



MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION

[HOME](#) | [ABOUT THE MINISTRY](#) | [PROGRAMS & FUNDING](#) | [SUCCESS STORIES](#) | [NEWSROOM](#) | [PUBLICATIONS](#) | [BLOG](#)



[EMAIL](#)

About the Ministry

- ▶ [About the Ministry](#)
- ▶ [Our Partners](#)
- ▶ [MRI's Results Based Plan](#)
- ▶ [Accessibility](#)
- ▶ [MEDl Service Pledge](#)
- ▶ [French Language Services](#)

Explore Government

Contact us

- ▶ [Have a Question?](#)
- ▶ [Website Feedback](#)
- ▶ [Telephone Directory](#)
- ▶ [ServiceOntario Locations](#)
- ▶ [MPPs](#)

Social Media: Follow Us



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Accessibility

MINISTRY OF RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

2011-2012

Accessibility Plan



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- [Introduction](#)
- [Section One: Report on Measures to Identify, Remove and Prevent Barriers in 2010-11](#)
 - [Customer Service](#)
 - [Information and Communications](#)
 - [Employment](#)
 - [Built Environment](#)
 - [Other](#)
- [Section Two: Measures Planned for 2011-12 and Beyond](#)
 - [Customer Service](#)
 - [Information and Communications](#)
 - [Employment](#)
 - [Built Environment](#)
 - [Procurement](#)
 - [Other](#)
- [Section Three: Review of Acts, Regulations and Policies](#)
- [Glossary of Terms/Acronyms](#)
- [For More Information](#)

Introduction

Note: The content of this plan was developed when the Ministry of Research and Innovation (MRI) was a separate entity from the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade (MEDT), prior to the creation of the new Ministry of Economic Development and Innovation (MEDl). Future accessibility plans will be created under MEDl.

Each year, the Government of Ontario sets a course to prevent, identify and remove barriers for persons with disabilities. Every ministry participates through its annual accessibility plans, as required

under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA).

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) is Ontario's roadmap to become barrier-free by 2025. It includes accessibility standards in:

- Customer service;
- Information and communications;
- Employment;
- Transportation; and
- The built environment.

This year the accessibility plans will help to inform planning requirements under the new Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) enacted last summer under the AODA. The IASR requires the Government of Ontario to develop a multi-year plan to prevent and remove barriers for persons with disabilities.

Our annual accessibility plan outlines the specific steps the government is taking to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Building on last year's plan, the 2011-12 accessibility plan will continue moving the Ministry of Research and Innovation toward the goal of an accessible province for all Ontarians.

The Ministry of Research and Innovation is focused on strengthening Ontario as a leading, innovation-based economy and society where innovative thinkers can flourish and innovative ideas are rewarded – an accessible Ontario is an important corner-stone in building Ontario's innovation economy.

To view other ministries' Accessibility Plans, visit Ontario.ca.

Section One: Report on Measures to Identify, Remove and Prevent Barriers in 2010-11

The Government of Ontario is working to achieve an accessible province by 2025.

In 2010-11, the government continued to comply with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service regulation and continued to implement initiatives to enhance accessibility in other areas: information and communication, employment, transportation and the built environment.

This document includes a summary of the initiatives the Ministry of Research and Innovation implemented in 2010-11.

Customer Service

In 2010-11 the Ministry of Research and Innovation continued to be in compliance with the Accessible Customer Service Standard. This included the following activities:

- Engaged and educated incoming/new staff on accessibility issues and standards;
- Continued to work toward improving our services by providing information in alternate formats upon request;
- Continued to ensure people with disabilities were able to keep their service animals with them on our premises; and
- Continued to ensure the ministry could receive feedback through multiple channels.

Information and Communications

In 2010-11 the Ministry of Research and Innovation undertook the following information and communications activities:

- Ensured the ministry was able to provide all publications in alternate formats upon request.
- Provided ongoing support and consultation services to ministry staff on AODA.
- Provided ongoing communication to staff regarding accessibility.

Employment

In 2010-11 the Ministry of Research and Innovation undertook the following employment activities:

- Provided all possible opportunities for persons with disabilities to have equal access to succeed in the ministry hiring process (e.g., upon request, will provide materials in alternate formats, make physical adjustments, accommodate technical aids or devices, etc.).

- Continued to review our facilities activities in order to work toward preventing, identifying and removing employment barriers, and to accommodate employees with a wide range of disabilities and/or functional limitations.
- Provided support to employees to ensure safe and accessible workplaces.

Built Environment

In 2010-11 the Ministry of Research and Innovation undertook the following built environment activities:

- To ensure that all ministry locations are accessible to staff, clients and people, including persons with disabilities, all newly built or renovated spaces met or exceeded the Ontario Building Code and "Standards for Barrier-Free Design of Ontario Government Facilities.
- On an ongoing basis as required, workspaces were designed and equipped to accommodate employees with a disability and/or a functional limitation.
- Ensured that emergency evacuation plans took into account the varied needs of people with disabilities.

Other

In 2010-11 the Ministry of Research and Innovation also undertook to utilize the OPS Diversity and Inclusion Lens to review the Ontario Capital Growth Corporation Act, 2008.

