



Ministry of Children and Youth Services

2014 ODA Accessibility Plan

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Executive Summary

This plan outlines our accessibility commitments, the progress achieved and our vision for the future. In Section One, we report on our 2014 commitments. In Section Two, we outline what we have planned for 2015 and 2016. Though MCYS continues to meet legislative obligations, we also strive to embed accessibility into everything we do. Within this plan, you will see how accessibility considerations were built into events, communication standards, emergency management plans, employment accommodations and more.

At the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS), we aim to develop programs and policies that celebrate and reflect the multi-faceted diversity of the province's children and youth. This is clear throughout our 2013-18 Strategic Plan, *Growing. Together.* The strategic plan outlines that to provide the best supports for each young person, we must deliver services that are barrier-free, inclusive and culturally responsive. To achieve this, the goals listed within the strategic plan also outline that we must provide opportunities for all children and youth to be resilient, develop the necessary skills to shape their lives, have their voice heard, and receive high-quality services. This is especially important for children and youth with disabilities.

In addition, we are working collaboratively with the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Ministry of Education to establish processes that support integrated transition planning for young people with special needs to prepare and plan for adulthood. Through integrated transition planning, young people with development disabilities and their families have better access to the full range of service and support options.

Growing. Together. was also the first time the MCYS Strategic Plan included a focus on organizational health and excellence. We recognize the passion and commitment of every MCYS employee for improving the outcomes of children, youth and families in Ontario. These contributions are valued, and employees are supported to understand how their work is connected to the success of the organization. The Deputy Minister of MCYS is the executive champion of the OPS-wide "Healthy Workplace, Healthy Minds" initiative, aimed at promoting accessible work spaces for employees experiencing mental health issues in

their lives. We also believe that leadership and innovation is possible at all levels, not just at the top.

We understand that fostering healthy, skilled and inspired employees requires that the ministry views accessibility, diversity, inclusion, employee engagement, and greening as overall components of a healthy workplace culture. The Corporate Services Branch, Renewal Strategies Office (RSO) leads many programs related to these components and have begun implementing an integrated approach to workplace culture. RSO staff will collaborate with divisional champions, working groups and the senior management committee to implement the approach.

The RSO is also responsible for compiling the feedback received from our program areas to draft the Accessibility Plan. Though the RSO will raise awareness of the Accessibility Plan, implementation is a shared responsibility of the entire ministry.

We encourage you to review the plan and submit your feedback to us. You will find many methods to contact us on the final page of this plan.

Introduction

Under the [Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 \(ODA\)](#), ministries are required to produce, and make available to the public, annual plans indicating how ministries will identify and remove barriers to accessibility.

The ODA Accessibility Plan (the Plan) is an opportunity to showcase our ministry's accomplishments and to demonstrate how we are modeling compliance with regulated accessibility requirements.

In 2010, MCYS began complying with the first accessibility standard established under the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\) - Accessibility Standards for Customer Service](#). In 2011, [the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation \(IASR\)](#) was introduced, establishing phased-in requirements in the following accessibility standards:

- Information and Communications;
- Employment;
- Transportation; and,
- Design of Public Spaces

Each year, the Ontario Public Service (OPS) as an obligated organization, confirms its compliance with the requirements of these standards to the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario. The Plan provides an opportunity for our ministry to go beyond confirming compliance with these regulated minimum requirements. Specifically, it allows us to highlight the measures taken by the ministry to identify and remove barriers in the previous year while proposing measures for the coming year that will make the ministry more accessible.

The IASR establishes that obligated organizations, shall create and maintain a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) that outlines the organization's strategies to prevent and remove barriers to accessibility. To meet the MYAP requirement, the OPS released [Leading the Way Forward](#) in 2012.

Organizations are also required to develop an annual status report that highlights progress in advancing the MYAP strategy and in meeting the requirements of the IASR. In 2013, the OPS released its first [Annual Status Report](#), highlighting progress made in 2012.

