

MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVICES

*2006-2007
Accessibility Plan*



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Introduction

In June 2005, the Ontario government took a strong stand on accessibility when it passed the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) into law.

The AODA lays out a comprehensive road map to make Ontario accessible to all people through the development, implementation and enforcement of new, mandatory accessibility standards for some of the most important aspects of people's lives.

The first two standards that are currently being developed cover the areas of transportation and customer service. On June 13, the first anniversary of the passage of the AODA, the government announced the development of three new standards that will address information and communications, the built environment, and employment.

While the government is moving forward to implement the AODA, there will be a transition period where government and the broader public sector will continue to meet their 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 These obligations will remain in effect until they are repealed and replaced by standards under the new act.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 mean real and effective change.

This document is the fourth annual accessibility plan developed by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services. It highlights the achievements of the 2005-06 plan and outlines the commitments for 2006-07 so that no new barriers are created and, over time, existing ones are removed.

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

Message from the Minister



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 fourth year in which plans have been written and are being implemented by organizations such as ours across the province.

This year marks the first anniversary of the landmark Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, (AODA) – legislation that will foster the development, implementation and enforcement of accessibility standards in key areas of daily living.

To commemorate this milestone, three new accessibility standards will be developed in the areas of communications and information, the built environment, and employment. These are in addition to two standards already being developed in the areas of customer service and transportation.

My ministry is committed to improving accessibility through identifying, removing and preventing barriers, working together within our ministry, across government and with our stakeholders in key areas of customer service, employment, communications and information, and the built environment.

Here at the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, we are building on the success of our previous three plans and continuing to look for ways to better meet the needs of people with disabilities who come into contact with this ministry, regardless of whether they are staff, members of the general public, or ministry stakeholders.

This ministry continues to work to better educate staff on accessibility. Examples of this work in the past year include; providing new managers and supervisors

with on-line training on the Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2001, providing further information on accommodation for applicants with disabilities during the recruitment process, and including information on accessibility requirements in the ministry's results-based planning staff training package. Other work this past year includes making accessibility improvements to the ministry's public website; ensuring that the technology allows users to access information in a barrier-free environment, and expanding TTY service in our local offices.

Moving forward, we are training staff on effective customer service standards for people with disabilities; our youth justice staff are looking at procedures and practices that will help support young people with special needs in facilities; and our public website will be redesigned to meet and exceed the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 accessibility standards.

More examples are provided in the pages that follow.

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,

Hon. Mary Anne Chambers

Report on Achievements

2005 - 2006 Accessibility Improvement Initiatives

The Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) was successful in achieving, and in some cases, surpassing, planned commitments outlined in its 2005-2006 accessibility plan. This section provides a status report.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Commitment:

The ministry will continue to meet the accessibility planning requirements of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA).

Status: Completed for the 2005-2006 accessibility planning cycle

Actions:

- In October 2005, the Accessibility Ontario website for Ontarians with Disabilities was expanded and access included on the ministry public website. This expanded, fully-accessible web page has a link from the ministry public website for use by the public and ministry staff.
- Information from the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario (ADO) was incorporated into this site detailing the accessibility features of the public website, tips, and TTY (telephone teletype) and printer friendly information.

Timeframe: October 2005

Commitment:

The 2005-2006 results-based planning training package will include information for staff on the ODA and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA).

Status: Completed

Actions:

- In October 2005 the Accessibility Impact Checklist for Results-based Planning was updated to include information on the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). The information was distributed in November

2005 by the Human Resources Branch (HRB) to policy staff involved with results based planning for 2006-07.

- In addition, the Children, Youth & Social Services Cluster (CYSSC) included information on accessibility obligations and considerations in the information and information technology package for the results-based planning process in November 2005.

Timeframe: October-November 2005

Commitment:

Training on preparing cabinet submissions for ministry staff will include information on accessibility obligations.

Status: Completed

Action:

- In May 2005 a training session on the Cabinet decision-making process including accessibility obligations was provided by the Corporate Policy and Intergovernmental Affairs Branch; all program areas attended.

Timeframe: May 2005

Commitment:

The ministry will continue to fulfill the guidelines for implementing the procurement provisions of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA).

Status: Completed

Actions:

- On October 26, 2005 and December 14, 2005 two full day training sessions on procurement provisions were provided to staff. Procurement training continues to be provided on an as-needed basis. An ODA checklist was provided at the training sessions and is available on the ministry intranet site.
- Children, Youth & Social Services Cluster (CYSSC) and HRB staff worked together to develop a list of web sites related to various aspects of accessibility requirements (e.g. regulatory procurement, policies and guidelines for developing accessible information solutions, current assistive devices, etc.) The links to these websites were targeted to be available to MCYS staff through the CYSSC intranet site as of September 2006.

Timeframe: 2005-06

Commitment:

Help ensure ministry-sponsored events will include pre-planning for accessibility.

Status: Completed

Actions:

- The Human Resources Branch (HRB) developed a quick tips sheet on accessible event planning for trainers and facilitators based on the more extensive policy developed by the ADO.
- Detailed resources for planning accessible events continue to be available through the accessibility web page.
- HRB led ministry events included pre-planning for accessibility.

