

**MINISTRY OF TOURISM
AND CULTURE AND
ONTARIO SENIORS'
SECRETARIAT**

2010-2011

Accessibility Plan



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Introduction

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act AODA, 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 to accessibility 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 leading 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 — the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation (Ontario Regulation 429/07).

As additional standards are developed under AODA, the Government of Ontario continues to be guided by the Ontario *Human Rights Code* and obligations set out in the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA)*.

Each year, the Government of Ontario sets the course to prevent, identify and remove barriers through annual accessibility plans as required under the *ODA*.

On December 15th, 2009, the former Ministry of Culture and the former Ministry of Tourism separately attested to their compliance with the AODA's Accessible Customer Service Standards. The Ministry of Culture also attested to the compliance of the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat.

In January 2010, the former Ministries of Tourism and Culture were merged into the new Ministry of Tourism and Culture. This Accessibility Plan for 2010/11 incorporates

the separate achievements of the former ministries prior to amalgamation and establishes commitments for the amalgamated ministry.

Since January, 2010 the Ministry of Tourism and Culture has continued to advance the strategic accessibility objectives of the Government of Ontario by:

- Working with partner ministries and stakeholder representatives to prepare for compliance with the next accessibility standards
- Supporting the development of a culture of inclusion at MTC through providing accessible customer service training to MTC staff and service providers.
- Embedding its commitment to the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy in the ministry's business by implementing a coordinated communication strategy and adding accessible customer service training modules to staff orientation/on-boarding for all new staff.
- Improving its capacity to welcome staff and customers with disabilities at the ministry's attraction agencies.

Report on Accessibility Achievements for 2009-2010

- In 2009/10 all staff of the ministry completed accessible customer service training through the e-learning modules – “May I Help You: Welcoming Persons with Disabilities” and “May I Help You? Supplementary: Ten Things You Need to Know”.
- All MTC managers also completed “ODA: Maximizing the Contributions of Employees with Disabilities”
- Third party service delivery agents of the former “Ministry of Tourism” completed “May I Help You?” [parts 1 and 2]
- All private sector counsel retained by the Ministry of the Attorney General to provide legal services for the former Ministries of Culture and Tourism, received accessible customer service training before December 31st, 2009.
- Both ministries established and communicated an accessible process to receive customer service feedback through the separate websites of the Ministries of Culture and Tourism.
- In 2009, the feedback mechanism operated as a six month pilot through the Deputy Minister’s Office of the ministry. To date it has received no customer service feedback.
- As part of their AODA compliance with the Customer Service Standards, both ministries also implemented a service disruption protocol which was developed and implemented across the cluster ministries of Tourism, Citizenship and Immigration and Culture. The protocol was communicated to staff and management through a memorandum from the Chief Administrative Officer.
- The ministry implemented the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy in December, 2009 and communicated its commitment to all staff by letter from the Deputy Minister and briefings at branch meetings

- In 2009, the Ministry of Tourism's attractions, Huronia Historical Parks and Fort William Historical Park, continued their policy of admitting attendants who accompany visitors who have disabilities without charge.
- In 2009/10, Fort William Historical Park [FWHP] also undertook capital improvements which improved the accessibility of the attractions to visitors with disabilities including:
 - o Increasing the amount of directional parking signs to highlight accessible parking spaces [July 2010]
 - o Widening doorways at the on-site restaurant to accommodate visitors using mobility devices.
 - o Installing a kiosk/desk at accessible height to facilitate the completion of customer serviced feedback surveys at FWHP [May 2010]
 - o Installation of paved walkway at FWHP to facilitate access for people with disabilities between the parking lot and the Amphitheatre [June 2010].
- Huronia Historical Parks [HHP] completed accessibility commitments in 2009/10 which enhance the ability of people with disabilities to obtain information and communicate with staff and to experience the attraction.
- For example:
 - o Websites for Sainte-Marie among the Hurons and Discovery Harbour were updated to existing accessibility requirements.
 - o HHP added an electronic scooter to Discovery Harbour for visitors with mobility related disabilities to enable them to navigate and experience the attraction.
 - o HHP completed the installation of accessible drinking fountains in the Education Centre at Sainte-Marie Among the Hurons.
- In 2009/10, staff of the Culture Division received training on how to plan and run an accessible meeting as part of regular branch meetings.
- The Ontario Seniors' Secretariat completed all staff training in Accessible Customer Service and provided staff with a lunch n' learn opportunity about mental health issues in the workplace.

Report on Accessible Customer Service Requirements

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

The Ontario Public Service [OPS] became the first public organization to file an AODA 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.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment [Ongoing]: Provide all new staff in the Ministry of Tourism and Culture with training in accessible customer service through the e-learning modules “*May I Help You: Welcoming Customers with Disabilities*” and “*May I Help You: Supplementary*” [MIHY 1 and 2] within the first three months after they start at MTC.