The MCYS 2014 ODA Plan demonstrates how the measures our ministry has taken and the measures we propose for the coming years support the key outcomes and deliverables of the of the MYAP.

To access the MCYS and other ministries' 2014 ODA Accessibility Plans, visit [Ontario.ca](#).

Section One: Report on Measures Taken by MCYS in 2014

Customer Service

OPS MYAP Key Outcome:

People with disabilities who are OPS customers receive quality goods and services in a timely manner.

2014 Deliverables and Published Commitments

- New staff trained on accessibility.
- Accessibility criteria built into decision-making, project management, procurement, technology, infrastructure, I & IT and training.
- Increased awareness in OPS of accessibility best practices in customer service.
- Ensure that all branch level emergency management plans include an updated “accessibility impact statement” that outlines the ministry’s commitment to deliver services to people with disabilities as they relate to:
 - non-emergency events whereby people with disabilities may be affected by a disruption to normal business processes; and
 - emergency events whereby an alternative service delivery location is utilized to ensure the continuity of business services.
- Develop and host advanced accessibility training for staff.
- Encourage the use of the OPS Inclusion Lens when developing/renewing service agreements.

Measures Taken by MCYS in 2014:

- According to statistics provided by the Centre for Leadership and Learning (CFL), 92% of MCYS staff has completed the mandatory customer service training course, *May I Help You? Welcoming Customers with Disabilities* and 90% have completed the supplement: *Ten Things You Need to Know about Accessible Customer Service*.
- The Ontario Municipalities Social Services Association (OMSSA) has developed a thorough *Conducting Accessible Meetings Guide*. To increase awareness of best practices for customer service, this guide is followed by the Corporate Services Branch when planning ministry-wide events for staff such as employee orientation or

division days. For example, at the annual Leadership Summit, which brings the ministry's leaders together from across the province:

- The Corporate Services Branch conducted a site visit to ensure the venue was accessible. The meeting rooms were inspected to ensure they were large enough and could be set up for participants to move about easily.
 - Volunteers received a pre-event orientation session and were briefed on the location of elevators, accessible washrooms and accessible fire exits.
 - A post-event evaluation form was developed and participants were asked whether their accommodation or dietary needs were met.
 - This year, presentations were videotaped, captioned and posted online for all staff to view.
- The OMSSA guide has been posted in the Tools and Resources section of our Diversity and Inclusion intranet page.
 - When deciding to purchase goods or services, MCYS procurement activities are guided by the Management Board of Cabinet procurement directive which includes the principle of accessibility. Business case templates include questions and answers about accessibility.
 - The 2013-16 MCYS Inclusion Plan was launched to all staff and posted on the ministry's intranet site. The Corporate Services Branch will organize events and raise awareness by working with Diversity and Inclusion Champions to strengthen implement the goals of the Inclusion Plan within our organization.
 - All approved branch level emergency management plans include an updated accessibility statement related to the ministry's commitment to deliver services to people with disabilities. In addition, employees who may require assistance are invited to self-identify and arrangements are pre-planned to provide necessary assistance in the event of an emergency and/or evacuation.
 - The Emergency Management Unit developed an Accessibility Checklist for assessing Alternate Service Delivery Locations (ASDL) and provided a take-away exercise for completing the Accessibility Checklist for ASDLs.
 - Accessibility, diversity and inclusion CFLC courses are listed on the *MCYS Learns* portal on our intranet site. All staff will be advised of the requirement to take new courses as they are developed through ministry-wide communications.
 - The ministry has an ongoing commitment to encourage all staff to use the OPS Inclusion Lens when developing or renewing materials for internal or external use.

Information and Communications

MYAP Key Outcome:

Information and Communications are available in accessible formats or with necessary supports to all OPS staff and customers.

