

MINISTRY OF TOURISM

2009-2010 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, 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 plans will continue moving the Ministry of Tourism towards the goal of an accessible province for all Ontarians.

Links to the other ministry plans are available at:

http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/mcss/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 support ministries' transition, the OPS Diversity Office has developed the [OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy and OPS Accessibility Guideline](#). This corporate policy and guideline is to be adopted by each ministry as it addresses the requirements of the regulation. This policy will be embedded into ministry-specific practices, policies and procedures to ensure that accessibility becomes part of regular business practices, including interactions with members of the public.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New

Adopt and amend the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy for use in the Ministry of Tourism and its attractions.

Planned Action(s): The Ministry of Tourism will undertake a review of its customer service and training plans in order to establish policies, practices and procedures that ensure people with disabilities are provided goods and services in accordance with the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy's core principles of independence, dignity, integration, equality and opportunity.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 – Jan 10

Results Achieved: The Ministry of Tourism has undertaken a review of its customer service policy to ensure that all staff and third party purveyors are: trained to properly communicate with people with disabilities; familiar with how to help people with assistive devices and support persons, informed on how to accommodate service animals; and familiar with how to successfully address requests for alternate formats. A new customer service policy will be in place by January 1, 2010 and will be made available to the public.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New

Establish a Feedback process on how the Ministry of Tourism provides goods and services to people with disabilities.

Planned Action(s): The Ministry of Tourism will develop an accessible Feedback process to register both positive and negative comments about the ministry's efforts to be more accessible. A timetable of action and a tracking system will be developed to ensure that feedback is dealt with in a timely manner. The feedback mechanism will be posted on the public Ministry website and on the Ministry intranet. Feedback may be provided in a variety of channels: email, phone call, TTY, in writing, in person etc. A memo from the Deputy Minister will remind staff of their obligation to effectively record feedback and managers will be responsible to ensure that answers to feedback are delivered according within prescribed timelines.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 – Jan 10

Results Achieved: The Ministry of Tourism has initiated a Feedback process that takes in feedback from a variety of channels, is accessible, is posted in a conspicuous location on our ministry website, has a clear reporting and replying process, and is available to the public.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: Ongoing

Ensure all Ministry of Tourism staff complete the two "May I Help You" e-courses.

Planned Action(s): Post links to the two 'May I Help You?' e-courses on the Ministry of Tourism's intranet. Follow this up with an email from the Deputy Minister informing all staff of the requirement to take the course.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 – Jan 10

Results Achieved: E-mail from the DM was delivered and all MTOUR staff are expected to have completed both 'May I Help You?' e-courses by November 13, 2009.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: Ongoing

The ministry's attractions, Fort William Historical Park and Huronia Historical Parks, will maintain their standing policy to provide free admission to the attendants of people with disabilities (with no identification required for either party).

Planned Action(s): Fort William Historical Park and Huronia Historical Parks maintain their standing policy regarding attendant admissions.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 – March 11

Results Achieved: The Fort William Historical Park, maintain a long standing, Minister approved, policy on Persons with a Disability Admissions as follows:

For all disabled persons regular admission fees will be charged. For those persons requiring the assistance of an aide, the aide regardless of age will be admitted free of charge. Admission policies will be maintained, to assist trip planning, in English and French, on signage and web sites at both Huronia Historical Park and Fort William Historical Park. Food, retail, theatre and other concessions on site have also adopted these policies, where applicable.

Report on Other Accessibility Commitments

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

In the near future, the OPS will be obligated to comply with four new standards in the areas of transportation, information and communication, employment and the built environment. This section focuses on ODA planning on readiness and preparation for these new standards currently under development. Therefore, initiatives described below to identify, remove and prevent barriers are clearly identified by these four areas.

A “barrier” means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability, including a physical barrier, an architectural barrier, an information or communications barrier, an attitudinal barrier, a technological barrier, a policy or a practice. Examples of methodologies to identify barriers include a policy or program review, surveys or customer feedback mechanisms, etc.

This section identifies new initiatives and provides a status report on completed or multi-year initiatives that are currently underway. This section:

- Identifies whether initiatives have implications for the built environment, employment, transportation, or information & communication. (Note: Initiatives may have an impact on more than one AODA focus area.)
- Identifies whether the initiative will have an impact on or include an assessment of acts, regulation, policies, programs, or services.
- Reports on results achieved for completed commitments. If implementation of the commitment spans multiple years, planned activities for the next year and the results achieved in the last year are identified.

Focus Area: Info&Comm

Impact: Act Regulation

Commitment: Ongoing

Ensure that tourism industry interests are represented in the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario's process of developing standards under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Planned Action(s): Tourism Policy and Research Branch monitors the standard development meetings of the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario in order to represent the interests of tourism industry stakeholders.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 – Mar 11

Results Achieved: Input into the standard development process for Information and Communication and Built Environment to make it easier for tourism businesses to comply with the requirements.

Focus Area: Info&Comm

Impact: Service

Commitment: Ongoing

Work with ServiceOntario Publications to provide ministry publications in alternative formats upon request.

Planned Action(s): Address requests for publications and ministry materials in alternative formats in an efficient and timely manner.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 –Mar 11

Results Achieved: The Ministry of Tourism's Communications Branch addressed all requests for publications and ministry materials in alternative formats in an efficient and timely manner.

Focus Area: Info&Comm

Impact: Service

Commitment: Ongoing

To provide signer or interpreter services as required at all ministry-planned events and ensure that these events are held in accessible locations.