Timeframe: 2005-06

Commitment:

MCYS will establish the York Simcoe Children's Treatment Centre to deliver local services to the 3800 children requiring specialized treatment services and their families in York Region and Simcoe County.

Status: Completed

Actions:

- The business plan and infrastructure for services for the Children's Treatment Network (formerly the York Simcoe Children's Treatment Centre) was developed in September 2006.
- Clinical service provision began in September 2006.

Timeframe: September 2006

Commitment:

MCYS will continue to play an active role on the Inter-Ministerial Provincial Advisory Committee (IMPAC), a provincial, community-led committee that addresses the needs of children and youth including those with disabilities or multiple disabilities.

Status: Completed

Action:

- The Coordinator of Mental Health and Specialized Services sits on the Inter-Ministerial Provincial Advisory Committee for the Youth Justice Services Division (YJSD) and represents all of the regions.

Timeframe: 2005-06

Commitment:

The ministry will provide additional funding to nine regional service providers for the School Support Program. This will increase the number of autism professionals available to support teachers and educators of school aged children with autism spectrum disorder in the public school system.

Status: Completed

Action:

- Through the School Support Program there are now 188 Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Consultants hired by the nine regional autism service providers to help teachers and educators better support students with autism spectrum disorders. There were 170 ASD Consultants in October 2005 which increased to 188 by September 2006.

Timeframe: 2005-06

EMPLOYMENT**Commitment:**

Continue to communicate the need for all new managers and supervisors to complete ODA online training.

Status: Completed for 2005-06

Action:

- In February 2006 the new location of the on-line ODA computer/based training for managers/supervisors was communicated to staff, and new managers were reminded of the need to complete the training.
- In September 2006, the Human Resources Branch (HRB) asked all new managers, supervisors and human resources staff to verify they had completed the ODA computer-based training that addresses accommodation of employees and applicants with disabilities.

Timeframe: 2005-06

Commitment:

Provide managers and supervisors with additional information on how to provide accommodation to applicants with disabilities in the recruitment process.

Status: Completed

Action:

- A tip sheet for managers and supervisors on providing accommodations in the recruitment process was drafted by the Human Resources Branch (HRB).

Timeframe: 2005-06

Commitment:

Facilitate the exchange of information between employees with disabilities using assistive devices.

Status: Completed

Action:

- Between April and June 2006, the Human Resources Branch (HRB) and the Children, Youth & Social Services Cluster (CYSSC) conducted research to identify technical requirements for information exchange using assistive technology. Though several software programs were evaluated, the result was that the existing email system was the best tool for information exchange using assistive technology.

Timeframe: April-June 2006

Commitment:

Identify any barriers that may exist in the Human Resources Branch (HRB) career development programs or processes.

Status: Completed

Action:

- HRB consulted with Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) and Association of Management, Administrative and Professional Crown Employees of Ontario (AMAPCEO) bargaining agent representatives in June, 2006.

Timeframe: June 2006

Additional Achievements

Achievement:

Ministry job advertisements include consistent wording to reflect the Ontario Public Service (OPS) Equal Opportunity Policy.

Status: Completed

Action:

- In August 2006 the Human Resources Branch (HRB) advised all Human Resources Managers and Human Resource Consultants to include the following with all job advertisements:

The Ontario Public Service is an equal opportunity employer committed to a talented diverse workforce. Accommodation will be provided in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code for all employment activities including the recruitment process. Information available upon request

Timeframe: August 2006

Achievement:

Developed and distributed information to staff on the effects of scented products on indoor air quality and on individuals with fragrance sensitivity.

Status: Completed

Action:

- In April 2006, the Human Resources Branch (HRB) released "Scented Products: Information for All Staff" on the HRB website. The document was designed to increase the awareness of air quality and fragrance sensitivity issues by ministry staff. It complements a previous document for managers and supervisors entitled "Fragrance Sensitivity in the Workplace: An Employment Accommodation Guide for Managers and Supervisors".

Timeframe: April 2006

COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION

Commitment:

The Communications and Marketing Branch (CMB) will research methods to increase access to MCYS news releases and other communication products by people with disabilities who may not rely on mainstream media because of barriers.

Status: Completed

Action:

- CMB met with representatives of VoicePrint, a national radio service for people with disabilities, and explored potential communications opportunities.

Timeframe: 2005-06

Commitment:

The ministry will continue measures to improve TTY (telephone teletype) services.

Status: Completed

Actions:

- In October 2005, the Human Resources Branch (HRB) added the branch TTY telephone number to its letterhead.
- Program Management Division regional offices have added TTY numbers to their letterhead as a further means of promoting the availability of this service to their clients and members of the public.

Timeframe: 2005-06

Commitment:

Establish a Children, Youth & Social Services Cluster (CYSSC) responsibility centre on information and information technology accessibility standards.

Status: Completed

Actions:

- The Children, Youth & Social Services Cluster (CYSSC) identified a coordinator function to maintain and communicate up-to-date information on accessibility standards and accessibility issues relating to software, hardware, networks, etc.

Timeframe: 2005-06

Additional Achievement:**Achievement:**

The Children, Youth & Social Services Cluster (CYSSC) will share information on assistive technology solutions to staff and members of the public through Showcase Ontario.

