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Accessibility Plan 2013-2014

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 Northern Development and Mines (MNDM) 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) publicly released 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 MNDM will contribute to a barrier-free Ontario by 2025.

To access the 2012-2013 Accessibility Plans for MNDM and other ministries, visit [Ontario.ca](#).

Section One: Report on Measures Taken in 2012 - 2013

The following lists the commitments made in last year's Plan and the measures taken.

Customer Service

- ▶ All new employees completed the necessary training for meeting the requirements specified in the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation (ASCS) including individuals who provide services on the ministry's behalf through third party agreement. While most staff completed their training on-line, those who required an alternate format received it. In addition to responding to employee requests for alternate formats, we anticipated the need for staff who are located in outlying areas (the far north and other locations without

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- access to high-speed internet) and provided them with alternate formats as well (paper copy, DVD or by telephone).
- ▶ Reviewed and updated the client feedback feature (Contact Us) on the MNDM public facing website in a continuing effort to be responsive to accessibility-related matters.
 - ▶ Responded appropriately to feedback received from the public on accessibility-related matters.
 - ▶ Continued to ensure notice disruption policies are in place when services are unavailable.
 - ▶ Implemented the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and associated practices and procedures, in accordance with the requirements of the ASCS.
 - ▶ Promoted the OPS Inclusion Lens as a tool for identifying areas for improvement with regard to accessibility in service delivery; ensuring barrier-free services and outdoor opportunities at Ontario's provincial parks reflects the ministry's ongoing commitment to applying an inclusion lens in its planning for visitor experiences.

Information and Communications

- ▶ All new website information now conforms to WCAG 2.0 Level AA as required (excluding live captions and audio descriptions) effective January 1, 2012.
- ▶ In support of the OPS Accessibility@Source information campaign, MNDM communicated to staff on the requirements for:
 - ▶ Including accessibility considerations in procurement practices;
 - ▶ Creating accessible documents; and the
 - ▶ OPS policies for accessible employment (OPS Employment Accommodation and Return to Work Operating Policy).
- ▶ The ministry's Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) informed employees of new resources and of the mandatory training requirement on accessibility. In addition to MNDM News Blasts, the information was posted on the ministry intranet.
- ▶ Staff of the Strategic Human Resources Business Branch received training on some common barriers to accessibility within documents, and best practices for creating documents that are friendly for everyone, including those who use assistive devices.
- ▶ Updated content on the Employee Orientation intranet site with information on the mandatory training requirements on IASR for all employees, and added links to select instructions and tip sheets on how to create quality accessible documents.
- ▶ Responded to public requests for publications in accessible formats and advised staff on how to meet this requirement and provide alternate formats that best address client needs.
- ▶ Raised staff awareness on the need to consider accessibility for persons with disabilities when planning public meetings; provided 'how to' resources on the employee website.

Employment

- As an employer, the ministry is working to attract and retain talented employees including those with disabilities; MNDM met accessibility requirements in the following areas:
- ▶ Recruitment processes;
 - ▶ Employee accommodation and supports;
 - ▶ Accommodation where needed for employees returning to work after an extended medical leave; and
 - ▶ Supported employees who requested and/or received employment accommodation, relative to performance management, career development and redeployment.

MNDM ensured the mandatory training on accessibility for all staff on the topics of IASR and employment accommodation under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Built Environment

- ▶ The ministry ensured that alterations to existing facilities and any new construction were designed and implemented in compliance with Infrastructure Ontario Guidelines for Barrier-free Design in Ontario Government Facilities (these standards are equivalent to or higher than the Ontario Building Code barrier-free design requirements).

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- ▶ Timmins: South Porcupine (completed a re-design of existing office space which included new counters, work stations, customer service area)
- ▶ Thunder Bay: 3rd floor and basement – retrofitted entire office space

Procurement

Supported by the tools and templates provided by the MGS Supply Chain Management Division (SCMD) and the [Management Board of Cabinet Procurement Directive – 2012](#).

- ▶ Included accessibility considerations in its procurement and evaluation practices, consistent with the SCMD [Guidelines for Meeting Accessibility Obligations in Procurement](#).
- ▶ Incorporated accessibility criteria in procurement planning and documentation.
- ▶ Considered accessibility for persons with disabilities in all goods and services purchased for ministry or public use.

Leadership in Accessibility

Employee Training

The ministry fulfilled this year's training requirements (as specified in AODA standards) by ensuring that...

