



MINISTRY OF GOVERNMENT SERVICES

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Office of the Premier and Cabinet Office 2009 – 2010 Accessibility Plan

Introduction

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 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, beginning in January 2010 when the first standard — for customer service — comes into force.

Each year, the government sets the course to prevent, identify and remove barriers through annual accessibility plans required under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA).

Building on last year's plan, the 2009-10 accessibility plan will continue moving the Office of the Premier and Cabinet Office toward the goal of an accessible province for all Ontarians.

Key achievements reported in the 2009-10 plan:

- Construction of the accessible ramp for the Whitney Block west entrance commenced in June 2009 and is targeted for completion by March 2010.
- Public and intranet websites continue to be fully accessible in accordance with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act and guidelines developed by the Ministry of Government Services. Key accessibility features include:
 - Written explanations for every graphic item (e.g. images, photographs) such that screen reader software can interpret the graphics for people with visual disabilities.
 - A "Contact Us" page, providing a feedback form; contact information includes a telephone number, TTY number (where applicable), fax number, and email address.
- Publications continue to be available in alternate formats upon request, e.g. Braille, large print, sound files, etc.
- Teletypewriter (TTY) equipment continues to be available at the Whitney Block main reception desk and appropriate training continues to be provided to reception staff.
- The analysis of Cabinet submissions considers, where appropriate, the potential impacts to persons with disabilities (e.g. will the initiative create or remove barriers) and ensures that mitigation options are explored where necessary. This information was covered in the six training sessions delivered by Policy and Delivery staff to OPS employees on how to write Cabinet submissions.
- The recruitment process continues to be fair and barrier-free, with accommodation available to job candidates upon request. Accessibility information is included in orientation packages for new employees.
- All employees will be trained on the principles and practices of accessible customer service by November 13, 2009.
- A number of accommodations activities in Whitney Block program areas resulted in improved accessibility for staff. For example, in the Strategy and Results workspace (Rm



6527), two automatic door openers were installed, coat hooks lowered, and furniture removed or repositioned to remove physical barriers. Two automatic door openers were also installed in the 6th floor men's washroom.

- From mid-November 2009 to the end of January 2010, an accommodations project will correct accessibility deficiencies in 13 offices and one workstation, provide for installation of additional accessible lever-style doorknobs and automatic door openers, and update signage for improved visibility and Braille translation where applicable.

Going forward, Cabinet Office will work in collaboration with the OPS Diversity Office, the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario and ministry partners to prepare for the implementation of further accessibility standards under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

An executive summary of all Government of Ontario Ministry Accessibility Plans is available at: http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/mcass/english/ministry/accessibilityPlans/ministries_accplans10.htm.

Report on Status of Customer Service Requirements

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

To begin to transition OPS ministries to this regulation, this section has been added to the ODA Planning Template to highlight customer service initiatives.

Please note that there is a separate reporting process for compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation. Activities to meet the requirements of the Regulation are described in more detail as part of that reporting process administered by the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Impact: Act, Regulation, Policy, Program, Service

Commitments:

1) Completed

Ensured that services to the public met the legislated requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service. An accessibility compliance team was established with representation from all divisions to coordinate the implementation of the standard across the organization.

Implementation Timeframe: November 2008 – December 2009

2) Ongoing

Cabinet Office will continue to work with the OPS Diversity Office, the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario, and ministry partners to identify and facilitate appropriate training for employees on the new customer service standard.

Implementation Timeframe: January 2009 and ongoing

Results Achieved:

1) Compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service. As outlined in the preamble to this section, full details will be provided in a separate report administered by the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario. A description of some activities undertaken to achieve compliance are provided below.

Accessibility Compliance Team members served as the accessibility champions for their divisions, coordinating the divisional input and roll-out of activities, sharing ideas and information, and facilitating accessibility training for divisional staff.

Cabinet Office's range of services was reviewed to distinguish between external- and internal-facing functions. External, public-facing services fall under the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service. A key example is correspondence services for the Premier of Ontario. The Correspondence Services Unit confirmed that its existing operations were aligned with the provisions of the standard, including the availability of various ways to correspond with the Premier (e.g. regular mail, website, fax, teletypewriter) and responses in alternate formats upon request. An example of another type of service is policy and delivery functions. No deficiencies were identified for these services with respect to the standard and any gaps that may arise in the future will be addressed in a timely manner.

The enterprise OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy was adopted to ensure that external-facing policies and procedures were aligned with the standard.

2) In consultation with the OPS Diversity Office, the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario and ministry partners, Cabinet Office developed a training strategy to ensure that all employees (managers and staff) had a fundamental understanding of accessible service delivery and were aware of their responsibilities under the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service. Training was delivered through on-line e-courses offered through OPS Learning and Development and materials developed by the OPS Diversity Office. Training was mandatory for all employees. This requirement was reinforced by a memo sent to all staff by the Chief Administrative Officer in October 2009.

All employees will be trained on the principles and practices of accessible customer service by November 13, 2009.