Status: Completed

Action:

- The Children, Youth & Social Services Cluster (CYSSC) coordinated a demonstration at Showcase Ontario, September 25-27, 2006, of assistive technology devices used by ministry employees and members of the public with disabilities. The purpose of the demonstration was to increase awareness of the importance of providing accessible I&IT solutions and the various assistive technology devices that are available.

Timeframe: September 2006

BUILT ENVIRONMENT**Commitment:**

Funded capital program projects will continue to meet the accessibility standards of the 1997 Ontario Building Code.

Status: Completed

Actions:

- The Capital and Accommodation Services Branch (CASB) continues to ensure capital projects meet accessibility standards and released the following:
 - Requirements for Developing Best Start Infrastructure Projects for Consolidated Municipal Service Managers and District Social Services Administration Boards
 - Guidelines for Developing Infrastructure Projects with Service Providers
- The Best Start Requirements were distributed to regional offices and municipal staff across the province. The Guidelines were distributed to policy and program staff, regional offices, and distributed by regional staff to transfer payment agencies interested in implementing an infrastructure project.
- In January 2006, CASB released the revised Planning and Design Guidelines for Child Care Centres. The original document was created in 1995. A chapter in the Guidelines is dedicated to barrier-free design. It can be found at <http://www.children.gov.on.ca/CS/en/programs/BestStart/Publications/PlanningAndDesign.htm>.
- CASB also held training sessions for each regional office and for corporate staff highlighting the Infrastructure Funding and Partner Facility Renewal Funding process. Accessibility issues and incorporating barrier-free design were highlighted in each session.

Timeframe: 2005-06

Ongoing Accessibility Improvement Initiatives

The Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) was successful in achieving, and in some cases, surpassing, its commitments described in the accessibility plans it issued before 2005 - 2006. This section provides a status report.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Commitment:

The ministry will continue to meet the accessibility planning requirements of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*.

Status:

Completed for the 2005-2006 accessibility planning cycle and ongoing

Actions:

- The ministry maintained its commitment to accessibility planning and reviewed progress at mid-year in preparation for the 2006-07 accessibility plan development. The confidential electronic mailbox that allows staff to identify barriers or make suggestions on accessibility continued to be available throughout the year.
- The ministry through the Human Resources Branch (HRB) consulted with the ADO and other ministry ODA leads throughout the year on accessibility planning.
- The Human Resources Branch (HRB) researched and identified the new Accessibility Directorate of Ontario (ADO) on-line training, on welcoming customers with disabilities, as an effective method of increasing staff awareness.
- HRB staff provided comments on the development of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) Initial Proposed Customer Service Standard as well as on future government-wide accessibility planning initiatives.

Timeframe: 2005-06 and ongoing

Commitment:

The Office of Child and Family Service Advocacy, which advises the Minister of Children and Youth Services, will continue to provide child advocacy services for children who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing in Ontario in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of the Deaf community. The Office will also continue to make special accommodation for children and youth with other disabilities, special needs or medical issues.

Status: Completed and ongoing

Actions:

- The Advocacy Officer working with children with hearing loss visits all the Provincial and Demonstration Schools to provide child advocacy.
- This Advocacy Officer has a TTY in his office and at the schools.
- There is a TTY in the general reception area.
- There are two staff in the office with basic American sign language skills.
- The physical building is barrier free.
- The Office of Child and Family Service Advocacy also has an Advocacy Officer who provides advocacy for children and youth who are visually impaired or deaf/blind. Her business card is written in Braille to inform these children and youth of their right to contact the Office of Child and Family Service Advocacy

Timeframe: 2005-06 and ongoing

Commitment:

Make TTY services available in MCYS Youth Justice Services Division (YJSD) regional offices and directly operated youth justice custody and detention facilities. Probation Offices will access TTY through the Regional Office, as needed. This will facilitate confidential communication, as required by the Youth Criminal Justice Act, between clients, family and community partners who require the use of a TTY.

Status: In progress

Actions:

- Northern Regional Office purchased and placed a TTY unit at the Sudbury Probation Office in Feb 2006. Cecil Facer Youth Centre will get and implement TTY services. All other Northern Probation Area Offices receive TTY support from the Regional Office.
- In the Eastern Region, Brookside Youth Centre and Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre Youth Unit now have access to TTY equipment. Eastern Probation Area Offices receive TTY support from the Regional Office, as needed.

- Eastern Regional Office has also purchased specialized amplification equipment for a staff member who requires it.
- Western Regional Office has TTY service. Sprucedale and Bluewater Regional Centres also have TTY service available. All Western Probation Area Offices receive TTY support from the Regional Office, as needed.
- YJSD will purchase TTYs and implement effective services in Central region. All Central Probation Area Offices will receive TTY support from the Regional Office, as needed.

Timeframe: 2005-06 and ongoing

Commitment:

The Management Support Branch's Integrated Services for Children Unit will undertake several initiatives in 05-06 to increase accessibility.

Status: Completed

Actions:

- The unit assigned a staff member who researched best practices criteria for an accessibility checklist for the unit in May 2006 and with ADO, the unit developed in August 2006 an accessibility checklist to review policies, programs and services.
- Staff training on accessibility was provided in August 2006.
- The unit worked with ADO and HRB to develop a survey of stakeholders to help identify accessibility issues in policy, programs and services.

