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Executive Summary Ministry of Government Services 2005-2006 Accessibility Plan

Introduction:

In December 2001, the [Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001](#) (ODA) was passed into law. Its purpose is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to their full participation in the life of the province.

The Ministry of Government Services' 2005-2006 Accessibility Plan outlines our commitment to improving accessibility and preventing and removing barriers to people with disabilities in Ontario. This report shows our dedication to the philosophy and spirit of the ODA and more broadly the concept of high-quality service to the people of Ontario.

Achievements of 2004-2005 Planning Commitments:

The ministry has responded to accessibility issues in a number of ways. The ministry has placed a great deal of effort into making its various channels - telephone services, counters and websites - available and accessible to all Ontarians and its employees, no matter what their abilities.

Through Publications Ontario, the ministry has taken a lead role in assisting clients who need access to documents in alternate formats.

To lead the ministry's efforts to improve accessibility for all Ontarians, the ministry hired a permanent ODA Coordinator. The ODA Coordinator also monitors the activities of the ministry to identify and assist in the solution of emerging issues.

As an employer, the ministry appreciates its diverse workforce and recognizes the accommodation needs of its employees with disabilities. As such, the ministry has accommodated the needs of its employees with disabilities through items, services, employment practices and training in the workplace.

Commitments and Strategies for 2005-2006:

Although much has been achieved, the ministry still has work to do. The ministry will take steps to ensure that proposals for new acts, regulations, policies, programs and services are assessed for their effect on people with disabilities, in order to prevent new barriers.

This year, the ministry will also review some of its key responsibilities and functions related to the quality of service for clients and the working environment of employees to determine their effect on people with disabilities.

The plan also outlines the specific measures the ministry will take over the next twelve months to identify, prevent and remove barriers and improve accessibility in areas such as communications, facilities and technology.

Conclusion:

We look forward to continuing to improve accessibility for people with disabilities, whether they are part of the general public or our own employees - so that they can access information where, when and how they want it.

▶ [View the Ministry's 2005-2006 ODA Plan.](#)



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Introduction

The recent passage of the landmark Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) marks a new era of accessibility in Ontario. This legislation will make Ontario one of the world leaders in improving accessibility for people with disabilities.

While the government is moving forward to implement the new legislation, there will be a transition period during which government and parts of the broader public sector will continue to have planning and other obligations under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA). These obligations will remain in effect until they are repealed and replaced by standards under the new act.

Under the ODA, Ontario government ministries, municipalities, hospitals, school boards, colleges, universities and public transportation organizations are required to develop annual accessibility plans to make policies, practices, programs, services and buildings more accessible to people with disabilities. These plans must be made available to the public. Accessibility planning efforts to date have developed a strong foundation for the development of accessibility standards that will ensure real and effective change.

This document is the third-annual accessibility plan developed by government ministries. It highlights achievements of the 2004-2005 plan and outlines commitments for 2005-2006 so that no new barriers are created and, over time, existing ones are

removed.

The Ministry of Government Services intends to build on its achievements by implementing initiatives that support the government's efforts and commitment to continue to make Ontario an inclusive and accessible province, where people of all abilities have a chance to fully participate and achieve their potential.

Message from the minister



I am pleased to provide the 2005-2006 accessibility plan for the Ministry of Government Services. This plan outlines the many significant accomplishments to improve accessibility in 2004-2005 by the Management Board Secretariat (MBS), Centre for Leadership and Human Resource Management (CFL/HRM), and the Ministry of Consumer and Business Services (MCBS).

In June 2005, the Ontario government created the Ministry of Government Services (ministry) to support the restructuring and modernization of government operations and improve the delivery of government services to businesses and consumers. The ministry combines elements of the former MBS, CFL/HRM and MCBS.

This plan also outlines the Ministry of Government Services' 2005-2006 commitments to improve accessibility by removing and preventing barriers to people with disabilities and improve the delivery of government services to all citizens of Ontario. In addition, the plan demonstrates how the Ontario Public Service leads by example in building on its successes and achievements to become an accessible and inclusive employer and service provider.

Let me share with you two ministry achievements of last year.

In 2004-2005, MCBS made great strides to include accessibility in the planning, development, design and implementation stages of its new ServiceOntario initiative. ServiceOntario is a multi-year, multi-ministry, inter-jurisdictional initiative, to improve access to government services by offering one-stop access to government services and information in person, by phone or online. In 2004-2005, people with disabilities conducted an accessibility review of a ServiceOntario customer service centre model. They provided comments and suggestions and many recommendations were incorporated into the design to ensure the highest level of accessibility would be

attained at the center. The ministry is proud of making the ServiceOntario initiative exemplify the concept of barrier-free design and accessibility to people with disabilities.