- ▶ All employees completed two OPS courses one on the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (The IASR in the OPS) and the other on the Ontario Human Rights Code (Working Together – the OHRC and the AODA); the ministry achieved 100 per cent completion rate.
- ▶ In addition, all new staff (regular and fixed-term employees including summer students) received assessable customer service training on how to plan for and provide accessible services and information products (May I Help You I & II).
- ▶ Employees are encouraged to complete additional learning and awareness material provided by the OPS Diversity Office, such as those provided through Accessibility@Source information campaign comprised of topical resources and learning material posted on the Diversity internet website.

Accessibility Feedback

MNDM is responsive to feedback received on accessibility. In 2012-2013, we continued to provide feedback mechanisms for the public through a range of communication channels including:

- ▶ Email contact through ministry internet site,
- ▶ Telephone and TTY and
- ▶ Contact by paper correspondence and facsimile.

Section Two: Measures Planned for 2013 - 2014

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 Northern Development and Mine is only reporting on measures it will take or initiate during the 2013-2014 reporting period.

Customer Service

MYAP Outcome:

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

MYAP Deliverables and Timelines

- ▶ 2013 - New staff trained on accessible customer service and requirements under the AODA Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, and the Ontario Human Rights Code and the AODA.
- ▶ 2013 - Accessibility criteria built into decision-making, project management, procurement, technology, infrastructure, I & IT and training.
- ▶ 2013 - Increased awareness in OPS of accessibility best practices in customer service and the workplace.
- ▶ 2014 – 2016 – OPS Inclusion Lens applied to all policies and practices.
- ▶ 2014 – 2016 - Accessibility is part of all MNDM business.

Ministry Proposed Measures

2013 – 2014

- ▶ Continue to implement the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and associated practices and procedures, in accordance with the requirements of the ACSP.
- ▶ All new staff will receive the ministry's required training within two weeks of their start date (May I Help You I & II; Working Together – the OHRC and the AODA; Introduction to the IASR in the OPS; Differences Matter; Workplace Discrimination and Harassment Prevention).
- ▶ Continue to implement a service disruption protocol to fully meet the requirements of the ASCS.
- ▶ Staff provide appropriate responses to all ministry feedback related to accessibility.
- ▶ MNDM's Accessibility Lead will continue to advise program areas on the effective design of programs, services and processes, ensuring that the needs of persons with disabilities are considered up front.

2014 – 2016

- ▶ As part of the 2014 OPS Employee Survey, staff will be asked if their employment accommodation are being met.
- ▶ In addition, new managers will continue to take “Inclusive Leadership: Leading Diversity”.
- ▶ Beginning in December 2014, all managers will also be required to take the online training course entitled “Using the OPS Inclusion Lens”.
- ▶ Select staff in MNMD's Strategic Human Resources Business Branch or on the MNMD Inclusion Council will take the OPS Inclusion Lens train-the-trainer sessions, as available.

Information and Communications

MYAP Outcome:

Information and communications are provided in accessible formats and alternate formats upon request to all OPS staff and customers.

MYAP Deliverables and Timelines

- ▶ 2013 - Accessibility criteria built into decision-making, project management, procurement, technology, infrastructure, I & IT and training.
- ▶ 2014 - 2016 – Communications, websites, technology solutions and documents employ accessibility best practices.

Ministry Proposed Measures

2013 – 2014

- ▶ Continue to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) standards.
- ▶ Continue to use accessibility criteria in the ministry's procurement activities and provide advice to project managers.
- ▶ Encourage staff to attend OPS sessions on creating web-ready and accessible documents.
- ▶ Communicate availability of accessible formats and communication supports to the public by January 1, 2014.
- ▶ Send delegates to the annual Expo/JOIN conference (Toronto) in order to stay current on the topic of employment for persons with disabilities.
- ▶ Hold ministry specific events to highlight accessibility around Dec 3, UN International day of Persons with Disabilities and National Access Awareness Week (end of May/beginning of June)

2014 – 2016

- ▶ Continue to use accessible format standards and templates based on best practices.
- ▶ Promote staff awareness of accessibility within the ministry through use of OPS-wide information opportunities.

Employment Accommodation

MYAP Outcome:

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

MYAP Deliverables and Timelines

2013 - Increased awareness in OPS of accessibility best practices in customer service and the workplace.