Timeframe: 2005-06 and ongoing

Commitment:

Corporate Policy and Intergovernmental Affairs Branch (CPIA) will continue to consider the accessibility needs of Ontarians with disabilities in federal/provincial/territorial relations.

Status: Completed for 2005-2006 and ongoing

Actions:

- CPIA continues to pursue initiatives for persons with disabilities as the co-chair of the Federal/Provincial/ Territorial (FPT) Benefits and Services for Persons with Disabilities Working Group. Key achievements include the following:
 - In October 2005, FPT Ministers released a public communiqué that reaffirmed their commitment to the objective of the full inclusion of Canadians with disabilities in society.

- The Canada-Ontario Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities, extended to March 31, 2007, helps improve employment outcomes of persons with disabilities.
- Discussions of the proposed Federal National Disability Act are ongoing and could help establish national accessibility standards; scope of the proposed Act is yet to be determined.

Timeframe: 2005-06 and ongoing

Commitment:

The needs of people with disabilities will be considered in emergency management planning.

Status: Completed for 2005-2006 and ongoing

Action:

- The Emergency Management Unit (EMU) is participating in a multi-ministry initiative to develop an emergency preparedness guide for people with disabilities.

Timeframe: 2005-06 and ongoing

Rationale:

The release of the guide for people with disabilities was expected by June 2006, but has been delayed by the lead, Emergency Management Ontario (EMO), until fall 2006.

Additional Achievement:

Achievement:

The Youth Justice Services Division (YJSD) of the MCYS reviewed its practices and procedures for assessing and identifying young people with special needs.

Status: Completed for 2005-06 and ongoing

Actions:

- YJSD is developing a standardized comprehensive intake/assessment tool for young people, including those with special needs, and disability related needs, to be used at all direct operated and transfer payment residential youth justice facilities.
- Youth factors such as emotional, mental and physical considerations will be incorporated into the standards for intake processes and the intake assessment tool.

Timeframe: 2005-06 and ongoing

EMPLOYMENT

Commitment:

The ministry will continue its strong commitment to meeting the individual accommodation needs of employees and applicants with disabilities.

Status: Completed for 2005-06 and ongoing

Actions:

- MCYS continued to accommodate employees and applicants with disabilities, for work-related barriers, by implementing the Ontario Public Service (OPS) policies on employment accommodation, and workplace discrimination and harassment prevention. A wide variety of individualized accommodations are provided to employees and applicants. The following is a selection of accommodations provided in the past year:
 - Voice recognition software was purchased to assist an employee who has a learning disability
 - An employee with a severe neck injury was provided with an ergonomic assessment and modifications to the employee's workstation
 - Installation of ceiling track lift in washroom
 - Provision of sign language Interpreter services.
 - Purchase, installation and training on use of emergency evacuation chairs
 - Temporary relocation of an employee with an allergy to an alternate office
 - Installation, customization and training on a voice recognition assistive device system for operating the computer
 - Provision of ongoing workplace attendant care services
 - Modification of office workstations and tasks based on assessments conducted by registered occupational therapists
- The Human Resources Branch (HRB) developed a guide for managers and supervisors on the evacuation of employees requiring assistance in the event of an emergency. The guide provides practical advice on how best to support employees requiring assistance and how to develop individual evacuation plans for these employees.
- On September 12, 2005 a new Electronic Manual of Ministry Administration (EMMA) intranet site for staff was launched which is compliant with the accessibility requirements of the ODA.

Timeframe: 2005-06 and ongoing

COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION

Commitment:

The ministry will continue to provide official ministry publications in alternate formats upon request.

Status: Completed

Action:

- There were no requests received in 2005-06.

Timeframe: 2005-06

Commitment:

The MCYS public website will continue to meet the accessibility requirements of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA).

Status: Completed for 2005-06 and ongoing

Actions:

- The Communications and Marketing Branch webmaster continued to monitor and verify that all new material posted to the MCYS public website meets accessibility standards.
- All new material posted to the MCYS internal intranet website also continued to meet accessibility standards.

Timeframe: 2005-06 and ongoing

Commitment:

The Children, Youth & Social Services Cluster (CYSSC) which provides information and information technology services to MCYS will continue to track and provide timely solutions to information and information technology accessibility problems when they arise.

Status: Completed for 2005-06 and ongoing

Action:

- CYSSC business consulting managers continue to respond to accessibility issues related to information and information technology that are raised by MCYS staff.

Timeframe: 2005-06 and ongoing

Commitment:

The Children, Youth & Social Services Cluster (CYSSC) will research cost-effective methods to provide information in alternate formats and alternate media.

Status: Completed for 2005-06 and ongoing

Action:

- Research and evaluation of options for alternate formats has been conducted by cluster staff. The coordinator will complete the analysis in 06-07.

Timeframe: 2005-06 and ongoing

Rationale:

Due to a number of issues related to cluster disentanglement, the coordinator was not identified until September 2006.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT**Commitment:**

The ministry will continue to improve the accessibility of their facilities and offices where and whenever possible.