Each year, the Ontario government sponsors Showcase Ontario, the largest public sector information and technology education event in Canada. Participants from across Canada attended the event to learn how to serve citizens better through the use of information technology. At Showcase Ontario 2004, Management Board Secretariat and Centre for Leadership and Human Resource Management hosted two Power of Accessibility booths that showcased how the Ontario government, along with its broader sector partners, improved accessibility to people with disabilities. At the booths, attendees learned about various assistive devices for people with disabilities, ranging from cutting edge online sign language software to robots that allow students in long-term hospitalization to participate in a classroom from a remote location in real-time. A presentation on the Power of Accessibility booths also gave visitors insight into these assistive devices.

MBS and CFL/HRM also provided interpreters and accessibility guides to ensure that Showcase Ontario 2004 was accessible for people with disabilities. This event signified the importance of how partnerships among governments and the broader public sector can make Ontario a place where people of all abilities have a chance to fully participate and achieve their potential.

In 2004, the Ontario government passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. This legislation marks a new era in accessibility by making Ontario a world leader in improving accessibility for people with disabilities.

We look forward to improving accessibility for people with disabilities by building on past accomplishments while at the same time developing accessibility standards that make Ontario's communities strong, vital and accessible to people of all abilities for years to come.

The Honourable Gerry Phillips, MPP
Minister of Government Services

Report on Achievements of 2004-2005 Planning Commitments for the Ministry of Consumer and Business Services

Overview:

The Ministry of Government Services is committed to improving accessibility and preventing and removing barriers to people with disabilities. The ministry is dedicated to the philosophy and spirit of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA) and more broadly the concept of quality service to the people of Ontario.

In 2003-2004, the ministry undertook an ambitious agenda to meet its first year accessibility plan commitments. The ministry's ODA coordinator lead the ministry's accessibility working group, consisting of representatives from all ministry divisions, to develop solutions and improve access to people with disabilities. The ministry provides information and services over the Internet, in ministry offices and by telephone. Quality service is of critical importance. As such, the ministry has worked to make its various points of public contact available and accessible to all Ontarians, no matter what their abilities. Some of the services delivered include providing information to other ministries and other levels of government. The ministry also provided internal communication activities to help employees understand the ODA.

Improved Accessibility in Technology

The ministry understands that with rapidly changing technology, the public's expectations for quality service delivery are also increased. As one of the ministry's goals is to continue as a world-class leader in service delivery, the ministry will ensure accessibility to services and information provided by this ministry are accessible to all Ontarians.

Commitment: MCBS will review all building and renovation projects to ensure compliance with the Ontario Building Code requirements for people with disabilities and the new Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC) guidelines.

Status: **Complete.** MCBS renovated four land registry offices in 2004-2005 to align with the conversion from the old, paper-based system to the electronic registration system now being used in the land registry offices. MCBS also completed the construction of four new ServiceOntario customer service centres in Guelph, Ottawa, Owen Sound and Peterborough. MCBS reviewed, evaluated and addressed accessibility issues in all its building and renovation projects to ensure all Ontarians have access to government services at MCBS service locations.

Commitment: MCBS will continue to work with the government's central agencies to develop and implement the new ODA facilities' guidelines.

Status: **Complete.** MCBS provided input and advice to the ORC regarding the new facilities' guidelines to assist in developing practical and effective standards. MCBS has implemented the new *Standards for Barrier-Free Design of Ontario Government Facilities*, which were released on November 18, 2004. The new standards were incorporated in the planning and design of new, relocated and renovated MCBS offices, including its ServiceOntario centres.

