



MINISTRY OF CONSUMER SERVICES

HOME | ABOUT THE MINISTRY | AUTHORITIES AND AGENCIES | NEWSROOM | CONTACT US

Ministry of Consumer Services >
▶ About the Ministry
▶ Consumer Protection Legislation
▶ The Honorable Sophia Aggelonitis, Minister of Consumer Services
▶ Deputy Minister Fareed Amin
▶ Parliamentary Assistant Jim Brownell
▶ Ontario Public Service Careers
▶ Results-based Plan Briefing Book 2009-10
▶ Service Commitment
▶ Ministry Accessibility Information
▶ Contact Us
▶ Authorities and Agencies
▶ Newsroom

Here to Help ✓
▶ What are My Rights?
▶ How Do I Make a Complaint?
▶ Can I Cancel a Contract?
▶ Consumer Protection Survival Guide (PDF)
▶ Search Consumer Beware List
▶ Information Brochures
▶ Useful Consumer Links

Learn More >
Information for Businesses >
Public Consultations
Explore Government >
Contacts >

E-MAIL PRINT

2009-2010 Accessibility Plan

- [Introduction](#)
- [Report on Status of Customer Service Requirements](#)
- [Report on Other Accessibility Commitments](#)
(Accessibility improvement initiatives to identify, remove or prevent barriers in preparation for AODA standards currently under development.)
- [For More Information](#)

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).

The Ministry of Consumer Services was established in June 2009. The 2009-10 accessibility plans will move the Ministry of Consumer Services 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/mcsc/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 begin to transition OPS ministries to this regulation, this section has been added to the ODA Planning Template to highlight customer service initiatives.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New

The ministry will establish policies, practices and procedures on providing goods or services to people with disabilities. Policies will:

- allow persons with disabilities to use their own and ministry assistive devices to access ministry goods and services;
- allow persons with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal at the locations the ministry owns and operates;
- allow support persons to accompany persons with disabilities when they access ministry goods and services.

Planned Action(s):

The ministry will adopt the OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy. This policy addresses the use of assistive devices, service animals and support persons.

In addition, the ministry will develop program specific accessible customer service practices and procedures, where required, to address ministry-specific application of standards outlined in the corporate-wide policy. The policies, practices and procedures will address the provision of public ministry materials in accessible formats, internal/external feedback mechanisms, access for service animals and access for support persons, service disruption notification processes, framework for compliance monitoring and reporting, including performance measures and timelines and annual internal audit for ongoing improvements. This initiative is coordinated in connection with the rollout of the OPS Service Directive initiative, including communication and training.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 – Mar 11

Results Achieved:

The ministry has adopted and trained staff on the *OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy*.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New

The ministry will ensure customer service policies are consistent with the principles of dignity, independence, integration and equality of opportunity.

Planned Action(s):

The ministry will review update existing customer service policies in a manner that encourages interpretation consistent with the *OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy*.

The ministry will consider accessibility when drafting new customer service policies.

The ministry will promote the *OPS Diversity Lens* to policy staff when it becomes available. In the interim, the *OPS Accessibility Lens* (will be merged with the diversity lens) will be communicated to staff as a tool for incorporating accessibility into policies.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 – March 11

Results Achieved:

To be reported in next year's accessibility plan.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New

Train all staff on:

- Communicating with persons with disabilities in a manner that takes into account his or her disability;
- The purposes of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the requirements of the Customer Service Standard;
- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities;
- How to interact with persons with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person;
- What to do if a person with a disability is having difficulty in accessing the ministry's goods and services
- OPS policies, practices and procedures relating to the provision of goods or services to persons with disabilities.

Planned Action(s):

Make the online training courses "*May I Help You? Welcoming Customers with Disabilities*" and "*May I Help You Supplementary: Ten Things You Need to Know About Providing Accessible Customer Service*" mandatory for all staff. The two online courses offered by the OPS address the first five training requirements.