Ministry Proposed Measures

2013 – 2014

- ▶ 2014 - Senior managers have accessibility performance commitments.
- ▶ 2014 - 2016 – Best practices on employment accommodation and return to work implemented.
- ▶ 2014 - 2016 – Managers and staff have accessibility performance commitments.
- ▶ Promote OPS policy on preventing barriers in employment through the OPS Accessibility@Source information campaign on OPS policies, practices and resources.
- ▶ Increase manager awareness of employment accommodation directives, policies and plans through the support of OPS awareness initiatives.
- ▶ Assure that managers understand the availability of accessible formats and communication supports for employees.
- ▶ Include performance commitments on inclusion (which includes accessibility) for all managers and executives.

2014 – 2016

- ▶ Analyze MNMD's results from the OPS Employee Survey to assess if employees were appropriately accommodated.

Built Environment

MYAP Outcome:

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

MYAP Deliverables and Timelines

- 2013 - Continue to develop strategies for addressing infrastructure barriers.
- 2014 - 2016 – OPS ready to implement requirements of IASR's Design of Public Spaces Standards and potential changes to the barrier-free design requirements of the Ontario Building Code.

Ministry Proposed Measures

2013 – 2014

Government Facilities

The ministry is committed to greater accessibility within and around the buildings and public spaces it occupies.

- All planned facility alterations and improvement projects, as well as any new construction, are designed and implemented in compliance with the Infrastructure Ontario's (IO) Guidelines for Barrier-free Design of Ontario Government Facilities.

2014 – 2016

AODA Design of Public Spaces Standards and other Barrier-free Design Requirements

- Increase manager awareness of accessible built environment obligations in the IASR, the Ontario Building Code and Infrastructure Ontario's (IO) Guidelines for Barrier-free Design of Ontario Government Facilities.

Leadership in Accessibility

MYAP Outcome:

The OPS endeavours to demonstrate leadership for accessibility in Ontario.

MYAP Deliverables and Timelines

- 2013 - Ongoing consultations with persons with disabilities.
- 2013 - Ministries continue to publish annual accessibility plans.
- 2014 - 2016 – Accessibility continues as strong organizational commitment.

Ministry Proposed Measures

2013 – 2014

- Create a Ministry Inclusion Council that will not only assist with the Ministry's Inclusion Plan but will become Inclusion Ambassador for the Ministry to implement the plan.
- Continue to support participation of the ministry's member on the OPS Disability Advisory Council.
- Continue to support MNDM accessibility lead to participate in OPS accessibility forums and networks.

2014 – 2016

- Increase awareness among staff of mental illness in the workplace by promoting OPS resources and program initiatives.

Section Three: Report on Legislative Review

In support of our commitment to improve access for people with disabilities, the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines will continue to review government acts and regulations to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility.

Acts, Regulations and Policies Reviewed in 2012 - 2013

The ministry reviewed legislation based on its established schedule. Consistent with corporate directions, staff relied on the OPS Inclusion Lens to identify any potential barriers to people with disabilities, and vetted the work through legal counsel.

Acts, Regulations and Policies to Be Reviewed in 2013 –2014

MNDM will continue its review of legislation, according to the ministry's schedule.

SCHEDULE FOR INCLUSION REVIEW OF MNDM STATUTES

Name of Act	Description	Date for inclusion review by:
Northern	Establishes a corporation to promote economic development and	2014

Ontario Heritage Fund Act	diversification in Northern Ontario through the use of funds provided for that purpose.	
Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry Act	Establishes the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines.	2014
Ontario Northland Transportation Commission Act	Established the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission to provide transportation and telecommunications services to Northern Ontario. On March 23, 2012, the Province announced that it was beginning to divest itself of ONTC's assets. The ONTC continues to operate during the divestiture process.	2016
Northern Services Boards Act	Allows inhabitants of territories without municipal organization to establish local services boards to provide certain basic community services. It also provides for the establishment of area service boards to consolidate service delivery.	2017
Mining Act	This Act provides for the administration of mining lands, the regulation of mineral exploration and development activities and mine closure and rehabilitation in Ontario. Currently undergoing Phase III of Mining Act Modernization which includes Online Claim Staking which will increase accessibility of Ministry services. We have placed the Mining Act last on the list to allow time for Online Staking to be fully operationalized.	2018

Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

- ▶ AODA – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- ▶ ASCS - Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation
- ▶ IASR – Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation
- ▶ MNDM - Ministry of Northern Development and Mines
- ▶ MYAP – Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
- ▶ OPS – Ontario Public Service
- ▶ ODA - Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001
- ▶ SCMD – Supply Chain Management Division
- ▶ TTY – Telephone Typewriter or Telecommunication Device for the Deaf
- ▶ WCAG - Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

How to Contact us

Questions and/or comments about the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines Accessibility Plan are always welcome.

Please contact us at:

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"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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