Commitment:	MCBS will implement the new purchasing guidelines for goods and services from Management Board Secretariat.
Status:	Complete. All MCBS staff responsible for the procurement of goods and services received the <i>Guidelines for Implementing the Procurement Provisions of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act</i> . MCBS also posted the new procurement guidelines on the ministry's Intranet site in January 2005.
Commitment:	MCBS will develop a ServiceOntario website that meets the requirements of the ODA.
Status:	Complete. Providing access to government services and information in person, by phone and online is a priority. The new ServiceOntario website, launched on November 2, 2004, delivers information about government services using plain language and consistent navigation technology. The website also meets the requirements of the ODA. For example, the colours selected for the website ensure that a person with a visual impairment can see the graphics. In addition, the website was developed so that a person with a visual impairment can use voice readers to read the content of the page.
Commitment:	People with disabilities will have full access to Publications Ontario products by Internet.
Status:	Complete. Publications Ontario provides easy online access to 10,000 free and priced publications through its website. Publications Ontario is also the primary source of distribution and sales of provincial legislation. The purchasing section of the Publications Ontario websites will meet the requirements of the ODA by January 30, 2006. People with disabilities can now access product descriptions and order and pay for publications online at Publications Ontario On-Line or through the three Publications Ontario websites for special client groups.
Commitment:	MCBS will work with other ministries to create business bundles that meet the requirements of the ODA.

- Status:** **Complete.** A business bundle is a comprehensive collection of services and information online relating to events in the business cycle. For example, if a person wanted to start a business, all of the information the person required would be accessible through one online location or bundle, even though the information source may be spread over a number of ministries and/or jurisdictions. All forms associated with business bundles are available in an accessible format.
- Commitment:** MCBS will modify the existing MyBIS service to meet the requirements of the ODA.
- Status:** **Complete.** MCBS allows businesses to stay informed electronically in a fully accessible manner. The Ontario Business Connects website hosts the enhanced My Business Information Services system (MyBIS), which allows businesses to electronically select and receive business related information and event notification. An accessible MyBIS application was implemented in October 2004.
- Commitment:** MCBS will implement its communications plan advising other ministries on how to obtain documents in alternate formats from Publications Ontario.
- Status:** **In Progress .** Publications Ontario has a process to translate government documents into alternate formats. When the ODA was first proclaimed, MCBS informed other ministries of this translation process. Ministries, however, are responsible for the cost of producing the documents in alternate formats. If the process is more widely communicated and understood by other ministries, when alternate formats are required, they can be obtained more quickly. In 2004-2005, MCBS completed a review of its process for alternate format requests. In 2005-2006, MCBS will remind ministries of the process for arranging alternate formats for their customers.
- Commitment:** MCBS will review how the new Consumer Protection Act affects accessible service delivery.

Status: **Complete.** On July 30, 2005, the new Consumer Protection Act came into force. The new act represents the most comprehensive and sweeping changes to Ontario's consumer protection laws in more than 30 years. The new act provides consumers with new rights and businesses with new responsibilities. MCBS has reviewed the new Consumer Protection Act using the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration's framework on legislation for accessibility issues. The legislation contains no barriers preventing people with disabilities from receiving the same level of consumer protection as all other Ontarians.

Commitment: MCBS will ensure that the ODA is included in all orientation and training packages for potential supervisors or managers.

Status: **Complete.** A fact sheet for MCBS was posted on the MCBS Intranet site and included in employee orientation packages. The fact sheet covers government obligations under the ODA and an overview of disability issues and barriers facing people with disabilities. In the past year, 160 managers within MCBS have also completed online training.

Commitment: MCBS will initiate discussions with Teranet to assess the possibility of providing TTY capability on the 1-800 help line.

Status: **Complete.** Teranet, a third-party service provider for MCBS, operates a 1-800 telephone help line that provides assistance to individuals and businesses. The help line does not currently provide TTY functionality to allow callers with disabilities to communicate through typed messages. MCBS has determined that persons with disabilities can use the Bell-Relay service to access Teranet when required.

Commitment: MCBS will make employment ads more accessible to people with disabilities.

Status: **Complete.** MCBS is committed to equal opportunity for employment. To ensure that people with disabilities have an equal chance of competing for an MCBS position, employment ads are displayed in locations that are accessible to people with disabilities. For example, ads are posted at a level that can be seen by someone using a wheelchair.

Commitment: MCBS will ensure that its legal branch is aware of the importance and impact of the ODA when drafting legislation.

- Status:** **In Progress.** The ODA coordinator has developed a presentation that provides an overview of the ODA to increase disability and barrier awareness. In 2005-2006, the ODA coordinator will make a presentation to MCBS' legal branch to ensure that as legislation is being drafted, barriers can be identified and dealt with early in the process.
- Commitment:** MCBS has developed, and is in the process of implementing, its internal accessibility communications plan to deliver training to ensure MCBS employees understand disability issues and their impact on MCBS' efforts to provide high-quality service to its clients.
- Status:** **In Progress.** The ODA coordinator has developed a presentation that provides an overview of the ODA and disability and barrier awareness. In 2004-2005, the ODA coordinator delivered the presentation to MCBS staff. The ODA coordinator will continue to deliver the presentation in 2005-2006.