2014 Deliverables and Published Commitments

- Accessibility criteria built into decision-making, project management, procurement, technology, infrastructure, I & IT and training.
- Ensure that all branch level emergency management plans outline the requirement to make emergency plan information available in an accessible format upon request, as soon as practicable.
- Highlight the various Windows 7 accessibility features to staff as computers are refreshed.
- Deploy an accessibility desktop icon to staff providing a one-stop avenue to a wide variety of accessibility related documents and resources.
- Explore opportunities to expand the Assistive Technology (AT) User Group.
- Enrich staff awareness by providing training and promoting the use of TTY lines.
- Develop a style guide for staff to help maximize the accessibility of all e-mails.
- Hold an Accessibility Expo.
- Develop training offerings in sign language to support ministry staff in providing an active offer of communication supports to people who communicate in sign language.
- Give more prominence to accessibility on the internet and intranet homepages.
- Work towards increasing the completion rates for mandatory IASR CFLL e-learning course *IASR Information and Communication Standards* by producing quarterly reports to identify and follow up with the individuals that have not completed training.

Measures Taken by MCYS in 2014:

- All approved branch level emergency plans include a "Commitment to Accessibility" statement that stipulates the alternate format request.
- Children, Youth, & Social Services I&IT Cluster (CYSSC) collaborated with the Information and Technology Services Training Centre of Excellence to develop e-learning modules on Microsoft Word accessibility. Resources on Windows 7 accessibility features are posted on the intranet website.
- CYSSC created a one-stop portal on documents accessibility on the I&IT Accessibility Centre of Excellence intranet website to consolidate information from

Diversity Office, Ministry of Government and Consumer Services and various accessibility partners. A desktop icon linking to this page may be developed in the future.

- CYSSC released email bulletins and held an accessibility contest to promote I&IT Accessibility Centre of Excellence products and services including the AT user group.
- Staff from the Child and Parent Resource Institute has been trained to support the use of TTY lines and we will expand this training to more staff in the future.
- An “Accessible Emails” tip sheet was created and distributed to all staff to help maximize the accessibility of all emails.
- The ministry is beginning to implement a streamlined approach to workplace initiatives such as accessibility, inclusion, employee engagement, and learning and development. Although we did not host an Accessibility Expo in 2014, the Renewal Strategies Office will host an open house in 2015 to raise awareness of the streamlined approach as well as the various initiatives.
- In late 2013, an American Sign Language awareness session was held. We will host another awareness session in early 2015 and evaluate our needs for further ASL training for staff.
- Our public website provides a link on each page to OPS accessibility information and standards.
- Some divisions have begun creating their quarterly reports to track completion for mandatory IASR CFLLE e-learning courses. To evaluate this at a ministry level, the RSO and the Human Resources Strategic Business Unit will collaborate to determine the best approach in following up with staff who has not completed these courses.

Employment

MYAP Key Outcome:

OPS employees with disabilities participate fully and meaningfully in their employment.

2014 Deliverables and Published Commitments

- Conduct a management review on accommodation for employees with disabilities.
- Increased awareness in the OPS of accessibility best practices in the workplace.
- Senior managers have accessibility performance commitments.
- Evaluate the disability awareness sessions and implement sessions at a staff level.
- Continue to train staff on the AODA regulations and the Human Rights Code.

- Launch training for managers to increase knowledge on providing accommodation for employees with disabilities.
- Continue to examine broader use of the Inclusion Lens to eliminate barriers in recruitment practices.
- Continue to hold quarterly Manager Community of Practice teleconferences highlighting various subjects related to employment accommodation.

Measures Taken by MCYS in 2014:

