

OFFICE OF THE PREMIER AND CABINET OFFICE

*2010-2011
ODA Accessibility Plan*



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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. In 2010, it 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 the additional standards under The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* we are guided by the Ontario Human Rights Code and obligations set out in the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*.

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*.

Key Ministry 2009-2010 Achievements

In **2009-2010** the Office of the Premier and Cabinet Office (*hereafter referred to as the Ministry*) had many accessibility achievements and the key highlights are as follows:

Built Environment

- Worked with the Ontario Realty Corporation on the installation/construction of an accessible entrance ramp at the Whitney Block west entrance.
- Improved accessibility in offices/work stations and boardrooms by installing new furniture, and redesigning layouts to ensure adequate clearance as defined by specifications.

- Installed new signage for program areas and boardrooms to improve accessibility within Cabinet Office.
- Improved accessibility by installing lever-style door handles on offices and boardrooms, and automatic door openers leading to program areas and boardrooms.
- Worked with the Ontario Realty Corporation to install automatic door openers on washroom doors in Whitney Block.
- Accessibility to kitchen areas was improved by lowering the height of kitchen sinks to achieve accessibility standards.

Information and Communications

- The newest version of Adobe Acrobat Professional 9 was installed on computers in each division. This software is now in use and includes features that enhance the accessibility of PDF documents and allows users with disabilities to access, read and use PDF files with ease.

Customer Service

- Established and implemented a Ministry protocol to collect and assess feedback about accessible customer service.

Other

- The Intergovernmental Affairs Division of the Ministry developed legislation to make provincial elections fairer, more flexible, and more accessible to voters. Through a number of important changes to the *Election Act*, election accessibility will be enhanced for Ontarians with disabilities for the scheduled 2011 provincial election.

Section 1 of the Plan provides a full list of achievements along with additional details.

The 2010-11 Accessibility Plan will continue to move the Ministry toward the goal of an accessible province for all Ontarians.

To view other Ministries' Accessibility Plans please visit: Ontario.ca

Section 1: Report on Accessibility Achievements for 2009-2010

1. FOCUS AREA: BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Achievement: Accessible entrance ramp

- Worked with the Ontario Realty Corporation on the installation/construction of an accessible entrance ramp at the Whitney Block west entrance.
- The project was completed in July 2010 and included the installation of a new accessible ramp, the creation of a new entrance lobby on the lower level and the installation of an elevator linking the lower level to the main floor security desk.
- The new ramp is enclosed by a stone guard and is well-illuminated, protected from ice build-up by heated cables, and equipped with stainless steel handrails. Security cameras, access card readers and an emergency intercom system work to ensure personal safety and protect building security. Directional signage has been installed to clearly identify this new accessible entrance.

Result: Whitney Block now has 2 accessible entries, 23 Queen's Park Crescent and 900 Bay Street via Macdonald Block.

Achievement: Accessible work stations and boardrooms

- Improved accessibility in offices/work stations and boardrooms by installing new furniture, and redesigning layouts to ensure adequate clearance as defined by specifications.

Result: 5 offices/work stations and 4 boardrooms were improved and all Ministry offices now comply with accessibility standards.

Achievement: New signage

- Installed new signage for program areas and boardrooms to improve accessibility within Cabinet Office.
- Signage was designed using the Accessibility Design Standard for Ontario Government Facilities in terms of font, contrast and installation height, and includes Grade 1 Braille to indicate the room number.

Result: 29 new signs were installed and all Ministry program areas are now identified by signs that have been designed using Accessibility Design Standards for Ontario Government facilities.

Achievement: Accessible doors

- Improved accessibility by installing lever-style door handles on offices and boardrooms, and automatic door openers leading to program areas and boardrooms.
- Worked with the Ontario Realty Corporation to install automatic door openers on washroom doors in Whitney Block.

Result:

- 152 lever-style door handles were installed on all Ministry interior program doors, with the exception of the 1st floor.
- 22 automatic door openers have been installed on all program areas and boardroom entries, with the exception of the 1st floor.
- Lever style handles and automatic door openers are on hand for installation on the 1st floor pending the conclusion of a Heritage Board review of Whitney Block.
- 13 automatic door openers have been installed on all public washrooms in Whitney Block, with the exception of the basement and the 1st floor; installation to be reviewed pending conclusion of a Heritage Board review of Whitney Block.

Achievement: Accessible kitchens

- Accessibility to kitchen areas was improved by lowering the height of kitchen sinks to achieve accessibility standards.