Report on Other Accessibility Commitments

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

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

Focus Area: Information and Communications

Impact: Policy, Program, Service

Commitments:

1) Ongoing

Public and intranet websites maintained by Cabinet Office will continue to be fully accessible, in accordance with provisions of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act and guidelines developed by the Ministry of Government Services. The accessibility of public and intranet websites will be verified annually.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2008 – 2009 and ongoing

2) Ongoing

Publications will continue to be available in alternate formats upon request, in accordance with provisions of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act and guidelines developed by the Ministry of Government Services. In consultation with the OPS Diversity Office, Cabinet Office will develop a guide to assist staff to directly produce or arrange for the production of alternate formats. The Correspondence Services Unit will continue to work with the appropriate organizations/offices to produce responses and other documents in alternate formats, as required:

- Braille – in collaboration with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Accessible Text Service
- Sound files – in collaboration with the Creative Services and New Media unit in Cabinet Office

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2008 – 2009 and ongoing

3) Ongoing

Usage of the teletypewriter (TTY) line at the Whitney Block main reception desk will continue to be monitored to ensure that the capacity of the system is adequate. All new reception staff will receive TTY training, with refresher training for existing staff being provided as required. The Correspondence Services Unit will continue to work closely with ServiceOntario staff to respond to TTY calls. TTY inquiries will continue to be addressed with the same timeliness and high level of service as regular telephone calls.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2008 – 2009 and ongoing

4) Ongoing

Information technology services used by the Office of the Premier and Cabinet Office will continue to be monitored for possible accessibility issues and timely solutions will be provided where practicable. To this end, Cabinet Office will continue to work with Information Technology Systems and Services, Central Agencies Information & Information Technology Cluster, and look for future opportunities to leverage cluster resources to ensure that Cabinet Office is made aware of any new technologies, and that appropriate IT solutions are provided, as required.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2008 – 2009 and ongoing

5) New

In close collaboration with the OPS Diversity Office, the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario and

ministry partners, Cabinet Office will review services relating to information and communications to prepare for the upcoming accessibility standard under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

Possible examples are inclusive language guidelines, availability of training to staff in producing documents in alternate formats, and expanding the accessibility section of the employee intranet to include more information on accessible communications. Cabinet Office will actively participate in any related corporate initiatives and inter-ministerial meetings.

Implementation Timeframe: January 2010 – March 2011

Results Achieved:

1) Public and intranet websites continue to be fully accessible in accordance with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act and guidelines developed by the Ministry of Government Services. Key accessibility features include:

- Written explanations for every graphic item (e.g. images, photographs) such that screen reader software can interpret the graphics for people with visual disabilities.
- A "Contact Us" page, providing a feedback form; contact information includes a telephone number, TTY number (where applicable), fax number, and email address.

2) Publications continue to be available in alternate formats upon request, e.g. Braille, large print, sound files, etc.

3) Teletypewriter (TTY) equipment continues to be available at the Whitney Block main reception desk and appropriate training continues to be provided to reception staff.

4) The IT HelpDesk monitored user problems arising from the wide range of information technology products and services used by staff in the Office of the Premier and Cabinet Office. Timely support and effective resolution was provided to staff, as required.

5) To be reported in the 2010 – 2011 Accessibility Plan.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Focus Area: Built Environment

Impact: Program, Service

Commitments:

1) Ongoing

Cabinet Office, working with property management and the Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC), will continue to champion the implementation of any feasible infrastructure improvements to address accessibility issues. An accessible entrance ramp for the Whitney Block is under construction and is scheduled to be completed in March 2010.

Implementation Timeframe: June 2009 – March 2010

2) Ongoing

Cabinet Office's multi-year facilities/accommodations strategy will continue to incorporate barrier-free initiatives. The Ontario Realty Corporation's Standards for Barrier-Free Design of Ontario Government Facilities will continue to be followed for all building and renovation projects where applicable.

Implementation Timeframe: November 2009 – January 2010

Results Achieved:

1) Construction of the accessible ramp for the Whitney Block west entrance commenced in June 2009 and is targeted for completion by March 2010.

2) From mid-November 2009 to the end of January 2010, an accommodations project will correct accessibility deficiencies in 13 offices and one workstation, provide for installation of additional accessible lever-style doorknobs and automatic door openers, and update signage for improved visibility and Braille translation where applicable.

A number of accommodations activities in Whitney Block program areas resulted in improved accessibility for staff. For example, in the Strategy and Results workspace (Rm 6527), two automatic door openers were installed, coat hooks lowered, and furniture removed or repositioned to remove physical barriers. Two automatic door openers were also installed in the 6th floor men's washroom.

EMPLOYMENT

Focus Area: Employment

Impact: Policy, Program, Service

Commitments:

1) Ongoing

The Cabinet Office human resources strategy will ensure that employment practices continue to be aligned with the overarching OPS Human Resources Plan. Managers at all levels will continue to receive assistance to understand their responsibilities for employee accommodation. Employees will continue to be informed of the availability of accommodation for their job-related accessibility needs (e.g. ergonomic assessments). Accommodations activities will be undertaken with ergonomic considerations in mind, such as a focus on task chairs and keyboard trays for staff, as well as improved lighting standards in program areas with the installation of parabolic lenses.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2008-09 and ongoing

2) Ongoing

The employee recruitment process will continue to be fair and barrier-free, with accommodation available to job candidates upon request. Job competitions will continue to be monitored to ensure that no barriers are inadvertently introduced into the process. Employment candidates will continue to receive appropriate accommodation during the competition process upon request.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2008 – 2009 and ongoing

Results Achieved:

1) An October 2009 memo from the Chief Administrative Officer reminded managers of the mandatory requirement to take the "ODA: Maximizing the Contribution of Employees with Disabilities" e-course on employee accommodation.