- In most divisions, management worked with employees who self-identified as having disabilities to determine necessary changes to accommodation, such as purchasing computer accessories, desk set up or an ergonomic chair in order for them to be more effective in doing their work. Also, at the Child and Parent Resource Institute, a manager has been dedicated to the employee accommodation portfolio to ensure consistent expertise with direct oversight by the organization's senior management team.
- New employees are asked to advise of any accommodation needs and accessibility standards are included in onboarding and recruitment processes.
- When inviting ministry staff to events, the invitations, e-mails and promotional materials clearly indicate that participants can request special dietary, physical or other accommodations. Access to the meeting space and accessibility of all presentation materials for the event are considered regardless of a request for accommodation.
- All employees are to include an accessibility or inclusion performance commitment in their annual performance management plans. A memo from the Director of the Human Resources Strategic Business Unit was sent at mid-term to remind all senior managers of this requirement.
- The OPS Diversity Office created a new online learning course, *IASR Employment Standards*, which is mandatory for all managers and Human Resources staff. The course was advertised in May through a memo from our Chief Administrative Officer. As of September, 38% of applicable MCYS employees have completed this course. We are working to improve the compliance rate and have sent a reminder from the Chief Administrative Officer in the fall. We have also asked divisional champions and the Employee Engagement Working Group members to promote the courses at staff meetings.
- Managers work with a Recruitment Consultant throughout the recruitment process to ensure that the Inclusion Lens is used to eliminate barriers throughout the recruitment process and to ensure that accommodations are offered to all candidates and provided to those who ask for them.
- The ministry, along with Ministry of Community and Social Services, formed a Manager's Community of Practice to provide managers with the opportunity to discuss issues or ask questions regarding employment accommodation. One

teleconference was held in fall 2014. A survey has been sent to the participants to determine which topics would be most useful to discuss in 2015.

Built Environment

MYAP Key Outcome:

There is greater accessibility into, out of and around OPS facilities and public spaces.

2014 Deliverables and Published Commitments

- Continue to develop strategies for addressing infrastructure barriers.
- Secure Custody Guidelines will be developed to ensure that accessibility requirements can be addressed.
- The ministry continues to address accessibility in all its owned and leased spaces.
- Promote/refresh “Planning Accessible Meeting Guidelines” to include new policies and information on external meetings to reflect the AODA Design of Public Spaces Standards and updated barrier-free design requirements of the Ontario Building Code.

Measures Taken by MCYS in 2014:

- Through strategic planning of the MCYS capital fiscal plan, Capital Planning and Delivery Branch (CPDB) will continue to address the current infrastructure barriers and develop strategies to ensure its compliance to AODA requirements as identified within the IO Guidelines for Barrier-free Design of Ontario Government Facilities.
- Secure Custody Guidelines have been developed in the last fiscal year by CPDB in collaboration with Youth Justice Services Division, Divisional Services Branch. These guidelines address accessibility requirements while ensuring the safety of youth and staff in areas of high interaction with youth. The areas that serve the public and staff spaces were developed using the AODA requirements as identified within the IO Guidelines for Barrier-free Design of Ontario Government Facilities.
- Addressing accessibility in ministry owned and leased space continues to be a key focus of ministry accommodation planning. Accessibility standards are included within a Probation office renovation. Current direction from the Treasury Board Secretariat and Infrastructure Ontario (IO) is that work is carried out in accordance with the IO Guidelines for Barrier-free Design of Ontario Government Facilities. These standards are used for all space planning projects.
- The ministry ensures external meetings are located in facilities that reflect the AODA Design of Public Spaces and adhere to the “Planning Accessible Meeting Guidelines” to avoid barriers presented to staff. We also have an internal “Green

and Accessible” meeting guide for ministry staff to follow. This guide will be updated in 2015 to align with the updated Ontario Building Code.

Other Commitments

MYAP Key Outcome:

OPS staff is able to identify barriers to accessibility, in OPS policies, programs, services and facilities, and actively seek solutions to prevent or remove them on a continuing basis throughout the organization.

2014 Deliverables and Published Commitments

- Ongoing consultations with persons with disabilities.
- Ministries continue to publish annual accessibility plans.
- Explore the feasibility of developing a supplier’s list and manager’s guide for the acquisition of supportive technologies to accommodate staff with disabilities.
- Encourage all staff to use the OPS Inclusion Lens to review acts, regulations, policies, programs, practices and services.
- The ministry will continue to play an active role on the Disability Advisory Council (DAC) which was established to prepare for the integrated accessibility standards, under the AODA by providing a consumer perspective on implementation. The Council also helps to further develop leadership capacity of employees with disabilities in the OPS, with a broader goal of supporting the journey towards a barrier-free Ontario by 2025.