Result: 3 of 7 kitchen sinks were retrofitted to comply with accessibility standards. This represents one accessible sink for each Ministry occupied floor: 3, 4 and 6. There is no kitchen sink in the 1st floor program area.

2. FOCUS AREA: INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Achievement: Employee communications and outreach

- As head of the Ontario Public Service, Secretary of the Cabinet Shelly Jamieson ensures all information on her intranet site is accessible to more than 65,000 employees.

Result:

- Intranet site content meets all best practice online accessibility standards.
- Photos and graphics have alt tags to allow people using adaptive technology to access visual images.
- Videos are posted with a full transcript to allow people using adaptive technology to access content.
- All documents are posted in both HTML and accessible PDF formats.

Achievement: Raising awareness and educating Ontario Public Service staff

- The Secretary of the Cabinet continues to raise awareness about the need for accessibility and encourages all Ontario Public Service staff to learn more about breaking down barriers.

Result:

- The Secretary of the Cabinet regularly produces videos and posts blogs that promote inclusion and the tools available to help staff improve accessibility to all Ontarians both inside and outside the organization.
- The Secretary regularly encourages staff to break down physical and attitudinal barriers for customers and employees with disabilities.

Achievement: Accessible documents

- The newest version of Adobe Acrobat Professional 9 was installed on computers in each division. This software is now in use and includes features

- Guidelines for creating accessible documents and requesting alternate formats were posted on the Ministry intranet for all staff.

Result: In the summer of 2010, 10 staff members received the software; 6 of these staff members have confirmed their use of the software and 4 have not yet had occasion to use it.

Achievement: Accessible public and intranet websites

- Again this year, public and intranet websites continue to be fully accessible in accordance with the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* and guidelines developed by the Ministry of Government Services.
- Written explanations for every graphic item (e.g. images, photographs) are embedded to enable screen reader software to interpret the graphics for people with visual disabilities.
- To ensure people of all abilities, including both customers and employees, can navigate and understand the internet and intranet sites, all accessibility features are prominently displayed with tips and instructions for enhancing the accessibility of the websites.

Result: The 2 public websites, i.e. www.premier.gov.on.ca and www.news.ontario.ca, and the 2 intranet sites for the Secretary of the Cabinet and Cabinet Office are fully accessible.

Achievement: Publications in alternate formats

- Again this year, publications continue to be available in alternate formats upon request, e.g. Braille, large print, sound files, etc.

Result: No requests for publications in alternate formats have been received to date.

Achievement: Teletypewriter (TTY) equipment

- Again this year, teletypewriter (TTY) equipment continues to be available at the Ministry main reception desk and appropriate training continues to be provided to reception staff.

Result: The TTY unit continues to be operational and, in Fall 2010, TTY training was provided to 8 staff members including main receptionists and backups. Quick Tip reference sheets including regular testing instructions were also developed.

3. FOCUS AREA: CUSTOMER SERVICE

Achievement: Feedback on accessibility

- The Secretary of the Cabinet's intranet site has a prominent and easy-to-use feedback form to allow users to quickly submit questions, comments and concerns about any issue including the site and its content. All suggestions and comments are reviewed and incorporated where appropriate. Responses are sent to all inquiries in a timely fashion.
- Established and implemented a Ministry protocol to collect and assess feedback about accessible customer service. The protocol included the creation of a dedicated email address and posting of feedback forms at all Ministry reception areas. A commitment to review feedback was made to inform continuous improvements about accessibility related issues.

Result:

- All suggestions and comments received on the Secretary's intranet site are reviewed and incorporated where appropriate. Responses are sent to all inquiries in a timely fashion.
- The dedicated Ministry feedback email inbox is reviewed weekly and no feedback has been received to date.

4. FOCUS AREA: EMPLOYMENT

Achievement: Recruitment process continues to be fair and barrier-free

- Recruitment process continues to be fair and barrier-free, with accommodation offered to job candidates upon notification of interview.

Result: To date no requests have been made.

Achievement: Orientation information includes accessibility information

- Accessibility information is included as part of the orientation program for new employees and outlines relevant mandatory training.

Result: 100% compliance with mandatory training; managers and new staff are provided with the revised Ministry orientation checklist for staff which identifies accessibility training information and requirements.

