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Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Ministry of Housing

2016 Accessibility Report

How the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and the Ministry of Housing identified and removed barriers in the Ontario Public Service in 2016.

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Executive summary

Like all ministries, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MMA) and the Ministry of Housing (MHO) 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](#).

MMA and MHO'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 ministries 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 MMA and MHO in 2016

- Ministry-wide communication to staff through the ministries' electronic newsletter has continued on a weekly basis throughout the year as a method to both educate and emphasize the fact that accessibility is a part of all Ontario Public Service business and should be embedded in staff's day-to-day work. This regular communication reinforced the commitments contained in the Ontario Public Service Accessible Customer Service Policy on a continual basis.
- Training requirements, as well as online accessibility related e-courses and video resources are regularly communicated through updates in the ministries' weekly electronic newsletter.
- The "Accessibility at MMA | MHO" intranet web pages were updated to include information and links to a refreshed "Learning Opportunities" page offering a complete list of accessibility e-courses, both mandatory and recommended, for staff completion.
- More than 300 staff have successfully completed accessibility e-courses which help to ensure that the ministries' staff has a full understanding of commitments contained in the Ontario Public Service Accessible Customer Service Policy, our current obligations under the [IASR](#) and our duty to accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities and fulfill disability-related accommodation requests.
- The importance of surveys/evaluations with specific questions regarding the accessibility of our services has been emphasized to the ministries' staff as a method for ongoing improvement in our future initiatives.
- Accessibility considerations continued to be taken into account when delivering education, training and information sessions on ministry initiatives which included the *Smart Growth for Our Communities Act, 2015* (Bill 73) and the Co-ordinated Land Use Planning Review. Client feedback on accessibility related issues continued to inform improvement to the way education, training and

information sessions were delivered.

- Staff conducted site visits at potential venues for public open houses and stakeholder technical briefings pertaining to the Co-ordinated Land Use Planning Review to ensure they could accommodate varying needs of participants.
- The consultation phase of the Ontario Municipal Board Review were held in accessible venues, included an electronic component to allow citizens who may have difficulty attending public events to participate online and all communications materials intended for the general public were made accessible upon request and available in French and plain language to support public input.
- Venues for 2016 regional conferences, workshops and forums, such as the Treasurers' Forums, Planners' Forums and Housing Forums were assessed to ensure they could accommodate varying needs.
- Meetings of the Building Materials Evaluation Commission and the hearings of the Building Code Commission were able to accommodate the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities.
- All the ministries' open house and technical briefing events held for the Co-ordinated Land Use Planning Review were held in accessible venues and included alternatives that allowed citizens who may have difficulty attending public events to participate in their own time and at their preferred location. All materials produced for these meetings were made in an accessible format and were available online (or upon request).
- The ministries continued to include an "active offer of accommodation" in its communications with persons with disabilities. The ministries continued to ensure that people of all abilities are able to access ministry information and communication products.
- The ministries continued to include opportunities for improvement and inform the public about the availability of an accessible feedback process. In 2016, responses to all 75 email inquiries received were provided within two business days.
- The enterprise-wide campaigns "Accessibility@Source" and "Ready, Set, Access!" were communicated to staff as a means to demonstrate that accessibility continued to be a strong organizational commitment.

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 MMA and MHO in 2016

- The ministries websites are compliant with international Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

(WCAG) 2.0 Level AA. The ministries continued to utilize corporately-developed tools, testing methodology and training to support its website accessibility.

- The enterprise-wide training resources developed by the I&IT Accessibility Centre of Excellence (ACOE) continued to be promoted within the ministries and staff, particularly those who create and post content on the ministries' websites, were encouraged to access the various ACOE online learning resources to build their capacity for creating accessible information and communication products.
- The ministries continued to provide accessible alternate formats of ministry publications upon request.
- The ministries continued to provide offers of accommodation in advertisement and/or promotional materials for public events.
- Accommodations for persons with disabilities were made available upon request for public events.
- Public consultations, such as the Co-ordinated Land Use Planning Review and the Ontario Municipal Board Review, were held in accessible venues. Those unable to attend the public consultations were able to participate online through website consultation feedback forms. All communication materials intended for the general public were made accessible upon request and available in plain language to support public input.

Employment

MYAP key outcome

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

Measures taken by MMA and MHO in 2016

- The ministries continued its tradition of hosting the annual "Connexions" program for college and university students with disabilities and recent graduates. To date, more than 400 students have participated in the program. This annual event continues to demonstrate that the Ontario Public Service strives to ensure that anyone who is qualified and interested in working in the Ontario Public Service has an opportunity to pursue that goal. This event continues to be a valuable learning opportunity for staff who participates in the planning for the event. Staff learn how to ensure that accommodation needs of all participants are met, how to select accessible venues, how to procure communication supports, such as American Sign Language interpreters, and that all communication products are accessible.
- Any enterprise-wide communication on employment accommodation directives and policies continued to be reinforced through the ministries' electronic newsletter in order to increase awareness and understanding within the workplace.
- Manager and employee awareness of the *Accessibility Standards for the Customer Service*

Regulation and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation was enhanced by continuing to include the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* Standards in the Employee and Manager Orientation website.