Status: Completed for 2005-06 and ongoing

Actions:

- MCYS continued to improve the accessibility of offices and facilities wherever possible. Any project that involves either the renovation of space or the creation of new space is implemented using accessibility and barrier-free designs.

- New leases and lease renewals continued to be negotiated to address the elimination of any barriers.
- Management Board approval increased the space of 23 youth justice probation offices from the government standard of 200 square feet per person to 275 square feet per person to support program delivery and accessibility requirements.
- Recent alteration projects in both field offices and corporate locations have focused on the creation of smaller, more efficiently designed workstations to permit improved staff and client circulation and accessibility.

Timeframe: 2005-06 and ongoing

Commitment:

Improve the accessibility of MCYS youth justice probation offices through renovations or relocations where possible.

Status: Completed for 2005-06 and ongoing (multi-year project to 2007)

Actions:

- Renovations completed in Western Region, with the exception of the Cambridge Probation Office which will move to a new location that will be barrier free by the end of the 2006-07 fiscal year.
- In the Northern Region relocation planning was done in compliance with the ODA accessibility requirements for four probation offices which will relocate in 2006-07; Manitoulin Island, Bracebridge, Kirkland Lake and Huntsville
- In the Eastern Region, all probation offices meet ministry accessibility requirements as relocations and retrofits were completed during the 2005/06 year.
- Central Region is continuing with numerous probation office relocations and/or retrofits. Offices that have been completed are compliant with ODA requirements and incorporate barrier-free designs; future designs will continue to be barrier-free, in compliance with the ODA.

Timeframe: 2005-06 and ongoing

Commitment:

MCYS will establish a flagship youth centre of excellence that is accessible to people with disabilities. The Greater Toronto Area (GTA) Youth Centre will

provide a safe, secure and rehabilitative living environment for male and female young people in custody/detention.

Status: Completed for 2005-06 and ongoing (multi-year project to 2008)

Actions:

- Planning for renovations and construction of this new GTA facility, as well as for programming, includes consideration of the accessibility needs of people with disabilities. For example, consideration was given to the need for accessible washrooms, showers and bedroom areas and all common areas open to public access.
- Construction of the new GTA facility is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2006.

Timeframe: 2005-06 and ongoing

Additional Achievement:

Achievement:

Thistletown Regional Centre (TRC) and the Child and Parent Resource Institute (CPRI) continued to work towards the goal of providing barrier-free access to all areas and buildings on the grounds.

Status:

Some work completed in 2005-06 and requests submitted for funding remainder of work (ongoing).

Action:

- At TRC and CPRI renovations to buildings, homes and grounds were made to increase barrier-free access for clients, families and staff.

Timeframe: 2005-06 and ongoing

ACTS AND REGULATIONS

Commitment:

MCYS will continue to consider acts or regulations for a review for barriers to people with disabilities as work is planned.

Status: Completed for 2005-06 and ongoing

Action:

- Senior management and staff who work with acts and regulations continue to be advised, through the results-based planning process and the accessibility planning process, to consider acts and regulations for a review of barriers to people with disabilities in any work they undertake.
- The Capital and Accommodation Services Branch provided input on impact of changes regarding accessibility to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on the new Ontario Building Code.

Timeframe: 2005-06 and ongoing

Commitments — Measures to Prevent New Barriers in 2006-07

In the coming year, the ministry commits to continuing to meet the accessibility planning requirements of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 and to support the Accessibility Directorate on Ontario (ADO) and its activities. Further, the ministry will assess its acts, regulations, policies, programs, practices and services to determine their effect on accessibility for persons with disabilities. This section summarizes these commitments.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

- The ministry will provide training for staff on customer service to people with disabilities.
- The ministry's Youth Justice Services Division (YJSD) is reviewing its practices and procedures for assessing and identifying young people with special needs in youth facilities. Youth factors such as emotional, mental and physical considerations will be incorporated into the standards for intake processes and the intake assessment tool.
- The ministry will provide funding to train approximately 350 resource teachers and home visitors on how to support children with autism spectrum disorders in child care settings.
- The ministry encourages the inclusion of children with special needs into community child care services with their peers and provides funding for special needs resources.
- The ministry continues to improve the accessibility of its offices and facilities for staff and clients with disabilities.

EMPLOYMENT

- The ministry will continue its strong commitment to meeting the individual needs of employees and applicants with disabilities.
- Several areas of the ministry will be providing staff training on effective customer service for people with disabilities

- The ministry will develop information to assist staff in providing effective services to people who use sign language or intervener services.

COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION

- The ministry will continue to meet the accessibility requirements of the ODA.
- The ministry's external Internet website will be redesigned to exceed ODA accessibility standards.
- The ministry's webmaster will continue to verify that all new material posted to the MCYS public website and to the internal intranet will meet accessibility standards.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- New leases and lease renewals will be negotiated to address the elimination of any barriers to staff, clients or members of the public with disabilities.
- Where feasible and appropriate the ministry will continue to apply the most effective barrier-free design principles for the situation, rather than meet minimum standards of accessibility.

ACTS AND REGULATIONS

- The identification of barriers and accessibility-related issues will be included in the review of new statutes, regulations and amendments.