Report on Achievements of 2004-2005 Planning Commitments for Centre for Leadership and Human Resource Management

Established in April 2004, the Centre for Leadership and Human Resource Management (CFL/HRM) is responsible for human resource management across the Ontario Public Service, including building strategic human resource leadership and capacity, planning and transformation, labour relations, developing policies and practices and enterprise service management.

Throughout 2004-2005, CFL/HRM demonstrated leadership in its commitment to improve accessibility for people with disabilities working within, or applying to work within, the Ontario Public Service. CFL/HRM increased the awareness of disability issues for all managers, supervisors and employees. Increased awareness is necessary for the fulfilment of the commitment to identify and remove barriers to accessibility.

CFL/HRM made specific accessibility achievements in many areas related to employment and employee accommodation, as the following section demonstrates.

- Commitment:** CFL/HRM will continue to provide online training about accessibility to managers and employees. This training includes information about the government's accessibility obligations under the ODA and describes accessibility requirements for employees and job applicants.

Status:	Complete. CFL/HRM has continued to make the training available. In the past year, 18 managers within CFL/HRM have completed training. CFL/HRM reviewed the training material to ensure the content was up-to-date.
Commitment:	CFL/HRM will initiate a review of the Public Service Act to identify barriers and opportunities related to accessibility that can be addressed in future amendments to the legislation.
Status:	In Progress . The review was initiated in 2004-2005. Further actions are provided in the 2005-2006 Commitments section of this plan.
Commitment:	CFL/HRM will maintain and set policy direction for the employment accommodation fund for people with disabilities. The fund reimburses eligible expenses that ministries incur in addressing the accessibility needs of Ontario Public Service employees and job applicants. Eligibility criteria will be reviewed every two years, beginning in 2005-2006.
Status:	Complete. This fund and its supporting policy were maintained in 2004-2005 and remain available to assist people with disabilities who seek or have jobs in the Ontario government. Eligibility criteria for the fund will be reviewed every two years.
Commitment:	CFL/HRM will review a range of Ontario Public Service human resources policies, to determine whether the policies may contain barriers to accessibility for people with disabilities.
Status:	Complete: CFL/HRM completed its review of the Staffing Operating Policy and several labour relations policies in 2004-2005. No barriers were found. The review of policies related to human resources will continue in 2005-2006.
Commitment:	CFL/HRM will revise the Ontario Public Service policies that include or address employment accommodation for people with disabilities and return-to-work issues. These changes will remove the barriers that were identified in the 2003-2004 policy review and make improvements to facilitate the accommodation needs of employees and job applicants with disabilities. The revised policies will be provided to ministries and publicized.
Status:	In Progress. The revised Employment Accommodation for People with Disabilities and Return-to-Work policy has been drafted and the revised policy will be issued in 2005-2006.

Commitment:	CFL/HRM will continue to advise ministries about barrier-free policy interpretation, the delivery of services to Ontario Public Service employees and support for job applicants with disabilities.
Status:	Complete. CFL/HRM received numerous requests for clarification and interpretation of policies relating to the accessibility planning and legislation. CFL/HRM advised ministries as part of its ongoing policy interpretation and advice function.
Commitment:	CFL/HRM will work to ensure that the new Ontario Public Service Innovation and Ideas Fund (formerly known as the Innovation and Recognition Fund) has no barriers to accessibility.
Status:	Complete. In 2004-2005, the Ideas and Innovation Office ensured that the business processes and procedures to apply for the Innovation and Ideas Fund did not present any barriers to staff with disabilities. This was achieved by having communication materials, application procedures and the application form available in a format that could be read with an assistive device. CFL/HRM is making sure that all elements on the program's Intranet site, currently under development, meet the requirements of the ODA.
Commitment:	CFL/HRM, working with MBS, will improve staff awareness about accessibility obligations, issues and opportunities.
Status:	Complete: Every year, Showcase Ontario draws participants from across the country to learn how to serve citizens better through the use of information technology. CFL/HRM worked with MBS to create and host the two "Power of Accessibility" booths at Showcase Ontario 2004. CFL/HRM also helped develop an innovative approach to raising employee awareness through a lunch and learn event. This event involved creative and inspiring activities to encourage participants to discuss and increase their awareness about providing accessibility for people with disabilities.
Commitment:	CFL/HRM recognizes the importance of working across ministries to generate and share ideas and exchange best practices. In 2004-2005 and future years, CFL/HRM will have an active membership on the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration's ODA Inter-ministerial Working Group.