Planned Action(s): The Ministry of Tourism will maintain a list of registered sign language interpreter service providers, and ensure accessibility is taken into consideration for all meetings and events convened by the ministry.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 –Mar 11

Results Achieved: The Ministry of Tourism maintained its list of registered sign language interpreter service providers and the ministry takes accessibility into consideration for all meetings held by the ministry.

Focus Area: Info&Comm

Impact: Service

Commitment: Ongoing

Maintain an accessibility portal on the intranet site to give staff easy access to the ministry's Accessibility Plan and information.

Planned Action(s): Update and maintain the accessibility portal on the ministry's intranet site. Ensure the site includes a link to the ministry's Accessibility Plan, as well as to other current information about accessibility.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 –Mar 11

Results Achieved: The ministry continues to maintain an accessibility portal on its intranet site. The site includes a link to the ministry's Accessibility Plan, as well as to other current information about accessibility.

Focus Area: Built Environment**Impact: Service****Commitment: Completed**

Fort William Historical Park will modify the quality, size and surface of its outdoor amphitheatre to increase accessibility. When completed patrons with a disability will have access to any location in the amphitheatre including food vending, washrooms, beverage gardens and parking lots. Patrons with a disability will also have reserved seating areas that ensure visibility and access throughout the amphitheatre.

Planned Action(s): Engineers will redesign the slope and pathways of the amphitheatre. Construction will occur in the fall of 2007, spring through fall of 2008 and will be completed in 2009.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 –Mar 10

Results Achieved: August 2007 and August 2008, Fort William Historical Park modified the grounds and pathways of its amphitheatre, over 50,000 sq. metres plus parking lots, to become accessible when they previously were not. Engineered designs include gentle slopes to all areas including the festival bowl and the parking lots, smooth hard surfaced pathways and turf lawns, pathway lighting, reserved seating zones at the front edge of all three paved aisles, servicing for jumbo video and sound delay towers to encourage crowd dispersal evenly across the festival bowl and a designated public transportation depot capable of handling 20 buses at one time. Other amphitheatre operational features that assist Ontarians with a disability include: accessible washrooms, the allowance of temporary shelters for shade around the perimeter of the festival bowl, free admission for attendants, designated space for security services and vendor selection criteria that encourages accessible services. Completed in early 2009.

Focus Area: Built Environment**Impact: Service****Commitment: Completed**

Huronia Historic Parks will install a new power assisted door in order to increase accessibility to barrier free washrooms for the education program students using the new school lunch room.

Planned Action(s): Huronia Historic Parks will install a new power assisted door in order to increase accessibility to barrier free washrooms.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 –Mar 10

Results Achieved: Huronia Historic Parks installed a new power assisted door in order to increase accessibility to barrier free washrooms for the education program students using the new school lunch room. Completed in early 2009.

Focus Area: Built Environment

Impact: Service, Policy

Commitment: Ongoing

Ensure that any new Tourism Office built meets current accessibility requirements.

Planned Action(s): With regards to the likely move of several Ministry offices, the Ministry will ensure that barrier-free design is used in the design of future offices. Searches for new office space, if any, will consider the accessibility features of potential offices.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 –Mar 11

Results Achieved: Pending any future office moves.

Focus Area: Employment

Impact: Service

Commitment: Ongoing

Through the HR Ontario: ensure all managers are aware of the ministry's plan, programs and services; ensure all new employees receive information regarding programs and services that are available to them to assist with accessibility; and, insert a clause into offers of employment which request information on an individual's accessibility needs.

Planned Action(s): HR Ontario will continue to promote the new Employment Accommodation and Return to Work Operating Policy by encouraging managers to review the policy and support materials. A standard clause asking employees to notify their managers if they have accessibility needs was inserted into offer of employment letters.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 –Mar 11

Results Achieved: Managers were given additional resources to address accommodation issues.

Focus Area: Transportation

Impact: Policy Program Service

Commitment: Ongoing

Ensure third party vendor responsible for Tourism Oriented Directional Signing (TODS) has accessible portal of communication with the public. This includes their website; TTY; and, where necessary, printed material.

Planned Action(s): Develop contracts with accessibility considerations in mind.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 –Mar 11

Results Achieved: Pending

Focus Area: Other

Impact: Act Regulation Policy

Commitment: Completed

The identification of barriers and accessibility-related issues will be included in the final report of the tourism competitiveness study.

Planned Action(s): Identify barriers and accessibility-related issues in the development and drafting of new actions and initiatives by government and the tourism industry and work to remove them.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 –Mar 10

Results Achieved: The report recommendations are: improve way-finding, invest in tourism transportation infrastructure and access to existing attractions, increase internet marketing and on-line booking capabilities in order to improve accessibility for travellers with disabilities. This lens will continue to inform any future policies, acts, and regulations.

Focus Area: Other

Impact: Act Regulation Policy

Commitment: Ongoing

The identification of barriers and accessibility-related issues will be included in the development and drafting of new statutes, regulations and amendments.

Planned Action(s): Identify barriers and accessibility-related issues in the development and drafting of new statutes, regulations and amendments and work to remove them.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 –Mar 11

Results Achieved: From September 2008 to October 2009, no new statutes were drafted.

For More Information

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

Please phone: Darryl Soshycki, Chair, Ministry of Tourism Accessibility Planning Team

General inquiry number: 416-326-9326

TTY number: 416-325-5807

1-800 number: 1-866-700-0040

E-mail: general_info@mtr.gov.on.ca

Ministry website address: <http://www.tourism.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 a barrier-free province.

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

ServiceOntario Publications

Phone: 1-800-668-9938

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