Accessibility information is included in orientation packages for new employees.

In 2008-09, 66 ergonomic assessments were undertaken and corresponding ergonomic aids were obtained to meet the employment-related accessibility needs of employees.

2) The recruitment process continues to be fair and barrier-free, with accommodation available to job candidates upon request.

OTHER

Focus Area: Other

Impact: Act, Regulation, Policy, Program, Service

Commitments:

1) Completed

A coordinated strategy was developed to ensure that accessibility planning activities supported and aligned with the requirements of the new OPS Service Directive (compliance date January 1, 2010).

Implementation Timeframe: January – June 2009

2) Ongoing

The analysis of Cabinet submissions will continue to consider, where appropriate, the potential impacts to persons with disabilities and ensures that mitigation options are explored where necessary. Considerations include how the proposed initiative may create or remove barriers and how the proposed initiative would further the government's goal of a fully accessible Ontario by 2025.

Policy advisors will continue to provide training on how to write Cabinet submissions. The material covered will continue to include the accessibility considerations outlined above. These courses are offered through the Ministry of Government Services' Centre for Leadership and Learning several times a year.

Implementation Timeframe: Complete for 2008 – 2009 and ongoing

3) Ongoing

Policy staff will help implement the accessibility standards development process by active

participation in inter-ministerial initiatives in support of the continuing implementation of standards.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2008 – 2009 and ongoing

4) Ongoing

For procurement activities, finance staff will continue to comply with the accessibility provisions of the new Procurement Directive and related guidelines in conjunction with Ontario Shared Services. Staff will also continue to keep current on any new corporate accessibility requirements and all corporate funding resources available to ministries for accessibility initiatives.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2008 – 2009 and ongoing

5) Ongoing

Cabinet Office will coordinate an annual evacuation warden training session for all Whitney Block wardens and their back-ups (wardens are drawn from all co-located ministries in the Whitney Block). The session will include emergency procedures for people needing assistance to evacuate.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2008 – 2009 and ongoing

6) Ongoing

Accessibility factors and issues affecting people with disabilities will continue to form an integral component of emergency management planning for the Office of the Premier and Cabinet Office.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2008 – 2009 and ongoing

7) Ongoing

The Accessibility Compliance Team will continue to monitor the implementation of this plan and report back to senior management. Barriers to accessibility in the workplace will continue to be identified and addressed through the appropriate forum. All major program areas will continue to be represented on the team.

Implementation Timeframe: Completed for 2008 – 2009 and ongoing

Results Achieved:

1) Cabinet Office reviewed:

- Legislated requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service
- Corporate requirements of the OPS Service Directive
- Existing accessibility planning process and commitments made under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA) accessibility plan.

The implementation plan coordinated the roll-out of activities for the customer service standard, the service directive and ODA planning, including the communications and training activities.

2) The analysis of Cabinet submissions considers, where appropriate, the potential impacts to persons with disabilities (e.g. will the initiative create or remove barriers) and ensures that mitigation options are explored where necessary. This information was covered in the six training sessions delivered by Policy and Delivery staff to OPS employees on how to write Cabinet submissions.

3) Policy and Delivery staff worked closely with the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario (ADO), Ministry of Community and Social Services, to assist with continued implementation of the customer service standards and development of the four remaining standards. Staff also worked with the ADO to ensure that other key ministries – e.g. Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Government Services, Ministry of Municipal Affairs – were aware of the standards under development and involved in the decision-making process.

4) Finance staff provided advice on accessibility impacts relating to purchasing activities in accordance with corporate directives, guidelines and processes. Any new developments regarding accessibility in the procurement process were shared among the finance staff in a timely manner. Financial transactions arising from employee accommodation and/or barrier-removal were processed expeditiously.

5) Evacuation training for Office of the Premier and Cabinet Office wardens in the Whitney Block was completed in September 2009; Cabinet Office wardens in the Ferguson Block and at 1075 Bay Street were trained in October 2009.

6) During annual continuity of operations planning for the Office of the Premier and Cabinet Office, accessibility for employees with disabilities was considered for key components, including alternate workplace arrangements, emergency communications and education activities, and

resourcing plans.

7) The 2008 – 2009 Office of the Premier and Cabinet Office Accessibility Plan was released to the public on December 12, 2008, in accordance with legislated and corporate timelines.

For More Information

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

Please phone:
Office of the Director
Corporate Planning and Services Branch
Room 3540, Whitney Block
99 Wellesley Street West
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1A1

General inquiry number: 416 325-7635

TTY number: 416 314-5721

E-mail: odapublicinquiries@ontario.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 a barrier-free province.

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

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