- Mandatory learning commitment for new managers and employees was communicated and monitored by Human Resources Services Branch accordingly on the following:
 - *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation* (IASR Employment and Information and Communications Standards)
 - *Customer Service Regulation* (May I Help You? Welcoming Customers with Disabilities and May I Help You? Supplementary. Ten things you need to know about Accessible Customer Service for compliance)
 - Disability Accommodation and Supporting and Managing Attendance e-Courses (managers only)
- MMA|MHO communicated to new and existing managers the requirement of completing the OPS Inclusion Lens course. The course was a mandatory learning commitment for all managers to complete.
- The OPS Inclusion Lens was applied on decisions related to executive recruitment, nominations for leadership programs and succession management.
- All staff participated in the mandatory training for “Supporting a Respectful Workplace” and this was completed in 2016.
- The 777 Bay Street Emergency Evacuation Guide was updated to include a new sign for Persons Requiring Assistance (PRAs) that is posted in designated waiting areas.

Design of public spaces

MYAP key outcome

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

Measures taken by MMA and MHO in 2016

- MMA continues to work with George Brown College on delivery of training which includes accessibility requirements of the Building Code that came into force January 1, 2015.
- MMA continues to promote and support accessibility in the built environment. In fall 2016, MMA consulted on potential additional amendments to accessibility requirements that could be included in the next edition of the Building Code. These proposed changes mostly intend to clarify existing requirements as well as harmonize with the 2015 model National Building Code.
- MHO continued to deliver the Investment in Affordable Housing (IAH) Extension Program that identifies persons with disabilities as one of the target client groups. The Ontario Renovates

component of the IAH provides a grant of up to \$5,000 for accessibility upgrades made to a home.

- MMA|MHO continued to promote the corporately-developed e-learning module “Accessible Built Environment in the OPS” within the ministries as mandatory learning for new staff whose job responsibilities are impacted by the standard and as general interest learning for other staff within the ministries.
- Electronic door operators were installed on all accessible washrooms at the ministries’ headquarters.
- Design work has been completed to upgrade the lobby doors in Toronto that will enhance security and accessibility.

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 MMA and MHO in 2016

- The ministries’ continued its promotion of the OPS Inclusion Lens tool through notices in the MMA|MHO electronic newsletter in order to increase staff awareness and encourage the application of the OPS Inclusion Lens in the development of programs and policies.
- Accessibility considerations continued to be part of the ministries’ day-to-day operations. As required in the IASR, accessibility criteria and features continued to be incorporated in the ministries’ procurement process so that goods, services and facilities are more accessible to persons with disabilities, except where it is not practical to do so.
- MMA|MHO continued to mandate that a completed “Accessibility Assessment for Procurement” form be attached when submitting a Business Case for Procurement for review for all procurements \$10,000 or more. In 2016, thirty-three accessibility assessments were reviewed by the ministry Accessibility Lead to ensure accessibility considerations were included as part of the procurement process.
- The MMA|MHO Accessibility Lead continued to be an active participant in the Ontario Public Service Accessibility Network to ensure that any enterprise-wide tools and resources were promoted and used within the ministries.
- As part of our efforts for continuous improvement and barrier-removal, the ministries’ Accessibility Lead promotes the internal ministry *Ontarians with Disabilities Act* mailbox to encourage staff feedback on accessibility innovations and improvements.

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.

Our Ministries remain 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 Ministry of Municipal Affairs and the Ministry of Housing assessed our proposals for new Acts, regulations, policies and programs and services to determine their effect on persons with disabilities.

Actions taken in the past year

In 2015, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs took the following actions to address barriers in its Acts, regulations, policies, programs, practices and services in response to identified barriers:

- the ministry continued to review accessibility issues in the five-year review of the *Municipal Act, 2001* and the *City of Toronto Act, 2006* in addition to the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*. This review resulted in Bill 68, *Modernizing Ontario's Municipal Legislation Act, 2017*. Bill 68 includes provisions that, if passed, could increase accessibility for members of municipal council and certain local boards, by proposing to provide municipalities and local boards the ability to allow members to participate electronically in certain meetings. These proposed changes reflect what we heard from stakeholders and municipalities during the review
- the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996* was amended by Bill 181, which received Royal Assent in June 2016. The amendments included the removal of a barrier identified in the accessibility review regarding the posting of certain information at the voting place, as well as amendments allowing

certain documents and requests to be submitted in various formats, and a requirement for clerks to make an accessibility plan available to the public prior to voting day

In the coming year, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs will review the Acts, regulations, policies, programs, practices and/or services listed below, for barriers to persons with disabilities:

- the ministry consulted on minor technical amendments to the accessibility requirements to be included in the next edition of the Building Code. These proposed changes mostly intend to clarify existing requirements as well as harmonize with the 2015 model National Building Code

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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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Topics

Government

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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