Provide in-person training on the *OPS Accessible Customer Service Policies*.

Ensure all managers have taken the online course "*ODA: Maximizing the Contribution of Employees with Disabilities*".

The ministry will develop a plan for training new staff in accessibility and providing existing staff with refresher training. Information on the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and

required training will be included in the new employee orientation checklist.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 – March 11

Results Achieved:

A Lunch and Learn on accessibility was offered to staff to introduce them to the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the requirements of the Customer Service Standard. The session was presented by the Ontario Diversity Office and the Accessibility Lead of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade. A video was shown on providing accessible customer service.

The online training courses related to accessibility were made mandatory for all staff with a completion date of September 18, 2009. Regular communication was provided to staff on training requirements. Group training sessions were offered for the two *May I Help You?* courses. Staff completion rates have been continuously monitored.

In-person training was provided to all staff on the *OPS Accessible Customer Service Policies* in September and October 2009.

Orientation manuals have been updated to include accessibility components.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New

The ministry will develop strategies for providing information in an accessible format to ensure compliance under the new Customer Service Standard.

Planned Action(s):

The ministry will provide documents in alternative formats upon request. The ministry will track the number of publication requests provided in alternative formats.

The ministry will post documents identified by the Customer Service Regulation in alternative formats on its internet site.

Create a ministry accessibility intranet web page that provides information, resources and tools to increase awareness and knowledge of how to accommodate visitors/clients/staff with disabilities.

TTY access will be offered when required and the staff will be trained on how to operate the equipment.

Each program area will review its programs and services on an ongoing basis to ensure they are accessible to clients and the public.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 – March 11

Results Achieved:

A new TTY Line was launched and designated frontline staff were trained on how to operate the equipment in June 2009. All frontline and administrative staff received an overview of operating a TTY line and using Bell Relay Service in October 2009.

A new ministry internet site was launched in September 2009. The site was created in compliance with the OPS accessible *Web Site Standards*.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New

Alert third-party service providers and Delegated Administrative Authorities (DAAs) of the new accessibility standards for customer service

Planned Action(s):

The ministry plans to work with third parties and Delegated Administrative Authorities to ensure that the targets and timetables meet compliance for the new customer service standard and the performance of third-party compliance will also be monitored.

Accessibility compliance will be incorporated into new agreements and later versions of existing agreements with third-party service providers and Delegated Administrative Authorities.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 – March 11

Results Achieved:

The ministry provided communication to Delegated Administrative Authorities about the Customer Service Regulation. The ministry requested that DAAs have staff complete accessibility training and report completion to the ministry.

Presentations on accessibility and the customer service regulation were provided upon request to the Electrical Safety Authority and the Technical Standards and Safety Authority.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New

Provide notice when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on to provide access or use ministry goods and services are temporarily disrupted.

Planned Action(s):

Corporate-wide procedures are being developed for providing service disruption notifications to persons with disabilities who rely on those services to access ministry goods and services. When finalized, the ministry will adopt the corporate-wide procedures. In the interim, the ministry will develop its own processes for providing service disruption notifications to persons with disabilities.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 – March 11

Results Achieved:

To be reported in next year's accessibility plan.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New

Give people with disabilities opportunity to provide the ministry with feedback on the accessibility of its goods and services. Make information about the feedback process readily available to the public.

Planned Action(s):

Develop a feedback process that allows people with disabilities to provide feedback on the accessibility of ministry goods and services. Track feedback related to accessibility to identify trends and opportunities for improved accessibility of goods and services.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 – March 11

Results Achieved:

To be reported in next year's accessibility plan.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New

Make ministry events accessible to people with disabilities.

Planned Action(s):

Communicate the importance of planning accessible events to staff. Ensure staff are given the knowledge and tools for organizing accessible events.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 – March 11

Results Achieved:

Training on planning accessible events was provided to frontline and administrative staff in October 2009. Staff in attendance were provided with a checklist for analyzing the accessibility of a venue.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New

Creation of a ministry Accessibility Committee to lead the ministry to compliance with the customer service regulation and future regulations. Committee will also evaluate opportunities for new accessibility initiatives.

