



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

2009-2010 ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

**THE HONORABLE STEVE PETERS
SPEAKER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

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Introduction

This document is the sixth annual accessibility plan developed by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, outlining the Assembly's commitments for 2008-2009 to ensure that no new barriers are created and, over time, existing ones are removed.

The Legislative Assembly continues to build on its achievements by implementing initiatives to make Ontario an inclusive and accessible province where people of all abilities have a chance to fully achieve their potential.

Message from the Speaker

All public sector and broader public sector organizations are required by law to have an annual accessibility plan and to make it available to the public. This is the sixth year in which plans have been written and are being implemented by organizations such as ours across the province.

The Legislative Assembly is committed to improving accessibility through identifying, removing and preventing barriers in key areas of customer service, employment, communications and information, and the built environment.

At the Assembly we continue to build on the success of our previous plans and are continuing to look for ways to better meet the needs of people with disabilities who come into contact with the Assembly, regardless of whether they are staff, members of the general public or Members of the Provincial Parliament.

If you have any comments or concerns, I encourage you to send them using the contact information located at the end of this document.

Sincerely,

Steve Peters

Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

Report on Status of Customer Service Requirements

1. The Assembly will establish policies, practices and procedures relating to the provision of goods and services to people with disabilities.

Commitment: New

Planned Action: The Assembly's current policies, practices and procedures will be reviewed for appropriateness and new policies will be developed and put into place as needed.

Implementation Timeframe: January to December 2009.

2. The Assembly will use reasonable efforts to ensure that the Assembly's policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality and opportunity.

Commitment: New

Planned Action: The Assembly's current policies, practices and procedures will be reviewed to ensure that they are consistent with the core principles.

Implementation Timeframe: January to December 2009.

3. The Assembly will continue its practice of allowing people to use their own personal assistive devices to access its goods and use its services. This practice will be formalized in a policy.

Commitment: New

Planned Action: The current practice will be reviewed for appropriateness and formalized in a policy.

Implementation Timeframe: January to December 2009.

4. Assembly staff will communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account his or her disability.

Commitment: New

Planned Action: Front line staff will be trained, retrained or refreshed in the appropriate method of communicating with a person with a disability.

Implementation Timeframe: January to December 2009.

5. The Assembly will continue its practice of allowing people with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal in the Legislative Building.

Commitment: New

Planned Action: The current practice will be reviewed for appropriateness and formalized in a policy.

Implementation Timeframe: January to December 2009.

6. The Assembly will continue its practice of permitting people with disabilities who use a support person to bring that person with them while accessing the Assembly's goods or services in the Legislative Building.

Commitment: New

Planned Action: The current practice will be reviewed for appropriateness and formalized in a policy.

Implementation Timeframe: January to December 2009.

7. The Assembly will provide notice of any admission fee that may be charged for a support person of a person with a disability.

Commitment: New

Planned Action: The current practice will be reviewed for appropriateness and formalized in a policy.

Implementation Timeframe: January to December 2009.

8. The Assembly will provide notice when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on to access or use the Assembly's goods or services are temporarily disrupted.

Commitment: New

Planned Action: The current practice will be reviewed for appropriateness and formalized in a policy. Procedures will be set into place.

Implementation Timeframe: September to December 2009.

9. The Assembly will train staff, volunteers and contractors who interact with the public on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard.

Commitment: New

Planned Action: An appropriate training program will be put in place that meets the needs of the Assembly, its staff and members of the public.

Implementation Timeframe: September to December 2009.

10. The Assembly will train staff involved in developing Assembly policies, practices and procedures on the provision of Assembly goods and services on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard.

Commitment: New

Planned Action: The Assembly has added additional staff to the Working Group responsible for the development of the Assembly policies, practices and procedures in this area. They will receive proper updates and needed training.

Implementation Timeframe: January to March 2009.

11. The Assembly will establish a process for people to provide feedback on how the Assembly provides goods or services to people with disabilities and how it will respond to any feedback and take action on any complaints. The information about the Assembly's feedback process will be made readily available to the public.

Commitment: New

Planned Action: The Assembly will consider how best to provide an avenue for feedback and response and how to make that feedback process available to the public.

Implementation Timeframe: January to December 2009.

Report on Commitments

Focus Area: Built Environment: A plan will be developed to modify the design of the Assembly's security desks to ensure that those with disabilities have proper access to the desks.

Commitment: New

Planned Action: The Assembly's security stations that are located at the entry points in the Legislative Building and Whitney Block will be reviewed to determine if modifications are needed to ensure that they do not act as a barrier to those with disabilities who approach them or who work in them.

Implementation Timeframe: January to December 2009.

Focus Area: Built Environment: There will be a review of the washrooms in the Pages' quarters in the Legislative Building to ensure that they meet the needs of those with disabilities.

Commitment: New

Planned Action: The washrooms will be assessed and plans put into place as needed to modify the washrooms to meet current barrier-free standards.

Implementation Timeframe: January to December 2009.

Focus Area: Built Environment: Railings will be installed on the stairs behind the grand staircase.

Commitment: New

Planned Action: This will be the completion of the project to install a new accessibility elevator behind the grand staircase.

Implementation Timeframe: January to December 2009.

Focus Area: Built Environment: An elevator will be installed in the west wing of the Legislative Building housing the Office of the Lieutenant Governor.

Commitment: Ongoing

Planned Action: This project is underway and will be completed in 2009.

Implementation Timeframe: January to December 2009.

Focus Area: Built Environment: Signage throughout the main Legislative Building will continue to be reviewed to ensure that it is appropriate for those with disabilities.

Commitment: Ongoing

Planned Action: New signage was installed in 2008 to denote the barrier free entrance on the south basement entrance. Signage will be reviewed in the other exterior and interior areas of the building, including the south steps and entrance to the tunnel between the Legislative Building and the Whitney Block.

Implementation Timeframe: January to September 2009.

Focus Area: Information and Communication: The Working Group will organize an accessibility awareness event tied in with the Assembly's Health Fair to inform Assembly staff about the new AODA regulations and to make them more aware of the needs of the disabled.

Commitment: New

Planned Action: An event will be organized by the Working Group that suits the educational needs and interests of those attending the Health Fair.

Implementation Timeframe: January to December 2009.

Focus Area: Information and Communication: The Assembly will continue to upgrade its intranet and internet sites and review their content to ensure that they meet accessibility standards.

Commitment: Ongoing

Planned Action: The work continues as the Assembly revamps and redesigns the sites and adds new and additional content.

Implementation Timeframe: January to December 2009.

Comments about the Legislative Assembly's accessibility plan are always welcome.

For more information please contact:

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Website: <http://www.ontla.on.ca>

Visit the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration's Accessibility Ontario Web portal at: <http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/accessibility/indexf.html>. The site promotes accessibility and provides information and resources on how to make Ontario a barrier-free province.

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