Section Two: Measures Planned for 2011-12 and Beyond

This year, the Ministry of Research and Innovation's accessibility plan focuses on five areas. While these initiatives will support compliance with the existing Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, they will also help us enhance accessibility in four other areas:

- Employment;
- Information & communications;
- Built environment; and
- Procurement.

Customer Service

The Ministry of Research and Innovation is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities receive accessible goods and services from us. This means they will receive goods and services with the same high quality and timeliness as others. In 2011-12 and beyond, the ministry will undertake the following activities:

- Continue to ensure we are compliant with the Accessible Customer Service Standard and create a comprehensive documentation package annually;
- Engage and educate new/incoming staff on accessibility issues and standards;
- Ensure a feedback process is in place and that the ministry is prepared to receive feedback in multiple formats (e.g., in person, by telephone, in writing, by email, online, on disk or by another method);
- Ensure that people with disabilities are able to keep their service animals with them on the parts of our premises that are open to the public or other third parties, except where the animal is excluded by law; and
- Support accessibility through coordination of activities and tracking of progress against this plan.

Information and Communications

The Ministry of Research and Innovation is committed to making government information and communications accessible to people with disabilities. The information we provide and the ways we communicate are key to delivering our programs and services to the public. In 2011-12 and beyond, the ministry will undertake the following activities:

- Ensure the ministry is prepared to provide communications support and information in multiple accessible formats upon request, in a manner that takes into account a person's needs due to a disability.
- Make sure new internet and intranet websites and web content on those sites must conform with WCAG 2.0 Level AA, other than live captions and audio descriptions.
- Provide ongoing support and consultation services to staff on AODA issues.
- Provide ongoing communication to staff regarding accessibility.

Employment

The Ministry of Research and Innovation is committed to fair and accessible employment practices that attract and retain talented employees with disabilities. In 2011-12 and beyond, the ministry will undertake the following activities:

- Develop a policy on employment as part of the OPS' Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation overall policy.
- Provide all possible opportunities for persons with disabilities to have equal access to succeed in the ministry hiring process.
- Work toward preventing, identifying and removing employment barriers by ensuring accommodation for employees with a wide range of functional disabilities that supports a safe and accessible workplace.

Built Environment

The Ministry of Research and Innovation is committed to greater accessibility in, out of and around the buildings we use. In 2011-12 and beyond, the ministry will undertake the following activities:

- Develop a policy on the built environment as part of the OPS' Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation overall policy;
- Review facilities on an ongoing basis to identify and remove (or prevent) barriers to employment and ensure every employee is able to achieve their full potential. All newly built or renovated spaces will meet or exceed Ontario Building Code and Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC) Standards for Barrier-free Design of Ontario government facilities;
- Ensure workspaces are designed and equipped to accommodate a wide range of disabilities and/or functional limitations when they are identified;
- Ensure that all ministry locations are accessible to staff, clients and other people; and
- Ensure that emergency evacuation plans take into account the varied needs of people with disabilities.

Procurement

The Ministry of Research and Innovation is committed to integrating accessibility considerations into our procurement processes. In 2011-12 and beyond, the ministry will undertake the following activities:

- When deciding to purchase goods or services through the procurement process the ministry will ensure it considers accessibility for persons with disabilities to the goods or service.
- Where applicable, procurement documents will specify the desired accessibility standards to be met and provide guidelines for the evaluation of proposals with respect to those standards.

Other

In addition to the activities outlined above, in 2011-12 and beyond the ministry will undertake the following activities:

- Represent the ministry's employees with disabilities through participation in the OPS Disability Advisory Council.
- Support any new corporate initiatives introduced during the year.
- Support the implementation of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation.

Section Three: Review of Acts, Regulations and Policies

In support of our commitment to improve accessibility for people with disabilities, the Ministry of Research and Innovation will continue to review government initiatives, including legislation and policies, to identify and remove barriers.

Acts, Regulations and Policies Reviewed in 2010-11

The Ministry of Research and Innovation is committed to ensuring that our acts and regulations are reviewed for potential accessibility barriers and concluded a review of its legislation in 2010-11.

Inclusion Lens

In 2011, the Ontario Public Service launched the Inclusion Lens. The Lens is an innovative tool to help address diversity and accessibility. With this tool, ministries can identify and address potential barriers

to people with disabilities, and other barriers that may be present in existing or proposed legislation, policies, programs, practices or services.

In 2010-11, the Ministry of Research and Innovation:

- Ensured that a multidisciplinary team attended the one-day training on using the Inclusion Lens to review legislation for barriers to persons with disabilities.
- Used the OPS Inclusion Lens to review the Ontario Capital Growth Corporation Act, 2008.

In the future, our ministry will:

- Continue to identify opportunities using the Inclusion Lens to review any acts, regulations, policies, programs, practices and services.
- Encourage staff to use the Inclusion Lens when developing or reviewing policies, programs or services.

Glossary of Terms / Acronyms

AODA – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act
IAR – Integrated Accessibility Regulation
MRI – Ministry of Research and Innovation
ODA – Ontarians with Disabilities Act
OPS – Ontario Public Service

For More Information

Questions or comments about the Ministry of Research and Innovation accessibility plan are always welcome.

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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 an accessible province for everyone.

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