All new staff of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture will receive training in accessible customer service as part of their orientation and “on-boarding” so that they can provide accessible customer service and interact appropriately with OPS colleagues or customers who may have disabilities.

Review the ministry’s communication about its willingness to receive customer service feedback and ensure that MTC refers to opportunities to provide feedback about MTC services where appropriate in all public communications to MTC clients.

Planned Action(s)

- Managers will include a commitment to ensuring that staff receive accessible customer service training in their 2010/11 performance development and learning plans.
- Managers will complete a staff training log which documents that all staff have completed *MIHY Parts 1 and 2*.
- The manager's log will be provided to the Corporate Initiatives Team in Tourism Policy Unit in December 2010 to support the Deputy Minister's annual attestation of ministry compliance with the Accessible Customer Service Regulation under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act [AODA]*.
- Staff who are new to the ministry or who have not previously completed *MIHY* will include the e-learning modules in their learning plans and complete it within 3 months after they join the ministry.

Implementation Timeframe:

Ongoing

Focus Area: Information and Communication**Commitment : [New and Ongoing]**

- Expand the ability of the ministry to provide accessible services to customers and colleagues with a range of disabilities.
- Hold all MTC meetings in accessible locations, where these are available, and train all staff to plan and run accessible meetings.

Planned Action(s)

- Use Diversity Office videos at unit meetings to train staff to prepare accessible source documents.
- Expand the availability of assistive devices [e.g. Tele-typewriter or TTY] at the ministry and provide refresher training for staff in the OSS, the MTC Attractions

and the Ministry of Tourism and Culture Policy and Development Division to operate them.

- Train all staff at unit or branch meetings to plan for and deliver accessible meetings and events.
- Obtain two licences for Adobe 9 to support the preparation of public documents in accessible PDF versions.
- Test and, where necessary improve the accessibility features of the refreshed Ministry of Tourism and Culture websites [Winter 2010/11]
- Train ministry managers, supervisors and staff to apply the Inclusion Lens to identify and remove any potential communication barriers that may arise when the ministry creates, reviews or amends existing communications plans and products [Winter 2010/11- ongoing]

Implementation Timeframe:

Ongoing throughout 2010/11.

Information and Communication

Commitments

Information and methods of communication are essential 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 accessible Information and Communications, the Government of Ontario is continuously looking for opportunities to prevent and remove barriers to persons with disabilities when creating, procuring, conveying, receiving or distributing information and communications to the public.

Focus Area: Information and Communication

- In 2009/10, MTC's Communications Branch did not receive any requests for alternative formats of ministry publications; however, any such requests would be dealt with case-by-case and in consultation with the requester.
- In 2009/10, the websites of the Huronia Historical Parks were re-developed to enhance accessibility for people with disabilities.

Commitments:

- Improve the ability of our Deaf, deafened or hard of hearing clients and OPS colleagues to communicate accessibly with the Ministry through service points in the Deputy Minister's Office, the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat, Fort William Historical Property and the Tourism Policy Unit of the Tourism Policy and Development Division.
- Ensure that the refreshed ministry Internet and Intranet sites are accessible to persons with a range of disabilities and conform to OPS IT standards for accessibility.

- Provide training to MTC staff about how to create accessible source documents; accessible e-mails and other forms of accessible internal and external communication.

Planned Actions:

- To enhance the accessibility of MTC programs and services to clients and ministry staff who use TTY technology to communicate instead of telephones, in 2010/11, MTC will install additional TTY [Tele-typewriter] equipment and publicize its availability to all staff and clients.
- Refresher training on the operation of the TTY will be provided in Fall/Winter 2010 to MTC staff responsible for delivering customer service at service points in the Deputy Minister's Office, the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat and the Policy Unit of the Tourism Policy and Development Division.
- Training in the operation of TTY devices will also be provided to all reception and admission staff of Fort William Historical Park.
- In 2010/11, the ministry will complete the refresh of its public-facing Website to meet OPS IT Guidelines. The new website will be launched in the Winter of 2010/11.
- In 2010/11, the ministry will continue to ensure that all ministry-generated publications are posted on its public-facing website in accessible formats.

Implementation Timeline: October 2010-October 2011

Other Accessibility Commitments

In anticipation of the additional upcoming standards that are being developed under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act [AODA]* the Government of Ontario has planned several corporate initiatives in the areas of Transportation, Employment, Built Environment and others. The goal of these initiatives is to make it easier for people with disabilities to travel in Ontario, to ensure accessibility for people with disabilities across all stages of the employment life cycle and to break down barriers in to accessibility in buildings. Many of the corporate initiatives planned for 2010-2011 are intended to support ministries in their journey towards compliance with the upcoming standards.