Status: **Complete:** CFL/HRM is a member of the ODA Inter-ministerial Working Group. The strategic focus of this group was shifted in 2004-2005 to reflect the introduction of the new Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). CFL/HRM will also participate on the assistant deputy ministers' committee on implementation of the AODA.

Report on Achievements of 2004-2005 Planning Commitments for Management Board Secretariat

Management Board Secretariat (MBS) plays an important role in helping ministries deliver services directly to the public. Through the policies that it sets and the programs that it delivers, MBS remains committed to supporting the government's achievement of its goal of making Ontario fully accessible to people of all abilities.

As outlined in the achievements below, during the past year, MBS achieved great success and progress in improving accessibility for people with disabilities in areas such as procurement and the built environment. In particular, MBS released the barrier-free standards to ministries to improve accessibility in the building and renovation of government buildings. MBS also distributed the Procurement Guidelines to ensure ministries consider accessibility when making purchasing decisions.

These achievements reflect MBS' initiative and hard work to meet its commitments under the ODA.

Commitment: The ODA requires that people with disabilities be considered, when purchasing goods and services. The ODA requirements related to procurement have been successfully incorporated into the revised Management Board of Cabinet Directives on Procurement. To support ministries in determining if they are effectively incorporating appropriate accessibility requirements into the procurement process, a set of guidelines were developed. These guidelines, when approved and released, will be distributed to all ministries of the government.

Status: **Complete.** In 2004-2005, MBS distributed the *Guidelines for Implementing Procurement Provisions of the ODA* to all ministries.

To support these guidelines, MBS developed and released two complimentary and easy-to-use tools to ministries on June 22, 2005. An online presentation and a checklist were created to help employees through the procurement process to consider people with disabilities when purchasing goods or services.

Commitment: In order to receive funding under a government-funded capital program, projects related to an existing or proposed building structure or premise must meet or exceed accessibility eligibility criteria.

Status: **Complete.** The 2005-2006 MBS Infrastructure Plan was carefully reviewed to ensure that no new government-funded capital projects would create barriers for employees or people with disabilities.

Commitment: MBS will continue to consider accessibility when developing government planning activities.

Status: **Complete.** The program management and estimates division of MBS was consulted by the ministry accessibility planning co-leads to ensure accessibility was included in the training and instructional material for ministries on results-based planning. As well, the planning templates used by ministries to submit their results-based plans included an area where ministries were instructed to indicate where planned activities provided opportunities for improving accessibility.

Commitment: Accessibility in ministry planning will continue to be addressed in the training, guidelines, procedures and consultations with program areas throughout MBS.

Status: **Complete.** Program areas were reminded to consider improving accessibility through planned activities at the MBS and operational levels. These reminders were included during monthly Business Planning Working Group meetings (BPWG). Accessibility information was also distributed to planning and resource management specialists through an MBS newsletter. The internal newsletter publication provided specific guidelines, instructions and reminders for various important planning activities throughout the year.

Commitment: The Accessibility Planning Working Group (APWG) will continue to respond to any changes to the legislated requirements of the ODA and developments in other ministries. MBS and CFL/HRM will also continue to support the working group as a permanent committee of the ministry. The activities of the APWG are essential to the continuing implementation of accessibility initiatives and to the development of sustainable accessibility planning.

Status:	Complete. Throughout 2004-2005, the APWG continued to implement accessibility plan commitments and ensured that each area of MBS was represented.
Commitment:	MBS will continue to raise awareness about accessibility within the ministry. The ministry will hold special events to highlight accessibility and ensure that existing events like employee orientation sessions and the VOICE Awards (a ministry employee recognition program) include information about accessibility.
Status:	Complete. In July 2005, MBS pilot-tested an event to raise awareness and to educate participants about accessibility. This event was well received by the participants who felt the event enhanced their overall knowledge, attitude and awareness about accessibility. In addition, the employee orientation sessions continued to provide an information kit that included information about accessibility. The VOICE awards highlighted accessibility as one component of an award recipient's current projects.
Commitment:	The planning of accessibility activities for 2004-2005 included the commitment to conduct an employee survey to test the level of awareness about accessibility.
Status:	In Progress.
Action/Timeframe:	A questionnaire was developed, in consultation with the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario, and people with disabilities, to assess the level of staff awareness about accessibility. The questionnaire was accessible to people with visual impairments and could be provided in an alternate format.
Rationale:	Conducting the survey, based largely on the ODA, at the same time as the new AODA was being implemented, would not provide the most effective and efficient use of public funding. In 2005-2006, the ministry will consider the best approach to a survey strategy following the implementation of the AODA.
Comittment:	MBS is working on an accessibility toolkit for employees that will include information such as barrier identification and removal, types of disabilities, and a glossary of terms.