5. FOCUS AREA: OTHER

Achievement: Accessible elections in Ontario

- Responding to the recommendations of the Legislative Assembly's all-party Select Committee on Elections, the Intergovernmental Affairs Division of the Ministry developed legislation to make provincial elections fairer, more flexible, and more accessible to voters.
- Bill 231, the *Election Statute Law Amendment Act, 2010*, received Royal Assent on May 18, 2010. The bill makes a number of important changes to the *Election Act*, including enhancing election accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities.
- Among other changes, the amendments require that all polling locations be accessible and voters will have the opportunity in advance of scheduled elections to comment on whether proposed polling locations are sufficiently accessible before any final decision is made. Accessible voting equipment at returning office advance polls will allow voters with disabilities to vote without

assistance. It will be possible for voters who need assistance with voting by special ballots because of a disability to request a home visit from an Elections Ontario official who can help. The Chief Electoral Officer will also have the authority to direct the use of additional alternative voting methods, including electronic voting, if these methods have been successfully tested at a by-election and meet security and integrity standards.

Result: Measure of effectiveness to be determined at the next election and in subsequent elections.

Achievement: People with disabilities represented in government communications

- The Ontario Photo Library, a database of photos and images used in materials across the province, continues to be enhanced with photos that positively depict Ontarians of all abilities. This allows people across the Ontario government and in Ontario agencies to ensure people with disabilities are represented in online content and printed publications.

Result: Images and materials available for use in the Ontario Public Service.

Achievement: Use plain language to expand reach and impact

- Incorporated plain language deliverables into communications directors' performance plans.
- Completed review of plain language in Ministries, and finalized initial report on clear writing with recommendations for improvements.
- Developed a framework for self-audits and established benchmarks for measuring improvements.

Result: Performance commitments, clear writing recommendations and a self-audit framework.

Section 2: Report on Accessible Customer Service Requirements

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07) came into force on January 1, 2008. All Ontario Public Service (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 continue to embed accessibility in all areas of planning, programs and policies.

This Section expands on achievements and provides for continued reporting on these Accessibility Standards.

1. Commitment: Training on accessible customer service

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

- Building on the Ministry's success in meeting the full requirements of the Standards in 2009, all new employees and managers will be trained within six weeks of their start date. Training is delivered through online e-courses and materials developed by the OPS Diversity Office.
- The Ministry will encourage managers and staff to take additional training provided through the Centre for Leadership and Learning.
- Informal presentations will be provided to staff on topics such as accessibility and the future of information delivery, ergonomics in the workplace, assistive technology training and introducing web accessibility and usability.

Metrics: 100% of staff complete mandatory online training.

2. Commitment: Feedback on accessibility

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

- The Ministry will continue to review and ensure that feedback on accessibility related issues informs continuous improvement to the way the Ministry delivers services to their clients. All feedback provided in person, in writing and by any other means will be reviewed and analysed for ways to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities. It is important to note that the Ministry has implemented all requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and, as such, no feedback has been received to date.

Metrics:

- Number of inputs to feedback received.
- Weekly review of the dedicated feedback email inbox; feedback received to be considered quarterly for continuous improvements, or as required.

3. Commitment: Develop accessibility working group

Implementation Timeframe: 2010-2011

- The Ministry will form a standing 'Cabinet Office Accessibility Working Group' to meet and encourage ideas, internal communications and ongoing updates.

Metrics: Membership to represent each division and to meet quarterly.

Section 3: 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.

1. Commitment: Prepare for Information and Communication Standards

Implementation Timeframe: To be determined upon approval of the standards

- In collaboration with the OPS Diversity Office, the Ministry will review services relating to information and communications to prepare for the upcoming accessibility standards 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. The Ministry will actively participate in any related corporate initiatives and inter-ministerial meetings.
- Actively explore use of sign language interpreters for major government announcements.

Metrics: To be determined with the release of the new standards.

2. Commitment: Accessible practices for document formats

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

- The OPS Diversity Office, in partnership the Ministry's Communications Branch, has developed and is promoting revised communications practices that help stop the practice of attaching inaccessible formats to internal and external communications by encouraging the use of accessible formats. Materials underscore the importance of ongoing vigilance to ensure accessibility.
- While awaiting specific standards related to information and communication, all Ministry staff will adopt the instructions communicated by the Deputy Minister of Government Services in April 2010 and cease using inaccessible PDF attachments as the only means of communicating information and use best practice by placing content in the body of the e-mail. If attachments are necessary, then context can be provided in the email with a website link to an HTML version of the full document.

Metrics: All staff to use and promote best practice guidelines for accessible formats.

3. Commitment: Publications in alternate formats

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

- Publications will continue to be available in alternate formats upon request. The Ministry 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 the Ministry.

Metrics: Number of requests received by the Ministry for publications in alternate formats.

