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Ministry of Labour 2016 Accessibility Report

How the Ministry of Labour identified and removed barriers in the Ontario Public Service in 2016.

ISSN: 2560-7294

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Executive summary

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

Like all ministries, the Ministry of Labour (MOL) complies with the [Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation \(IASR\)](#). This regulation established phased-in requirements in the following accessibility standards:

- customer service
- information and communications
- employment
- transportation
- design of public spaces

The general requirements are:

- procurement

training

In 2012, the Ontario Public Service (OPS) released its first multi-year accessibility plan (MYAP) entitled [Accessibility in the Ontario Public Service: Leading the Way Forward](#).

MOL's 2016 Accessibility Report demonstrates how the measures taken in 2016 support the key outcomes and deliverables of the 2012-2016 OPS MYAP.

Section one: report on measures taken by the ministry in 2016

Customer service

MYAP key outcome

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

Measures taken by MOL in 2016

Commitment one

Build capacity and expertise in the ministry to create quality and timely alternative formats upon request to external and internal customers.

Measures taken for commitment one

The ministry has taken the initiative to share several resources on creating accessible documents with staff who regularly interact with internal and external stakeholders. The resources consisted of tip sheets and guidelines that ensured employees took the appropriate measures and steps required to develop documents in accessible formats.

Commitment two

Continue to monitor and improve the quality of services provided to customers with disabilities through various methods.

Measures taken for commitment two

The ministry reviewed the process used to conduct the OPS Common Service Standards Audit. The following recommendations, were brought forward and will be implemented during next year's audit:

1. Include a formal step in the MOL email audit process to validate that the message delivered to employees is 100% accessible.

In addition to supporting inclusion and meeting accessibility requirements, this implementation may also improve results, as individuals with vision impairments or screen readers will be better

equipped to respond faster and more effectively.

2. Measure the number of respondents who meet accessibility requirements and leverage best practices when auditing MOL employees on email response time.

This will allow the ministry to identify gaps in employees' knowledge of accessibility requirements, as well as assist in monitoring staff compliance with accessibility legislation.

In order to ensure that individuals are aware of expectations, a communication will be distributed to employees reminding them of the OPS Common Service Standards and this new requirement.

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 taken by MOL in 2016

Commitment three

MOL is striving toward intranet website and web content compliance with the IASR standard of World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, at Level AA, by 2020.

Measures taken for commitment three

The ministry is taking numerous steps to ensure that the content displayed on its intranet site is fully accessible. MOL is reviewing existing content and testing it against accessibility standards. MOL conducts web accessibility testing and converts PDF documents to HTML format when placing new content onto the ministry's intranet websites.

Commitment four

MOL should continue to send representatives to the Annual Accessibility Expo and share the learning with their respective teams and the Accessibility Council.

Measures taken for commitment four

The Ministry of Labour has continued to send representatives to the Accessibility Expo each year including in 2016. This year's Accessibility Expo took place on May 30, 2016. The theme of the conference was, 'In Letter and Spirit: Realizing the Vision of the AODA.' Learning has been shared with team members within the Strategic Human Resources Branch. Conference materials will also be shared with council members at the next council meeting in 2017.

Commitment five

Implementation of a ministry wide Accessible Documents Training Strategy.

Measures taken for commitment five

The ministry's accessible document training strategy was incorporated into a broader I & IT training plan to provide ministry employees with the opportunity to learn how to create accessible documents. This strategy aims to strengthen the capacity and productivity of employees throughout the ministry by allowing them to rely less on external vendors by developing accessible documents of higher quality on their own.

Employment

MYAP key outcome

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

Measures taken by MOL in 2016

Commitment six

The ministry's Deputy Minister's annual performance commitments identify accessibility in the ministry as a priority.

Measures taken for commitment six

Taking action on accessibility is outlined as a key commitment for the Deputy Minister's Annual Performance Plan. The commitment states:

"MOL is committed to accessibility objectives through the development of an Annual Plan, the implementation of that plan, and the active engagement of the ministry's Accessibility Council."

In addition, the Deputy Minister continues to promote and embed inclusion, diversity, and accessibility into all ministry policies, programs and services, and by holding senior managers accountable.

Commitment seven

Orientation and on boarding of new managers and staff includes accessibility and inclusion learning tools.

Measures taken for commitment seven

The MOL Orientation Guide for new managers and employees provides information about diversity, inclusion, and accessibility. The guide lists learning tools, courses, and resources regarding accessibility and inclusion within the OPS. During the semi-annual in-person orientation sessions, a representative from the OPS Diversity Office informs participants about the role of diversity, inclusion, and accessibility in the OPS. Managers are also provided with a Toolkit for Inclusion comprised of various diversity, inclusion, and accessibility related resources.

Commitment eight

Provide training to managers and employees on accommodation and return to work in collaboration with the Ontario Public Service Employees Union OPSEU Ministry of Labour's Employee Relations Committee MERC Employment Accommodation Working Group.

Measures taken for commitment eight

In August 2016, MOL's MERC sponsored the implementation of a Joint Disability Accommodation and Return to Work (JDARTW) Initiative. The goal of the program was to shift the culture and improve disability management within the ministry. The program also aims to provide for barrier free (systemic and physical), respectful, and dignified employment accommodation and return to work, through the effective collaboration of managers, bargaining agents, and employees achieved by an understanding of each other's rights, responsibilities, perspectives, and roles.

A Joint Disability Accommodation and Return to Work Steering Committee (Sub- Committee of MERC) was created to develop and implement the program for the ministry and its agencies. Eight (8) management representatives and eight (8) local union representatives have volunteered to serve as subject matter advisers (SMAs) on these issues and champions in their respective work areas/regions. The SMAs have completed the required training. They will begin to work with employees and managers during the program's roll out in Fall 2017.