Commitments —

Barriers to be Addressed in 2006-07

The Ministry of Children and Youth Services commits to identify, remove and prevent barriers to persons with disabilities in the coming year. This section summarizes these commitments.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Barrier:

Assessments, programs and interventions in the Youth Justice Services Division (YJSD) may be challenged to address the needs of youth with disabilities (e.g. deaf, hard-of hearing, blind, learning disabled).

Commitment:

The ministry's Youth Justice Services Division (YJSD) will continue to review its practices and procedures for assessing and identifying young people with special needs in youth justice facilities.

Actions:

- Determine whether current practices and procedures should extend to all youth justice programming.
- Develop a standardized comprehensive intake assessment tool for all direct operated and transfer payment facilities.
- As needed, direct operated and transfer payment agencies will be required to develop program descriptions and interventions that address specific disabilities including learning disabilities.

Responsibility:

YJSD Corporate Service Unit and Regions

Timeline:

September 2007

Barrier:

Resource teacher and home visitors in child care settings may not be aware how to support children with autism spectrum disorders.

Commitment:

The ministry will provide training for approximately 350 resource teachers and home visitors on how to support children with autism spectrum disorders in child care settings.

Action:

- The ministry will contract with the Geneva Centre for Autism to provide training activities.

Responsibility: Specialized Services & Supports Branch, Policy Development and Program Design Division

Timeline: 2006-07

Barrier:

There are some barriers for children with special needs in community child care settings.

Commitment:

The ministry's policy encourages the inclusion of children with special needs into community child care services with their peers.

Action:

- Special Needs Resourcing funds are used to purchase the services of resource teachers, specialized toys and equipment for children with special needs attending day nurseries and private-home day care.

Responsibility:

Early Years Program Branch, Strategic Policy and Planning Division

Timeline:

September 2007 (ongoing)

Barrier:

New staff and managers may not be aware of accessibility issues in the workplace.

Commitment:

The ministry's Human Resources Branch (HRB) will facilitate the training of ministry staff that serve the public, on providing effective customer service to people with disabilities.

Action:

- HRB will disseminate the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario's on-line training, "May I Help You – Welcoming Customers with Disabilities", to ministry staff when it becomes available.

Responsibility:

HRB

Timeline:

September 2007

Barrier:

Staff and managers may not know how to arrange services for clients or staff that use sign language interpretation.

Commitment:

The Human Resources Branch (HRB) will develop information to assist ministry staff in providing effective services to people who use sign language interpretation (people who are deaf, deafened or hard of hearing) or intervener services (people who are deaf-blind).

Action:

- HRB will develop an information sheet on how to arrange sign language interpretation or intervener services for clients or applicants who require these services.

Responsibility:

HRB

Timeline:

February 2007

Barrier:

There may be potential barriers in the provision of reception services to people with disabilities

Commitment:

Youth Justice Services Division will conduct a review to evaluate whether there are any barriers in this area.

Action:

- As needed, determine how best to provide front-line reception staff with training on how to effectively communicate with people who are deaf, hard-of-hearing and/or visually impaired.
- As needed, a pilot will be put in place to provide one-hour training sessions on appropriate protocols for providing effective reception services to persons with disabilities.

Responsibility:

YJSD Corporate Service Unit and Regions

Timeline:

September 2007

Barrier:

There are some barriers in customer service provision to people with disabilities.

Commitment:

Child and Parent Resource Institute (CPRI) and Thistletown Regional Centre (TRC) customer reception staff will be provided with formal training. This will be incorporated as a job specific learning and development plan requirement. This will be mandatory for all new front line reception staff.

Action:

- New reception staff will be provided with one hour training session on appropriate protocols for providing effective reception services to persons with disabilities.

Responsibility:

CPRI and TRC

Timeline:

October 2006 (CPRI) and June 2007 (TRC)

Barrier:

There are some physical barriers in service provision to people with disabilities.

Commitment:

Physical Plant management staff at CPRI and TRC will attend knowledge/skills development course/public forum on barrier-free design and other accessibility measures.

Action:

- Attendance at one day training opportunity, on barrier-free design and other accessibility measures, will be included in the annual professional development plan for managers involved in building services management.

Responsibility:

CPRI & TRC

Timeline:

April 2007 (CPRI) and June 2007 (TRC)

Barrier:

There are some systemic barriers in service provision to people with disabilities.

Commitment:

The Child and Parent Resource Institute (CPRI) will implement desktop videoconferencing (telepsychiatry) services at CPRI and networked via the Ontario Telehealth Network. This will provide increased service access for persons with limited mobility in remote locations and will eliminate concerns for clinicians with mobility disabilities.

Action:

- Procurement and implementation of video-conferencing equipment and development of service protocols.

Responsibility:

CPRI

Timeline:

March 2007

Barrier:

There may be some systemic barriers to people with disabilities through Federal/Provincial/ Territorial (FPT) initiatives.

Commitment:

Corporate Policy and Intergovernmental Affairs Branch (CPIA) will continue to consider the accessibility needs of Ontarians with disabilities in federal/provincial/territorial relations.