4. Commitment: Accessible public and intranet websites

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

- Public and intranet websites maintained by the Ministry will continue to be fully accessible. The accessibility of public and intranet websites will be verified annually.
- Develop an assistive technology testing station for all staff managing internet or intranet websites (i.e. test products using assistive technologies) which can also be used for training and education.
- Expand online design standards to include new, simplified instructions, and quick tips for personalizing Ontario government websites.

Metrics: The 2 public websites, i.e. www.premier.gov.on.ca and www.news.ontario.ca, and the 2 intranet sites for the Secretary of the Cabinet and Cabinet Office are fully accessible; 2 intranet sites, learning.com and Photo Library, are in transition and development, respectively, and each have a plan for accessibility (implementation date TBD).

5. Commitment: Teletypewriter (TTY) equipment

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

- Usage of the teletypewriter (TTY) line at the Ministry 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.

Metrics: Number of reception staff trained on TTY as part of their orientation.

6. Commitment: Accessible Information Technology services

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

- Information technology services used by the Ministry will continue to be monitored for possible accessibility issues and solutions will be provided as soon as practicable. The Ministry will continue to work with Information Technology Systems and Services, Central Agencies Information and Information Technology Cluster, and look for future opportunities to leverage cluster resources to ensure that the Ministry is made aware of any new technologies, and that appropriate information technology solutions are provided as required.

Metrics: Monitor number of accessibility issues and resolve as soon as practicable.

Section 4: Other Accessibility Commitments

Accessibility Improvement Initiatives to Identify, Remove or Prevent Barriers in preparation for the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* 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 break down barriers 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.

1. FOCUS AREA: BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Commitment: Accessibility of bathrooms, boardrooms and heritage space

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

- The Ministry will conduct a review to identify further opportunities to improve accessibility of boardrooms.
- Working with the Ontario Realty Corporation, the Ministry will determine how to complete planned accessibility initiatives for bathrooms and program areas on the first floor of Whitney Block consistent with any plans arising from a heritage review.
- Actively explore opportunities to enhance accessible parking for Ferguson Block at subsidized rates.

- Actively explore creating a designated accessible parking spot at the Whitney Block receiving area.

Metrics: To be determined.

2. FOCUS AREA: INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Commitment: Communication technologies

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

- New teletypewriter (TTY) technology and equipment will be evaluated along with other communication technologies that may improve accessibility of boardrooms.

Metrics: Number of technology devices acquired.

3. FOCUS AREA: EMPLOYMENT

Commitment: Barrier-free recruitment

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

- Managers will be provided with a checklist for preparing for job ads and interviews that incorporates accessibility.
- Job ads will continue to be reviewed to ensure there are no arbitrary barriers.
- Job ads will be shared with employment networks that assist persons with disabilities in their job search.
- The recruitment process will continue to be fair and barrier-free, with accommodation offered to job candidates upon notification of interview.
- The Ministry will continue to identify and remove potential barriers in employment policies, processes, practices or tools for people with disabilities.

Metrics: Number of requests for accommodation received.

4. FOCUS AREA: OTHER

Commitment: Accessible procurement practices

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

- Finance staff of the Ministry will continue to provide 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 are shared among the Finance staff in a timely manner. Financial transactions arising from employee accommodation and/or barrier-removal are processed expeditiously.
- Accessibility requirements are incorporated into the Ministry's RFP process and all new contracts. Ministry staff is required to complete the ODA Procurement Requirements Checklist in advance of any procurement activities.

Metrics: 100% compliance with checklist.

Section 5: Act(s), Regulation(s) and Policy(s) Being Reviewed to Identify Barriers to Persons with Disabilities

In support of the commitment to remove and identify 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.

- The Ministry commits to use and promote the use of the *OPS Inclusion Lens* when creating any new Act, Regulation or Policy. Developed by the OPS Diversity Office, the *OPS Inclusion Lens* helps to identify and remove any barriers to people with disabilities and supports the goal of being a diverse and inclusive organization.
- 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.
- The Policy Innovation and Leadership (PIL) Secretariat of Cabinet Office is currently working to revise the policy development process, used as the adopted OPS framework for policy development, and will incorporate, along with other OPS wide tools, the use of the *OPS Inclusion Lens* as a tool to assist in the development of government policy. Through the PIL Policy ADM Forum, the *OPS Inclusion Lens* was piloted by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture and the Ministry of Health Promotion in the preparation of a policy submission. In addition, the *OPS Inclusion Lens* was profiled in the September 2010 PIL NewsWire.

Metrics: 100% of all new Acts, Regulations and Policies will be reviewed using the *OPS Inclusion Lens*.

For More Information

Questions or comments about the Ministry's Accessibility Plan are always welcome.

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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 accessible province for everyone.

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