Status:	Complete. MBS' Accessibility Planning Working Group drafted several articles about accessibility issues. Three articles were chosen for approval to be posted on the MBS Intranet site. The articles focused on barrier and disability types, providing guidance to people with disabilities, and an accessibility lexicon.
Comittment:	Accessibility considerations will continue to be included in project planning, along with careful adherence to the Ontario Building Code standards, as well as the government's barrier-free standards.
Status:	Complete. Throughout 2004-2005, accessibility was considered in any projects relating to employee or program accommodation. Such accommodation projects cover activities ranging from workstation alterations and floor alterations to staff and function relocations and consolidations.
Comittment:	The barrier-free standards will be shared with ministries across the Ontario Public Service (OPS) in 2004-2005. The new standards apply to buildings, structures and premises that the government purchases, enters into a lease with a term of 36 months or longer, constructs or significantly renovates. Working with ORC, MBS will release and disseminate the revised barrier-free standards. Within two years of the release of these standards, ORC and MBS will report on the effectiveness and other implications of the new standards.
Status:	Complete. The barrier-free standards were shared with ministries across the OPS in November 2004. MBS and ORC began collecting data in spring 2005 to coincide with the construction season. The report from MBS and ORC will be published in November 2006. The commitment to submit a report was made over a two-year period.
Comittment:	MBS will provide updated information about Internet accessibility and resources to ministries through an Intranet site for government webmasters; this will be a resource for ministries, which have responsibility for their own sites. MBS will also be available to assist ministries when they are developing new sites. MBS will continue to raise awareness about website accessibility and to ensure new software, hardware and computer architecture are accessible.
Status:	Complete. MBS continued to provide updated information about Internet accessibility and resources to ministries through the Intranet site for Ontario government webmasters. In addition, MBS was available to assist ministries when developing new websites and to ensure its own software, hardware and computer architecture were accessible.

- Comittment:** The ODA requires that all managers and supervisors take training in accessibility. As part of this requirement under the act, MBS developed online training for managers and supervisors that provide easy access to information. All managers and supervisors are required to take this training within three months of moving into a managerial or supervisory position.
- Status:** **Complete.** In 2004-2005, MBS' Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) regularly reminded all managers and supervisors to complete the training to ensure MBS met this obligation. In 2004-2005, 171 MBS managers completed the training.
- Comittment:** Recognizing the value of working across ministries to generate and share ideas, exchange best practices, and capitalize on sharing products of value with multiple ministries, MBS will maintain a membership on the ODA inter-ministerial working group. MBS will work to further improve information sharing about accessibility by participating on the ODA inter-ministerial working group. MBS will take a collaborative approach to sharing best practices with other employees and ministries involved in this group; members are actively involved in accessibility initiatives throughout government. MBS will share ideas and plans to improve accessibility through horizontal partnerships and a team approach to planning.
- Status:** **Complete.** MBS attended all ODA inter-ministerial working group meetings and ensured that information and MBS' best practices were shared with other employees and ministries involved in this group.
- Comittment:** MBS will continue its legislation review by examining three new acts and establishing a schedule to review the remainder of MBS' legislation in subsequent years. MBS will also develop approaches to address any barriers that are identified in its legislation reviews.
- Status:** **Complete.** The legal services branch in MBS reviewed the following legislation in 2004-2005: the Ministry of Government Services Act, the Treasury Board Act and the Flag Act, and reported no barriers. MBS also developed an outline on how to amend legislation if barriers for people with disabilities are found in a legislation review.
- Comittment:** MBS will develop a guide for reviewing policies as required under the ODA and will produce a schedule of policies and priorities for further policy review. MBS will review five key policy directives in 2004-2005.