In addition to supporting this initiative, MOL ensured that managers within the ministry had the resources and training required to effectively assist employees in the implementation of the Attendance Support and Management Program (ASMP). In November 2016, the ministry hosted an in-person session of the course, "Supporting Employees: Employment Accommodation and Attendance Support," to assist managers in completing the required training.

The ministry also monitored managers' compliance with the e-learning course requirements of the ASMP. This allowed the following measures to be identified:

- the compliance rate for the e-learning course, "Disability Accommodation," increased from 13% to 95%
- the compliance rate for the e-learning course, "Supporting and Managing Attendance," increased from 58% to 93%

Design of public spaces

MYAP key outcome

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

Measures taken by MOL in 2016

Commitment nine

Improve accessibility in government facilities by installing door operators, and where possible investing in accessible washrooms and kitchens.

Measures taken for commitment nine

The ministry has improved accessibility in its facilities by installing door operators, and where possible investing in accessible washrooms and kitchens. Some examples of recent projects are:

- installation of new offset hinges and lever handle locks to retrofit emergency exit doors to meet new building code barrier free access requirements for the 12th floor at 400 University Avenue
- renovation of the Policy division's workspace on the 12th floor at 400 University Avenue. Accommodations and kitchens have been upgraded to be fully accessible
- the Ministry Security Incident Form, Emergency Management materials, and Security tip sheets have been developed to be in compliance with the Built Environment Code. These documents will also be posted on MOL's intranet in accessible formats

Commitment ten

The ministry will continue to use the Inclusion Lens Toolkit for any project initiation to ensure that the proposed work: is in full compliance with the Built Environment Code, does not create new barriers, and considers opportunities to improve existing accessibility.

Measures taken for commitment ten

The ministry has continued to use the Inclusion Lens Toolkit for any project initiation, as MOL strives to improve accessibility for all projects. The Built Environment Code is kept in mind even for partial renovations where code compliance is not mandatory. For instance, door hinges have been upgraded to off-set hinges to improve accessibility during a recent minor renovation project. In addition, strobe lights for individuals who are hearing impaired have been installed on all Ministry of Labour floors at 400 University Avenue.

Commitment eleven

Staff communications on facilities related matters will always be distributed in accessible formats.

Measures taken for commitment eleven

Staff communications on facilities related matters are sent and distributed in accessible formats. The communications abide by the following accessibility requirements and best practices:

- email set to [HTML](#)

- sans serif font (preferably Arial)
- font size is 12 point or higher, with black font on a white background
- information is provided in plain language

General outcomes

MYAP key outcome

OPS staff are 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 taken by MOL in 2016

Commitment twelve

Maintain a strong profile for the Accessibility Council in order to increase awareness and remove barriers.

Measures taken for commitment twelve

The ministry has always consulted the Accessibility Council as the lead in connecting with every part of the ministry. The council members consult with program areas on accessibility commitments and measures taken. The results of those consultations are included in the ministry's Annual Accessibility Plan.

The council also meets on a semi-annual basis to discuss various strategies, as well as to learn about new accessibility topics including: accessible meetings, the disability accommodation policy, and discussion on accessibility targets. The council has also been engaged through email communication and various other consultation processes.

Section two: addressing the identification of barriers in legislation and implementation frameworks

Introduction

In 2005, the government introduced the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, with the goal of making Ontario accessible by 2025. In support of this goal, the government subsequently committed to review Ontario legislation to identify and address accessibility barriers, and undertook a coordinated review of 51 statutes considered to have a high impact on persons with disabilities.

As a result of this review, the government made changes to 11 statutes spread across seven ministries to ensure that Ontario laws better reflect accessibility considerations. The changes to the 11 statutes were included in the government's 2016 Budget bill, which received Royal Assent on April 19, 2016.

Each ministry continues to be responsible for identifying and addressing barriers in their legislation and the policies and programs through which that legislation is implemented, and for reporting on results through its accessibility report.

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

Our ministry remains committed to the goal of ensuring that Ontario legislation and implementation frameworks do not create barriers to persons with disabilities.

Measures in place in 2016

The following measures are in place within the ministry to ensure that new statutes, policy, and program proposals, as well as those existing or being reviewed, include accessibility consideration as part of their process:

1. MOL ODA Public Mailbox

MOL currently manages an ODA public mailbox, which is used to provide information and respond to inquiries related to accessibility. The ministry strives to ensure that its internet is fully accessible; the ODA public mailbox provides an opportunity for users of the ministry's internet site to identify issues and/or request alternate formats if required. Managing accessibility related inquiries allows the ministry to better identify and respond to potential barriers for individuals with disabilities.

2. OPS Inclusion Lens and Accessibility Legislative Review Tool

The OPS Inclusion Lens and the Accessibility Legislative Review Tool are used to remove accessibility barriers when existing Acts, regulations, policies, programs, practices, and services undergo a policy review within the ministry.

Actions taken in the past year

In 2016, the Ministry of Labour took the following actions to address barriers in its Acts, regulations, policies, programs:

1. The ministry reviewed the following high impact statutes for accessibility barriers:

- *Employment Standards Act, 2000*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act*
- *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*

Based on the government's direction, the ministry will address any accessibility barriers that have been identified in the three high impact statutes set out above.

2. The ministry has continued to use the Inclusion Lens Toolkit for initiated building projects.

Updated: October 5, 2017

Published: October 5, 2017

Related

[All 2016 ministry accessibility reports](#)

[2012-2016 Ontario Public Service Multi-Year Accessibility Plan](#)

[A guide to accessibility directives and policies in the Ontario Public Service](#)

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An accessible Ontario by 2025

Ontario is the first Canadian Province to pass a law to improve accessibility in the areas that impact the daily lives of people with disabilities.

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