Planned Action(s):

Appoint a committee representative from the division and the ministry administration branches. Committee will be led by an Executive Sponsor and an Accessibility Lead will be appointed.

Committee will meet on a regular basis to discuss and monitor regulatory requirements, new accessibility initiatives and delivery of commitments outlined in this plan.

Committee will remain current in their knowledge of accessibility-related legislation, regulations, standards and best practices and effectively apply those to our business and employment practices.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 – March 11

Results Achieved:

A full accessibility committee was formed in February 2009. The committee has met regularly to discuss implementation of Customer Service Regulation requirements.

The Accessibility Lead currently receives regular updates from the OPS Diversity Office and Accessibility Directorate of Ontario on requirements and best practices relating the Customer Service Regulation and upcoming AODA regulations.

Focus Area: Customer Service

Commitment: New

Incorporate accessibility into ministry procurement practices.

Planned Action(s):

Future manager procurement training will include information about barrier-free procurement processes. Information of accessible procurement will be posted to the intranet.

Reinforce awareness of and compliance with the ODA accessibility requirements relating to procurement through roll-out of procurement framework to ministry staff, and promotion of Accessible Procurement E-Module Training Tool and Checklist.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 – March 11

Results Achieved:

To be reported in next year's plan.

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 should focus ODA planning on readiness and preparation for these new standards currently under development. Therefore, initiatives described below to identify, remove and prevent barriers should be clearly identified by these four areas.

Focus Area: Info & Comm

Impact: Policy

Commitment: New

The ministry will embed accessibility into all areas of planning, including Results-based Planning, Contingency Planning, Emergency Planning. Planning will take the varied needs of people with disabilities into account at all levels of planning and response activities.

Planned Action(s):

Planning leads will be encouraged to embed accessibility into their planning process. The OPS Diversity Lens (which considers accessibility) will be shared with staff and incorporated into ministry planning processes when it becomes available. In the interim, the *OPS Accessibility Lens* (to be merged with the diversity lens) will be communicated to staff as a tool for incorporating accessibility into policies.

Incorporate recommendations and advice from the Emergency Preparedness Guide for People with Disabilities/Special Needs into updates of the ministry's Continuity of Operations Plan.

The ministry will raise awareness of people with disabilities of what they can do to prepare for their own safety and survival during times of evacuation.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 –Mar 11

Results Achieved:

The Emergency Management & Security Unit provided training to managers on Emergency Evacuation Planning as part of the accessibility training sessions held in September 2009. The Unit also provided a general overview of accessible evacuation planning to all other staff during accessibility training sessions held in October 2009.

Focus Area: Info & Comm

Impact: Service

Commitment: New

The ministry will embed accessibility into its internet and intranet websites.

Planned Action(s):

The ministry internet and intranet sites will be compliant with the Government of Ontario Public Web Standard.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 –Mar 11

Results Achieved:

The ministry launched its new intranet and internet sites in September 2009. Both web sites were built in compliance with the Government of Ontario Public Web Standard. The web sites also comply with the ODA, 2001 (Section 6) requirements.

Focus Area: Info & Comm

Impact: Service

Commitment: New

The ministry will communicate accessibility planning to staff.

Planned Action(s):

This year's Accessibility Plan will be posted to the ministry internet and intranet site.

Communication will be provided to staff regarding the Accessibility Plan and the ministry's commitments within the plan. Communications will include contacts who can answer questions about the plan and its commitments.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 –Mar 11

Results Achieved:

To be reported in next year's Accessibility Plan

Focus Area: Employment

Impact: Policy

Commitment: New

The ministry will explore opportunities to hire employees with a diverse range of abilities.