Focus Area: Built Environment

Commitment [Ongoing]

In consultation with Facilities Branch and the Ontario Realty Corporation [ORC], Ministry of Tourism and Culture will continue to review the accessibility of its work locations and advocate for the inclusion of accessibility improvements in the planning process for moves or significant renovations in 2010/11.

Planned Actions:

- Facilities branch and the ORC will continue to identify and advocate for the removal of any current barriers to accessibility in the work locations of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

Implementation Timeframe: October 2010 – October 2011

Focus Area : Built Environment

Commitment :On-going

Planned Actions

- Physical accessibility improvements planned for Fort William Historical Property in 2010/11 will include:
 - A new public parking area with enhanced availability of designated accessible parking for persons with disabilities
 - Enhancements to the drainage of the Farm Square area of the Fort William property, improving access to it for people with mobility or vision disabilities.
 - Phase 1 of a construction project to install accessible doors to the Visitor Admissions area, the on-site restaurants, theatre and gift shop will enhance the accessibility of the attraction to people with disabilities.

Implementation: October 2010 - October 2011

Focus Area: Employment**Commitment: Ongoing**

The ministry will continue to ensure there are no potential barriers in employment policies, processes, practices or tools for people with disabilities.

Planned Action(s):

- As a part of the hiring process the ministry will alert the public that accommodations are available on request and provide accommodations to all applicants during the entire hiring process.
- Job ads will be reviewed to identify and remove accessibility barriers. HROntario has provided managers with guidelines to assist in the barrier-free job advertisements. These guidelines will be shared with all managers and supervisors.
- Job ads will be shared with the D-Net employee network which advocates for the interests of persons with disabilities within the OPS.
- HR will continue to expand the scope of the DM Diversity Mentorship Program which will enhance professional development opportunities for MTC staff with disabilities as one of the under-represented groups in the OPS.
- In 2010/11, Managers and staff will receive training in the development of accommodation plans.

Focus Area: Other

Commitment: Ongoing

Continue to leverage accessibility through ministry procurement processes to increase opportunities to embed accessibility features in ministry procurements .

Planned Action(s):

- Language requiring accessibility to be considered in the procurement of products and services from outside vendors will be included in ministry RFPs and any new service contracts
- Staff will be encouraged to use the Inclusion Lens as one element in the development of ministry RFP's.

Implementation Timeframe: Ongoing

Legislation or Policy 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: Information and Communication

Commitment:

- MTC will use the OPS Diversity Office Inclusion Lens as part of its review of the Public Library Operating Grant Program
- The ministry will also use the Lens to evaluate and where necessary, amend any new program offerings it considers in 2010/11.

Planned Actions

- The Ministry of Tourism and Culture will sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Diversity Office to use the Inclusion Lens as part of its review of the Public Libraries Operating Grant program.

Implementation Timeline : Fall/Winter 2010/11

Focus Area: New Legislation/Regulations

- Ministry of Tourism and Culture did not develop any new legislation in the reporting period [October 2009- October 2010]. However, the Ontario Seniors Secretariat developed the *Retirement Homes Act, 2010* which will be administered under the authority of the Minister Responsible for Seniors.
- The “Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Provincial Heritage Properties” adopted under *Ontario Heritage Act* in April , 2010 have incorporated

a requirement to “balance accessibility needs with the need to conserve the cultural heritage value of provincial heritage properties with the objective of providing the highest level of access with the lowest level of impact on the heritage attributes of the property.”¹ This language reflects the Ministry’s dual commitment to expanding accessibility for persons with disabilities and to heritage preservation.

¹ Standards and Guidelines for Conservation of Provincial Heritage Properties”, April 28,2010

Glossary

Accessible pdf - a secure on-line document which is accessible to a person who uses screen reader technology to access on-line publications.

Assistive device - a piece of hardware used by a person with a disability to overcome barriers [e.g. a wheelchair, scooter, a TTY or a notepad].

ASL – American Sign Language- Sign language that is used by people who are Deaf, deafened or hard of hearing to communicate.

Barrier – a physical or attitudinal obstacle to the full participation of persons with disabilities in the community life of the province.

Deaf – a person with a hearing disability who identifies as “culturally” deaf and therefore uses ASL or LSQ as his or her first language.

Inclusion Lens- a policy process to be used by the Ontario Public Service to assess the accessibility of new policies and programs.

LSQ – Langue des signes quebecoise- the form of French language signing used by francophones who are Deaf, deafened or hard of hearing in Quebec and the rest of Canada.

MTC – Ministry of Tourism and Culture

TTY – Tele-typewriter is a telecommunication device used by people who are Deaf, deafened or hard of hearing or have speech-related disabilities.

For More Information

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

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For more information about accessibility and the Ontario provincial government, please visit the web portal of the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario at.

<http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/en/mcass/programs/accessibility/index.aspx>

The site promotes accessibility and provides information and resources on how to make Ontario accessible province for everyone.

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