planned Action(s):

The Technology and Business Solutions Branch will continue to maintain and update, as required, the current checklist of software and applications in use across the cluster.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

Focus Area: Information and Communication

Commitment: Ongoing

The Technology and Business Solutions Branch of the Learning Ministries will investigate the use of Web 2.0 technologies and other social networking tools in relation to their possible support of accessibility for OPS users in the workplace environment.

Planned Action(s):

The Technology and Business Solutions Branch will continue to explore Web 2.0 tools to enhance I & IT accessibility in the OPS workplace for all employees, including those with special needs.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

Other Accessibility Commitments

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

In anticipation of the upcoming standards the Government of Ontario has planned several corporate initiatives in the following areas: Transportation, Employment, Built Environment and others. The goal of these focus areas is to make it easier for people with disabilities to travel in Ontario, ensure accessibility for people with disabilities across all stages of the employment life cycle, and improve barrier-free accessibility in buildings. Many of the corporate initiatives identified for 2010-2011 aim to support ministries in their journey towards compliance with the upcoming standards.

To review a list of corporate initiatives please refer to the Ministry of Government Services 2010-2011 Accessibility Plan.

Focus Area: Built Environment

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry, through our Corporate Finance and Services Branch, will ensure that the new Standards for Barrier-Free Design of Ontario Government Facilities released in October 2004 to improve barrier-free accessibility in ministry buildings, are implemented. The ministry will continue to improve accessibility when planning major capital projects, especially converting washrooms to barrier-free washrooms. The ministry will undertake the same diligence with respect to the renewal of rental agreements to ensure that existing ministry properties are accessible.

Planned Action(s):

The ministry will continue to improve accessibility when planning major capital projects, especially converting washrooms to barrier-free washrooms. The ministry will undertake the same diligence with respect to the renewal of rental agreements to ensure that existing ministry properties are accessible.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

Focus Area: Employment

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministries will continue to build on ministry managers' and employees' awareness of employment practices and continue to provide training opportunities to ensure improved accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Planned Action(s):

The ministry will continue to issue reminders to staff about requirements to complete accessibility training such as *May I Help You?* and *ODA: Maximizing the Contributions of Employees with Disabilities*, and will update online resources as required.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

Focus Area: Employment

Commitment: Ongoing

The Employment and Training Division (ETD) is committed to being informed of the needs of persons with disabilities by continuing to communicate directly with organizations that serve different disability types and through participation in conferences that focus on accessibility and persons with disabilities across the province.

Planned Action(s):

ETD will continue to attend and participate at conferences and meet with organizations supporting persons with disabilities.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing from November 2010

Focus Area: Employment

Commitment: Ongoing

The Technology and Business Solutions Branch of the Learning Ministries will investigate the use of Web 2.0 technologies and other social networking tools in relation to their possible support of accessibility for OPS users in the workplace environment.

Planned Action(s):

The Technology and Business Solutions Branch will continue to explore Web 2.0 tools to enhance I & IT accessibility in the OPS workplace for all employees, including those with special needs.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing**Focus Area:** Employment**Commitment: Ongoing**

The ministries will continue to promote the Emergency Preparedness Guide for People with Disabilities / Special Needs developed by Emergency Management Ontario, via the intranet and during Emergency Preparedness Week.

Planned Action(s):

The ministry will complete a refresh of our Emergency Management website.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing from January 2011**Focus Area:** Other**Commitment: Ongoing**

The ministry continues to support the government's commitment to the creation of accessibility standards as part of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA).

Planned Action(s):

To ensure the context and circumstances of the education and training sectors are reflected in policy development, the ministry will continue to provide input to the development of accessibility standards of the AODA, until standards come into effect as regulations.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing until Standards are in regulation

Focus Area: Other

Commitment: Ongoing

Students with disabilities may need additional financial assistance to accommodate the disability/special need, and to help them succeed in postsecondary studies.

The ministry will provide direct financial assistance to students with disabilities through the Bursary for Students with Disabilities for disability-related services and equipment required to participate in postsecondary studies.

Through the Bursary for Students with Disabilities Attending Out of Country Postsecondary Institutions, the ministry will provide financial assistance to deaf, deafened, and hard of hearing students to attend postsecondary institutions outside Canada where the language of instruction is American Sign Language.

Planned Action(s):

For 2010-11, the Postsecondary Education Division – Student Support Branch has budgeted \$3.57 million for the Bursary for Students with Disabilities and \$1.80 million for the Bursary for Students with Disabilities Attending Out of Country Post Secondary Institutions.

In addition, the Branch will create a working group with representatives from financial aid offices and offices for students with disabilities to discuss issues relating to financial assistance for students with disabilities.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

Focus Area: Other

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry will continue to provide support to the Postsecondary Advisory Committee on Disability Issues (PACDI) with the mandate of providing advice to the Minister on:

- education-related disability issues affecting publicly funded postsecondary students with disabilities to ensure impact of ministry's funding can be maximized; and
- priority disability related research initiatives.

Planned Action(s):

A Summit on Mental Health and Addictions will be held in the Fall 2010 to bring stakeholders together to move the bar forward on policies and practices to support students with mental health and addictions issues.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

Focus Area: Other

Commitment: Ongoing

In reviewing policy submissions, frameworks and proposals, the ministry will ensure that the needs/issues of persons with disabilities are considered.

Planned Action(s):

Trade certification examinations are multiple-choice written exams. Currently there are also six (6) practical trade exams that are available for clients that may face barriers in passing the written trade exam.