Planned Action(s):

Promote the AbilityEdge internship program to managers. The AbilityEdge program is an internship program managers can use to hire employees with a disability for a period of 6 months.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 –Mar 11

Results Achieved:

Managers were provided training on accessible recruitment and retention strategies at accessibility training held in September 2009.

Focus Area: Employment

Impact: Policy

Commitment: New

The ministry will work to accommodate employees with a diverse range of accessibility needs.

Planned Action(s):

Promote staff awareness of the Employment Accommodation and Return to Work operating policy.

Provide information to managers on the accommodation fund to ensure they have the knowledge to access the fund to support employees various accessibility and accommodation needs.

Assess opportunities to remove/prevent barriers as they are identified.

The ministry will continue its best practice of providing workplace ergonomic assessments to all staff upon request. The ministry will take appropriate action based on all assessments made.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 –Mar 11

Results Achieved:

To be reported in next year's Accessibility Plan.

Focus Area: Employment

Impact: Policy

Commitment: New

The ministry will promote staff awareness in accessibility create an environment of inclusiveness for staff with disabilities.

Planned Action(s):

Go beyond the requirements of the Customer Service Regulation by making accessibility training a requirement for all staff rather than frontline and policy staff only. Mandatory training for all staff will provide an internal knowledge base for staff to provide accessible services to each other.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 –Mar 11

Results Achieved:

The ministry provided training to managers on employee accommodation and accessibility training sessions held in September 2009.

All staff have taken the online training courses "*May I Help You? Welcoming Customers with Disabilities*" and "*May I Help You Supplementary: Ten Things You Need to Know About Providing Accessible Customer Service*" All staff attended an in-person training session on accessibility in September and October 2009.

Focus Area: Employment

Impact: Policy and Service

Commitment: New

Prevent, identify and remove barriers in the hiring process.

Planned Action(s):

The ministry will work with our Human Resources team, OPS Recruitment Centres and OPS Executive Services to ensure the ministry is providing accessibility requirements for the hiring process which includes the following:

- The ministry will give applicants opportunity to identify accessibility needs during the recruitment process.
- The ministry will accommodate people in all employment activities, including the recruitment process, based on the Ontario Human Rights Code (e.g. disability, religion, etc.).
- The ministry will accommodate employees in a timely matter and management will work with employees to identify and remove any barriers that will keep an employee, or prospective employee, from participating equally in all aspects of employment.
- During the recruitment process, people with disabilities will be provided with: alternate formats for written materials, physical adjustments (chairs, workstations, keyboards, etc.) and technical aids/assistive devices.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 –Mar 11

Results Achieved:

To be reported on in next year's Accessibility Plan.

Focus Area: Built Environment

Impact: Policy and Programs

Commitment: New

All newly built or renovated spaces will meet or exceed the Ontario Building Code and "Standards for Barrier-free Design of Ontario Government Facilities" October 2004.

Planned Action(s):

The ministry will continue to ensure that all new and renovated spaces will continue to meet theses

standards. The Ontario Realty Corporation will be updating the current ORC barrier-free design standards. These standards are expected to meet or exceed the new Built Environment Standard. Further review will be undertaken once the new Built Environment Standard comes into force. The Corporate Services Division will play an active role in the development of the new Built Environment Standard and participate in the Built Environment – Standards Development Committee (BE-SDC).

The ministry will assess opportunities to remove physical barriers in areas that are not scheduled for renovation as they arise.

Implementation Timeframe: Sept 08 –Mar 11

Results Achieved:

To be reported on in next year's Accessibility Plan.

For More Information

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

Please phone:

- Ashley Hobb at 416-325-4827
- General inquiry number: (416) 327-8300
- TTY number: 1-877-666-6545 or (416) 229-6086
- 1-800 number: 1-877-665-0662

E-mail: Infomcs@ontario.ca

Ministry website address: www.ontario.ca/mcs

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

TTY: 1-800-268-7095

ISSN 1920-8324