Action:

- CPIA will continue to pursue initiatives for persons with disabilities as the co-chair of the Federal/Provincial/ Territorial (FPT) Benefits and Services for Persons with Disabilities Working Group.

Responsibility:

Corporate Policy and Intergovernmental Affairs Branch (CPIA)

Timeline:

2006-07

Barrier:

Planning for emergencies has not been as inclusive as it should be in considering the needs of people with disabilities in emergency planning

Commitment:

The needs of people with disabilities will be considered in emergency management planning.

Actions:

- The Emergency Management Unit (EMU) will consult with external organizations of and for people with disabilities, with employees with disabilities, and with non-government/transfer payment sectors on the planning and the provision of services to persons with disabilities in an emergency and for feedback on the MCYS Emergency Management Plan.
- Consultation will be undertaken with MCYS employees with disabilities and non-government/TP sectors regarding planning and the provision of services to persons with disabilities in an emergency.

Responsibility:

Emergency Management Unit (EMU)

Timeline: 2006-07

EMPLOYMENT ACCOMMODATION**Barrier:**

Identify and address barriers to employment accommodation.

Commitment:

The ministry will continue to accommodate employees and applicants with disabilities, for work-related barriers, by implementing the Ontario Public Service policies on employment accommodation and workplace discrimination and harassment prevention.

Action:

- Ongoing

Responsibility:

All ministry management

Timeline

2006-07

Barrier:

Identify and address barriers in employment accommodation and return to work of employees with injury, illness or disabilities in jobs with heavy physical demands.

Commitment:

The Human Resources Branch (HRB) in consultation with the Youth Justice Services Division (YJSD) will investigate methods to enhance the provision of employment accommodation to staff in YJSD regional offices and facilities.

Action:

- HRB and YJSD will conduct a needs assessment and evaluate options.

Responsibility:

HRB & YJSD

Timeline:

April 2007

COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION**Barrier:**

The ministry's public website may not be completely accessible for people with disabilities.

Commitments:

The ministry's public website will continue to meet the accessibility requirements of the ODA. The ministry's redesigned public website will surpass government requirements for accessibility.

The Communications and Marketing Branch webmaster will continue to verify that all new material posted to the MCYS public website will meet accessibility standards.

Action:

- The ministry's public website redesign in 2006-2007 will result in a ministry public website that meets Priorities 1, 2 and 3 of World Wide Web Consortium standards (see <http://www.w3.org/TR/WAI-WEBCONTENT/full-checklist.html>), exceeding OPS accessibility standards.

Responsibility:

Communications and Marketing Branch

Timeline:

March 2007

Barrier:

The ministry's internal intranet site may not be completely accessible for staff with disabilities.

Commitment:

The ministry internal intranet website will continue to meet the accessibility requirements of the ODA. The ministry's redesigned internal intranet site will surpass government requirements for accessibility.

The Communications and Marketing Branch webmaster will continue to verify that all new material posted to the MCYS internal intranet website will continue to meet accessibility standards.

Action:

- The ministry internal intranet redesign in 2006-2007 will result in a ministry intranet site that meets Priorities 1, 2 and 3 of World Wide Web Consortium standards (see <http://www.w3.org/TR/WAI-WEBCONTENT/full-checklist.html>), exceeding OPS accessibility standards.

Responsibility:

Communications and Marketing Branch

Timeline:

September 2007

Barrier:

The Ministry of Children and Youth Services public Internet and internal intranet websites may not be completely accessible for Youth Justice Services Division (YJSD) staff and clients with disabilities.

Commitments:

- YJSD will review barriers to access on the YJSD public website and on the internal intranet website.
- YJSD will develop a process to accommodate those unique information and request for relevant published material.

Actions:

- YJSD will work with the Communication and Marketing Branch (CMB) to examine what, if any, barriers are on the YJSD public website and/or on the internal intranet website.
- YJSD with CMB will develop a process that provides for timely access to relevant published material.

Responsibility:

CMB, YJSD Corporate Services Unit and Integration Branch

Timeline:

Sept 2007

Barrier:

Removing barriers to TTY users.

Commitment:

HRB will support ministry offices in improving TTY services.

Action:

- A best practice guideline on answering TTY calls will be incorporated into the existing TTY Services Guide.

Responsibility:

HRB

Timeline:

September 2007

Barrier:

Removing information and information technology barriers.

Commitment:

The Children, Youth & Social Services Cluster (CYSSC) which provides information and information technology services to MCYS will continue to track and provide timely solutions to information and information technology accessibility problems when they arise.

Action:

- CYSSC business consulting managers will continue to respond to accessibility issues related to information and information technology that are raised by MCYS staff.

Responsibility:

CYSSC

Timeline:

September 2007

Barrier:

Addressing information and information technology barriers.

Commitment:

The Children, Youth & Social Services Cluster (CYSSC) will research cost-effective methods to provide information in alternate formats and alternate media.

Action:

- Research and evaluation of options for alternate formats has been conducted by cluster staff. The coordinator will complete the analysis in 06-07.

Responsibility:

CYSSC

Timeline:

September 2007

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Barrier:

Some of the ministry's locations may not be completely accessible to staff and clients with disabilities.

Commitment:

The ministry will continue to improve the accessibility of their facilities and offices where and whenever possible.