- Programs Branch within the Strategic Programs and Policy Division will be undertaking the development of more practical examinations in trades where the need is greatest.
- Programs Branch continues to collaborate with Employment and Training Division (Operations) to identify these trades.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

Focus Area: Other

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry will continue to support through funding from the Employment and Training Division, the Deaf Literacy Initiative.

Planned Action(s):

The ministry will continue to collaborate with the Deaf Literacy Initiative to support the needs of Deaf learners across Ontario.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing from November 2010

Focus Area: Other

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry is committed to increasing apprenticeship registrations across Ontario.

The April 2008 Budget contained a three year commitment of \$75 million for the expansion of Apprenticeship and \$45 million for the Apprenticeship Enhancement Fund, including support for Apprentices with Disabilities. (\$1.8 million in 08/09)

Planned Action(s):

Employment and Training Division (ETD) will continue to review and monitor the Support for Apprentices with Disabilities to ensure effective supports are provided.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing from November 2010

Focus Area: Other

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry will continue to support organizations with a specific focus on delivering training and employment supports to persons with disabilities through funding from the Employment and Training Division (ETD).

Planned Action(s):

ETD will continue to review employment supports for persons with disabilities to ensure that services are accessible in all communities across Ontario.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing from November 2010

Focus Area: Other

Commitment: Ongoing

French Language Services & Regional Coordination (FLS&RC) Unit of the Service Delivery Branch is to conduct an assessment of accessibility to provincial training and employment programs within Employment Ontario.

The results of the analysis are to be documented and used to increase awareness and identify gaps within delivery of our Employment Ontario programs.

Accessibility assessments include the following streams: Aboriginal, Francophone, Persons with Disabilities, Older Workers and Newcomers.

Planned Action(s):

FLS&RC Unit will continue to offer its expertise into policy and program development to ensure the needs and rights for accommodation and access continue to be met.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing from November 2010

Focus Area: Other

Commitment: Ongoing

French Language Services & Regional Coordination (FLS&RC) Unit will develop and implement an action plan that includes increasing awareness and identifying gaps within delivery of our Employment Ontario programs.

Accessibility assessments include the following streams: Aboriginal, Francophone, Persons with Disabilities, Older Worker and Newcomers.

Planned Action(s):

The Employment and Training Division (ETD) will continue to proactively monitor and analyze programs in accordance with new and existing legislation.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing from November 2010

Focus Area: Other

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry acknowledges the need for different branches and divisions of the ministry to share information pertaining to persons with disabilities to ensure that clients are obtaining appropriate service from the government and that any shortcomings or gaps can be addressed collectively.

Planned Action(s):

The Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO) will continue to undertake research projects relating to students with disabilities in postsecondary education.

Employment and Training Division (ETD) will continue to actively participate in interdivisional, interministerial and other relevant discussion groups and committees. ETD will continue to communicate and discuss the needs of persons with disabilities internally to ensure accessibility within MTCU programs and services.

ETD will continue to participate in discussion groups at an interdivisional level and at an interministerial level, to share ideas and learn how other branches and ministries can work together to better serve persons with disabilities.

ETD will also continue to communicate and discuss the needs of persons with disabilities internally throughout the ministry to ensure services and access to ministry programs remain available and free from barriers.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing from November 2010**Focus Area:** Other**Commitment:** Ongoing

Information technology goods and services (hardware/software) may pose barriers if there are no processes to check for ODA compliance.

The Technology and Business Solutions Branch of the Learning Ministries will continue its commitment to OPS procurement guidelines to ensure that accessibility has been considered in the procurement of goods and services.

Planned Action(s):

The Technology and Business Solutions Branch will continue its commitment to update and apply the AODA Procurement Requirements Checklist in developing business solutions.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

Focus Area: Other

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry, led by the Corporate Finance and Services Branch, will continue to adhere to the guidelines for procurement of accessible goods and services.

Planned Action(s):

The ministry will re-issue the guidelines for procurement of accessible goods and services to staff.

Implementation Timeframe: November 2010 – October 2011

Act(s), Regulation(s), Policy(s) being reviewed to prevent Barriers to Persons with Disabilities

In support of the commitment to remove and prevent barriers for persons with disabilities, the Government of Ontario will continue to review all new legislation, and policies under development to identify and remove barriers.

Focus Area: Acts, Regulations and Policy

Commitment: New

Barriers for persons with disabilities may inadvertently be created when developing/revising ministry policies, programs and legislation/regulations. The ministry will identify/remove/prevent potential barriers for persons with disabilities during development/revision of ministry policies, programs and legislation/regulations.

Planned Action(s):

The ministry will utilize tools (such as the Inclusion Lens developed by the OPS Diversity Office) when appropriate, to create more accessible policies, programs and legislation.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing from January 2011

Focus Area: Acts, Regulation and Policy

Commitment: Ongoing

The Legal Services Branch in the ministry commits to assess any new acts or regulations to ensure that they are compliant with the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*.

Planned Action(s):

New legislation will continue to be reviewed.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

Glossary of Terms/Acronyms

AODA – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

ETD – Employment and Training Division

ODA – Ontarians with Disabilities Act

MTCU – Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

OPS – Ontario Public Service

PSED – Postsecondary Education Division

SPPD – Strategic Programs and Policy Division

For More Information

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

Please phone:

General inquiry number: 416-325-2929 or 1-800-387-5514

TTY number: 1-800-263-2892

1-800 number: 1-800-387-5514

E-mail: info@edu.gov.on.ca

Ministry website address: <http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/>

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.

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