Measures Taken by MCYS in 2014:

- In the development of policies and programs, the Child Welfare Secretariat considers accessibility issues and the needs of young people with disabilities. For example, in revising the Policy Directive for the Ontario Child Benefit Equivalent, consideration was given to ensuring that children and youth in care who have a disability have equal access to recreational, educational, social and cultural programming.
- The MCYS 2013-14 Accessibility Plan was published by December 3, 2013, the United Nations' International Day of Persons with Disabilities.
- CYSSC supported Information Technology Services (ITS) with the launch of the new I&IT Assistive Technology Support Service. This new service makes it simpler and easier for staff to acquire IT assistive technology devices and support.
- Staff from the Corporate Services Branch, Renewal Strategies Office were trained on how to use the OPS Inclusion Lens. RSO will partner with the OPS Diversity

Office to launch this training as a learning opportunity for interested staff to encourage broader use of the tool.

- A new MCYS representative was chosen for the Disability Advisory Council (DAC). The representative was selected based on their disability expertise, lived experience and commitment to promoting and facilitating a barrier-free environment across the OPS.

Section Two: Report on Measures Proposed by MCYS for 2015 and 2016

Customer Service

OPS MYAP Key Outcomes

People with disabilities who are OPS customers receive quality goods and services in a timely manner.

Measures Proposed by MCYS for 2015 and 2016:

- Staff and customer feedback sought on accessibility innovations and improvements.
- Implement the ministry multi-year diversity and inclusion plan.
- Continue to:
 - exceed the requirement of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service by requiring all staff to complete the CFLL's two online training modules on providing accessible customer service, *May I Help You*.
 - promote the complete a range of accessibility related training programs provided through the CFLL to all staff.
 - encourage the use of the Inclusion Lens for new policies, programs, practices and services.
 - remind managers to incorporate inclusion leadership commitments into their Performance Development Plans.
- The Policy Development and Program Design Division commits to providing training for staff on the use of the OPS Inclusion Lens regarding the creation of acts, regulations, policies, program and practices.
- The OPS Inclusion Lens will be applied to the Child and Youth Mental Health Directory, prior to the directory's public launch, to ensure that the content is accessible to all Ontarians.

Information and Communications

MYAP Key Outcome:

Information and Communications are available in accessible formats or with necessary supports to all OPS staff and customers.

Measures Proposed by MCYS for 2015 and 2016:

- Accessibility is considered when developing communications, websites, technology solutions and documents.
- I&IT Accessibility Centre of Excellence (ACOE) will continue providing accessibility testing service and will develop online resources such as guides, videos and checklists to help staff identify and remediate key accessibility issues in their websites, web applications and documents.
- I&IT ACOE will coordinate reporting of assessment and remediation efforts from CYSSC business owners of websites and web applications to meet WCAG 2.0 AA.
- Exceed the IASR training expectation by requiring all ministry staff to complete the *IASR Information and Communication Standards* e-course.
- Develop and launch training offerings in sign language for client-facing ministry staff to support them in providing an active offer of communication supports to people who communicate in sign language.

Employment

MYAP Key Outcome:

OPS employees with disabilities participate fully and meaningfully in their employment.

Measures Proposed by MCYS for 2015 and 2016:

- Implement best practices on employment accommodation and return to work.
- Revitalize the Managers Employment Accommodation Community of Practice.
- Use the results from the 2014 OPS Employee Engagement Survey to assess potential barriers for employees with disabilities and establish a plan to remove the barriers.
- The ministry emergency management plan exercise will incorporate an element of accessibility.