Actions:

- Priority will continue to be given to removing barriers affecting employees, clients and the public with disabilities.
- New leases and lease renewals will continue to be negotiated to address the elimination of any barriers to staff, clients or the public with disabilities.

Responsibility:

Capital and Accommodations Services Branch (CASB)

Timeline:

September 2007 (ongoing)

Barrier:

Some of the ministry's locations may not be completely accessible to staff and clients with disabilities.

Commitment:

Through the year, projects will continue to be required to meet, at minimum, the barrier-free design standards of the 1997 Ontario Building Code.

Action:

- Where feasible and appropriate, the Capital and Accommodation Services Branch (CASB) will continue to apply the most effective barrier-free design principles for the situation, rather than meet minimum standards of accessibility.

Responsibility:

Capital and Accommodations Services Branch (CASB)

Timeline:

September 2007 (ongoing)

Barrier:

Some of the ministry's locations may not be completely accessible to clients and staff with disabilities

Commitment:

Continue to renovate residential homes, buildings and walkways at Thistletown Regional Centre (TRC) and Child and Parent Resource Institute (CPRI) to eliminate access/mobility barriers as a regular component to the capital planning initiatives.

Action:

- TRC and CPRI will submit barrier-free renovation initiatives for the buildings in the capital plan for priority funding requests.

Responsibility:

TRC and CPRI

Timeline:

2006-2007

Barrier:

Persons with hearing disabilities at CPRI cannot hear the fire alarm when activated.

Commitment:

CPRI will ensure persons with disabilities have a mechanism that alerts them to life safety events (i.e., fire alarms, hazardous situation announcements etc.).

Actions:

- Provide persons with hearing disabilities with vibrating pagers.
- Ensure persons with other auditory or visual impairments are linked with a "buddy system" for life safety support.

Responsibility:

CPRI Program Managers

Timeline:

October 2006

Barrier:

At Child Parent resource Institute (CPRI), people with disabilities may experience difficulty in common areas (i.e. washrooms) which are often dark as people are encouraged to turn off lights to save power.

Commitment:

CPRI will install motion sensors in all washrooms and common rooms that will illuminate on entry.

Action:

- Installation of motion sensor/controlled timer lighting in common rooms.

Responsibility:

CPRI

Timeline:

March 2007

Barrier:

Youth Justice Services Division (YJSD) worksites are not fully compliant with the ODA.

Commitment:

Improve the accessibility of youth probation offices where possible.

Action:

- Improve accessibility of current probation offices through renovations or relocations (multi-year project to 2004 to 2007).

Responsibility:

Capital and Accommodation Services Branch and YJSD Regions

Timeline:

September 2007

Barrier:

YJSD youth facilities are not fully compliant with the ODA.

Commitment:

MCYS will establish two (2) youth centres that are accessible to people with disabilities.

Action:

- Planning for renovations and/or construction of the Sault Ste Marie and GTA facility, as well as for programming, will include consideration of the accessibility needs of people with disabilities. For example, consideration will be given to the need for accessible washrooms, showers and bedroom areas and all common areas open to public access (multi-year project to 2008).

Responsibility:

CASB and YJSD Central Region

Timeline:

September 2007

Barrier:

Due to furniture configuration and/or storage, some of the ministry's meeting rooms are not accessible for persons with disabilities.

Commitment:

The Human Resources Branch (HRB) will provide information to managers in order to facilitate the use of ministry meeting rooms for persons with disabilities.

Action:

- Occupational Health and Safety Unit of HRB will develop and disseminate to management, best practices for boardroom/furniture utilization from an accessibility perspective.

Responsibility:

HRB

Timeline:

May 2007

ACTS AND REGULATIONS

Barrier:

Acts and regulations may not have appropriate language or be fully compliant with accessibility requirements.

Commitment:

The ministry will review new acts and regulations for barriers to accessibility.

Action:

- The ministries policy division staff will review new acts and regulations so that they are as barrier free as possible.
- The Strategic Policy and Planning Division staff will review for barriers to people with disabilities in revising O. Reg. 262 under the Day Nurseries Act.
- The Policy Development and Program Design Division will review, for barriers to people with disabilities, regulations being developed to Bill 210, the Child and Family Services Statute Law Amendment Act.

Responsibility:

Ministry policy divisions

Timeline:

September 2007 (ongoing)

Barrier:

Acts and regulations may not have appropriate language or be fully compliant with accessibility requirements.

Commitment:

YJSD will continue to ensure that all programs and services reflect any revisions in provincial acts and regulations that would impact young persons and employees.

Actions:

- Senior management and staff working with acts and regulations will continue to be advised, through the results-based planning process and the accessibility planning process, to consider acts and regulations and conduct a review for barriers to people with disabilities in work they undertake.
- YJSD will review acts and regulations for language (e.g., legislation referring to a “handicapped” person instead of a “person with a disability”).
- YJSD will review policies and procedures that may have an adverse impact on people with disabilities such as filling out complicated forms.

Responsibility:

YJSD Senior Management

Timeline:

September 2007

For More Information

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

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Visit the Ministry of Community and Social Services Accessibility Ontario web portal at: 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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