Status:	Complete. An MBS schedule for the review of ministry policies was established and the following five key policy directives were reviewed in 2004-2005 and no barriers were reported: Travel Management and General Expenses; Government Appointees; Accountability Directive; Transfer Payment Directive; and Conflict of Interest Directive. In addition, MBS developed a guide to assist policy reviews as required under the ODA.
Comittment:	All ministries across the government are required to produce annual accessibility plans as part of their annual planning processes, and to make their plans available to the public.
Status:	Complete. In consultation with the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario (ADO), MBS and CFL/HRM submitted a joint accessibility plan to the ADO and the plan was released to the public on September 30, 2004. The plan addressed identifying, removing and preventing barriers to people with disabilities in the acts and regulations administered by the ministry and the ministry's policies, programs, practices and services. In addition, the plan reported on the ministry's achievements and future commitments for 2004-2005.

Commitments and Strategies for 2005-2006

The Ministry of Government Services, comprising of the former Management Board Secretariat, Centre for Leadership and Human Resource Management and the Ministry of Consumer and Business Services, has a great opportunity to impact and improve the delivery of government services to people with disabilities. The ministry is dedicated to the spirit of inclusion, to improved accessibility and the concept of quality service to the people of Ontario.

The 2005-2006 accessibility plan focuses on continuing long-term commitments as well as the new initiatives to identify, remove and prevent barriers. It also strives to improve accessibility through a participatory, proactive and integrated approach spanning the priorities of customer service, employment, communications and information, and the built environment.

The commitments for 2005-2006 reaffirm the Ministry of Government Services' commitment to integrate accessibility in the ministry's programs and services, as an employer and a service provider.

Customer Service

Comittment:	All ministry staff responsible for the procurement of goods and services will continue to implement th e Procurement Provisions of the ODA to ensure accessibility is considered during the procurement process.
Action:	The ministry will distribute the new procurement tools and provide training to ensure accessibility is considered in the procurement process.
Timeframe:	2005-2006
Comittment:	The ministry will continue to ensure that all information posted on its websites is accessible to people with disabilities.
Action:	Publications Ontario will review its Ontario Gazette website to ensure that accessibility issues are included in the development of recommendations to be implemented in 2006-2007. Publications Ontario will post a notice on the Ontario Gazette website informing customers that alternate formats can be requested directly from Publications Ontario.
Timeframe:	2005-2006
Comittment:	The ministry will ensure its employees understand disability issues and their impact on the ministry's efforts to provide high quality service to its clients.
Action:	The ministry will train its front line staff by using the customer services training package, " <i>May I Help You - Welcoming Customers with Disabilities</i> ".
Timeframe:	2005-2006
Comittment:	The Ministry of Government Services, comprising of the former MBS, CFL/HRM and MCBS, will work together to ensure all areas of the newly integrated ministry are represented on the Accessibility Planning Working Group.
Action:	The ministry will review the current structure of its Accessibility Planning Working Group to ensure the ministry's obligations under the ODA and any new requirements resulting from the introduction of the AODA are met.
Timeframe:	2005-2006
Comittment:	Building on the accessibility questionnaire used in 2004-2005, the ministry will consider the best approach to gathering information as it now relates to the AODA and developing standards in the areas of customer service, employment, communications and information, and the built environment.

Action:	The ministry will review, analyze and make necessary changes to the questionnaire drafted in 2004-2005 based on the AODA.
Timeframe:	2005-2006
Comittment:	The ministry will consider a new accessibility standard that requires each ministry website to display a main TTY number
Action:	The ministry will ensure that the committee responsible for the ongoing development of the government's portal strategy will recommend that each ministry website display a main ministry contact phone number accompanied by a main TTY number. The ministry will also advise other ministries on how to prepare their websites for this new standard.
Timeframe:	2005-2006
Comittment:	The ministry will include TTY numbers in the sample letterheads and business cards on the Visual Identity Intranet site.
Action:	The ministry will ensure changes to the sample letterheads and business cards on the website include TTY numbers. Once these changes have been made, the ministry will inform the visual identity coordinators of this change.
Timeframe:	2005-2006

Employment

Commitment:	The ministry will continue to provide online accessibility training to managers and employees across the OPS. The ministry will ensure that its own managers and supervisors complete the training on how to accommodate the accessibility needs of employees and job applicants with disabilities.
Action:	The training material will be reviewed to determine whether revisions are required to reflect the requirements of the AODA. All managers and supervisors within the ministry will complete The Ontarians with Disabilities Act: Maximizing the Contribution of Employees with Disabilities Module.
Timeframe:	2005-2006