- Continue to ensure that training related to accessibility standards is included in onboarding of new employees.
- Managers will be advised that they are to include a performance commitment regarding accessibility in their 2015/16 performance plan.
- The ministry is participating in the pilot phase for the OPS Inclusion Continuum. The Continuum is a new tool being developed by the OPS Diversity Office that can help address gaps between the current culture and a more inclusive one. Anyone can use the tool to help nurture an environment where everyone feels like they matter and belong regardless of ability/disability, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, etc.

Built Environment

MYAP Key Outcome:

There is greater accessibility into, out of and around OPS facilities and public spaces.

Measures Proposed by MCYS for 2015 and 2016:

- The ministry is ready to implement requirements of IASR standard “Design of Public Spaces” and the updated barrier-free design requirements of the Ontario Building Code, reflected in the OPS’s “Guidelines for Barrier-free Design in Ontario Government Facilities, starting on January 1, 2015.
- Probation Office Guidelines will be developed to ensure that accessibility requirements can be addressed.
- The ministry will continue to address accessibility in all of its owned and leased spaces.
- Ensure that meeting facilities used for public engagements are accessible.
- Continue to actively offer physical accommodations for staff engagements.

Other Commitments

MYAP Key Outcome:

OPS staff is able to identify barriers to accessibility, in OPS policies, programs, services and facilities, and actively seek solutions to prevent or remove them on a continuing basis throughout the organization.

Measures Proposed by MCYS for 2015 and 2016:

- Accessibility continues as strong organizational commitment.
- Ensure all staff has completed mandatory online training modules related to the AODA and IASR.
- The OPS partners with the Job Opportunity Information Network (JOIN) to host an annual accessibility employer conference, referred to as the Accessibility Expo. Ministry delegates sent to the Accessibility Expo will learn about leading practices, strategies and supports for full inclusion of disability in the workplace. Delegates will be expected to develop and present training based on these conferences.

Section Three: Addressing the identification of barriers

In support of our commitment to improve accessibility for people with disabilities, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services will continue to review government initiatives, including Acts, regulations, policies, programs, practices and services for the purposes of identifying and removing barriers.

Recognizing the importance of addressing accessibility barriers in laws that have a high impact on members of the public and persons with disabilities, the government is following a three-pronged strategy that prioritizes the review of high impact legislation including:

1. Development of a standardized process and tools for identifying and addressing accessibility barriers;
2. By the end of 2014, review of 51 targeted high-impact statutes that meet the following criteria:
 - a. Statutes that affect persons with disabilities directly;
 - b. Statutes that provide for the delivery of widely applicable services or programs;
 - c. Statutes that provide benefits or protections; or
 - d. Statutes that affect a democratic or civic right or duty; and
3. Review procedural rules, policies and guidelines for select high-impact legislation, where necessary.

Acts, Regulations and Policies Reviewed in 2013-14

In consultation with our ministry's legal counsel and policy experts the ministry has used the Accessibility Legislative Review Tool to review the following statutes:

- Child and Family Services Act
- Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth Act

In 2013-14, the OPS made significant progress in conducting this phase of the review which is estimated to be completed by the end of 2014. At MCYS, we will continue to embed accessibility and inclusion into our daily work by using the OPS Inclusion Lens. If additional statutes are identified through the coordinated accessibility legislative review, our ministry will work with the Ministry of Attorney General and the OPS Diversity Office to review applicable acts, regulations, policies, programs or services.

Links

Public Links

[OPS Multi-Year Accessibility Plan - Leading the Way Forward](#)

[*Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*](#)

[*Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*](#)

[*Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation*](#)

[Accessibility Standards for Customer Service](#)

[Ontario Accessibility Website](#)

[Accessible, Fair and Sustainable Services for People with Developmental Disabilities Program](#)

[Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#)

Contact Us

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

General inquiries: 1-866-821-7770

TTY number: 1-800-387-5559

Email: mcsinfo@mcys.gov.on.ca

Ministry website address: <http://www.children.gov.on.ca>

For more information and resources on how to make Ontario an accessible province for everyone, please visit the Ministry of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure's public web portal, [AccessON](#).

Alternate formats of this document are available upon request from:

[ServiceOntario Publications](#)

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