- Commitment:** The ministry will continue to review all ministry policies for barriers to accessibility as required under the ODA. The ministry will share with ministries its policy review guide.
- Action:** The ministry will issue and promote a revised, improved policy on employment accommodation and return to work for people with disabilities. Upon release of the revised policy, the ministry will establish a process for reviewing the Employment Accommodation Fund criteria. In addition, the ministry will provide its policy review guide to the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario for distribution to ministries.
- Timeframe:** 2005-2006
- Commitment:** The ministry will ensure that its internal recruitment practices in place for employment competitions are free from barriers for people with disabilities.
- Action:** The ministry will review its existing recruitment practices for employment competitions to identify areas of improvement in quality of service, access and accommodation for people with disabilities.
- Timeframe:** 2005-2006

Communications and Information

- Commitment:** The ministry will implement its communications plan advising other ministries on how to obtain documents in alternate formats from Publications Ontario.
- Action:** Publications Ontario has a process in place for the translation of government documents into alternate formats. The ministry completed a review of its process for alternate format requests in 2004-2005. The ministry will reissue communications to ensure that all ministries are aware of the process for arranging alternate formats for their customers.
- Timeframe:** 2005-2006
- Commitment:** One of the biggest barriers to accessibility is the barrier of being unaware of the issues, benefits, challenges and opportunities related to accessibility. In response, the ministry will continue to build on its commitment to raise awareness about accessibility.

Action: The ministry will continue to raise awareness about disabilities, barriers and the requirements of the ODA and AODA by adding information about accessibility to the "accessibility information" link on the ministry's Intranet site and to its toolkit. In addition, two separate articles will be published in Topical , focused on issues related to barriers to accessibility, barrier identification, and types of disabilities. The ministry will also implement its internal accessibility communications plan to ensure ministry employees understand disability issues and the requirements of the ODA and their impact on the ministry. Also, the lunch and learn "pilot" event will be reviewed based on feedback received from the participants, and refined for a larger audience and made available to ministry staff. In addition, working in partnership with the lead for the employee orientation sessions, a portion of this event will be incorporated into the employee orientation session.

Timeframe: 2005-2006

Commitment: The ministry will ensure accessibility considerations are included in all of the ministry's Management Board submissions.

Action: The ministry will include an area for accessibility in the "*Management Board Submissions Guide* " developed for all ministry employees. The ministry will post the guide on the ministry's Intranet site.

Timeframe: 2005-2006

Commitment: In order to receive funding under a government-funded capital program, projects related to an existing or proposed building structure or premise must meet or exceed accessibility eligibility criteria. In keeping with this requirement under section 9 of the ODA, the ministry will continue to ensure that, as all capital plans are created, they will be checked to ensure that accessibility considerations are included.

Action: All ministry infrastructure requests included in the 2006-2007 results-based-plan will be reviewed to ensure they do not include barriers to accessibility.

Timeframe: 2005-2006

Built Environment

Commitment: The ministry will review all building and renovation projects to ensure compliance with the Ontario Building Code requirements for people with disabilities and the ORC Standards for Barrier-Free Design of Ontario Government Facilities.

Action: The ministry will complete the construction of four new ServiceOntario customer service centres in Aurora, Belleville, Sarnia and Windsor. The ministry has made it standard practice to review, evaluate and address accessibility issues in all its projects. This will ensure that Ontarians have the best access to government services available through the ministry's service locations. It will also ensure that there are no barriers to employees or potential employees who may have disabilities and review all third party lease renewals to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Ontario Building Code and the ORC Standards for Barrier-Free Design of Ontario Government Facilities.

Timeframe: 2005-2006

Acts and Regulations

Commitment: The ministry will support the implementation of the new AODA.

Action: The ministry will participate in the implementation process of the new Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and the development of accessibility standards, as required.

Timeframe: 2005-2006

Commitment: The ministry will review its acts and regulations to ensure the use of appropriate and inclusive language and that no barriers are created to people with disabilities.

Action: When developing legislation and regulations, the ministry will determine their effect on accessibility for people with disabilities. Also, the ministry will continue its legislation review by examining four acts for barriers: Public Service Act, Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and the County of Middlesex Act, 1979.

For more information

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Visit the Ministry of Community and Social Services Accessibility Ontario web site at: <http://www.mcscs.gov.on.ca/accessibility/index.html> . The site promotes accessibility and provides information and resources on how to make Ontario a barrier-free province. '

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