



**Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs**

**2013 - 2014**

**Accessibility Plan**

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# 2013 – 2014 Accessibility Plan

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## Introduction

For over ten years, every ministry has set a course to prevent, identify and remove barriers for persons with disabilities. Ministries achieve this through the preparation of their annual Accessibility Plan (Plan) as required under the [Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 \(ODA\)](#).

Recently, the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\)](#) established Ontario's roadmap to become accessible by 2025. It includes standards in areas such as: customer service, information and communications, employment, transportation, and the built environment. In 2010 the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs complied with the requirements of the first standard on [customer service](#). In 2011, ministries began to meet the requirements of the other four standards found in the [Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation \(IASR\)](#).. On January 1, 2012, the Ontario Public Service (OPS) published a single [Multi-Year Accessibility Plan \(MYAP\)](#). The MYAP included the following commitment:

The OPS endeavours to demonstrate leadership for accessibility in Ontario. Our goal is to ensure accessibility for our employees and the public we serve in our services, products and facilities.

This Plan will build on these laws and the MYAP. It will outline how the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs (MAA) will contribute to a barrier-free Ontario by 2025.

To access the 2012-2013 Accessibility Plans for MAA and other ministries, visit [Ontario.ca](#).

## Section One: Report on Measures Taken in 2012 - 2013

The following outlines commitments made by the ministry in last year's Accessibility Plan and the measures taken.

## **Customer Service**

- Ensured all new regular and fixed-term staff completed the necessary training to meet the requirements specified in the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation (ASCS). In addition to the online modules for staff, the training was offered in alternate formats as necessary (e.g., paper copy, CD, or telephone).
- This year, MAA's public-facing website migrated to Ontario's new One Site platform, the public's one window destination for online information and services delivered by all provincial ministries. As such, the ministry continues to meet the standard for barrier-free information and services for people with disabilities.
- MAA's Communications Branch remains committed to responding in a timely manner to all feedback received.
- Collaborated with the Ministry of Natural Resources to ensure that TTY service was made available on behalf of MAA through the Natural Resources Information Centre.
- A service disruption protocol was in place to fully meet the requirements of the ASCS.
- The OPS Accessible Customer Service Policy was put into practice, as were the associated practices and procedures in accordance with the requirements of the ASCS. MAA's Accessibility Lead advised program areas on the effective design of programs, services and processes, ensuring that the needs of persons with disabilities were considered up front.
- Staff in the ministry's Corporate Initiatives Unit, Strategic Human Resources Business Branch, have been trained on using the OPS Inclusion Lens.

## **Information and Communications**

- MAA identified areas for improvement in accessibility within the ministry's communication and information products. For example, the ministry's quarterly

newsletter *Footprints* is sent out to the public by email in an accessible HTML format and is posted on MAA's website in a fully accessible PDF format.

- All new websites conformed with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA, which exclude live captions and audio descriptions, by January 1, 2012 as required.
- Updated the accessibility resources section on the MAA employee website to assist staff in locating new information, guidelines and tools. The website is continually reviewed to ensure up-to-date content that keeps pace with OPS initiatives.
- Promoted e-learning videos and other resources provided through the OPS Accessibility@Source information campaign, on how to create accessible documents and other subjects related to the IASR. The information was communicated directly to staff through memorandum.
- MAA's Communications Branch ensured that accessibility was considered early in the planning for communication materials, as described in the OPS Inclusion Lens.
- Ministry staff are prepared to respond to public requests for publications in accessible formats according to the OPS guidelines.
- Staff took persons with disabilities into consideration when planning for public meetings. All of the venues for the public information sessions for the Algonquin land claim, held across eastern Ontario in March 2013, were fully accessible for persons with disabilities. Ministry staff were available at these sessions to accommodate any visitors with disabilities and to provide documents in alternate formats upon request.

## **Employment**

In 2012-2013 the accessibility requirements as an employer were met in the following areas:

- Recruitment processes;
- Employee accommodation and supports;

- Accommodation for employees returning to work after an extended absence;
- Accommodating employees relative to performance management, career development and redeployment; and
- Ensuring all mandatory training was observed by staff, including “Working Together,” the new OPS training pertaining to the IASR in the OPS and the Ontario Human Rights Code.

### **Built Environment**

- MAA’s Accessibility Lead continued his contribution to the OPS inter-ministerial committee associated with the proposed Built Environment Standards.
- As tenants of 160 Bloor Street in Toronto, the ministry consulted with the facility’s property management on any alterations; this ensures that ministry needs are addressed and designed in a way that provides barrier-free access according to the Ontario Building Code.

### **Procurement**

Supported by the tools and templates provided by the MGS Supply Chain Management Division (SCMD) and [Management Board of Cabinet Procurement Directive – 2012](#) the ministry:

- Included accessibility considerations in its procurement and evaluation practices, consistent with the SCMD and [Guidelines for Meeting Accessibility Obligations in Procurement](#).
- Incorporated accessibility considerations in procurement planning and included accessibility criteria in procurement documentation.
- Considered accessibility for persons with disabilities in all goods or services purchased for the use of the ministry, its employees or the public. For example, all

of the venues chosen for the public information sessions for the Algonquin land claim were fully accessible for persons with disabilities.

## **Leadership in Accessibility**

### **Employee Training**

- Fulfilled the training requirements as specified in the ASCS and the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) for all employees.
- Encouraged staff to increase their awareness of accessibility matters through promoting materials prepared by the OPS Diversity Office, including the Accessibility@Source tools and learning supports.

### **Accessibility Feedback**

Our ministry continued providing feedback mechanisms for the public through a range of communication avenues:

- Electronic contact through the MAA internet site;
- Telephone contact in partnership with MNR, through the Natural Resources Information Centre (NRIC), including TTY;
- Contact by correspondence through postal services;
- Contact by correspondence through facsimile; and
- Encouraging feedback from clients and participants of consultation sessions and workshops.

The ministry is prepared to respond in a timely and respectful manner to feedback received on accessibility matters.

### **OPS Inclusion Lens**

- Required all staff to include in their annual learning plans the OPS Inclusion Lens online course.

- Encouraged staff to use the OPS Inclusion Lens as part of their normal business when reviewing or developing legislation, policies, programs, practices or services. This year, the Deputy Minister wrote a blog about inclusion, and the Inclusion Lens training has been added to the learning opportunities list for staff. MAA was a pilot ministry when the Inclusion Lens was first developed and staff continue to use it in policy development and planning to remove barriers to persons with disabilities.

## **Section Two: Measures Planned for 2013 – 2014**

Last year, the OPS published a [Multi-Year Accessibility Plan \(MYAP\)](#) that outlines how the government will identify, prevent and remove barriers for persons with disabilities. In this section, although we highlight the deliverables and timelines of the MYAP until 2016, the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs is only reporting on measures it will take or initiate during the 2013-2014 reporting period.

### **Customer Service**

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

### **MYAP Deliverables and Timelines**

2013 – New staff trained on accessibility.

2013 – Accessibility criteria built into decision-making, project management, procurement, technology, infrastructure, I & IT and training.

2013 – Increased awareness in OPS of accessibility best practices in customer service and the workplace.

2014 - 2016 – Inclusion Lens applied to all policies and practices.

2014 - 2016 – Accessibility is part of all OPS business.



## **Ministry Proposed Measures**

### **2013 – 2014**

- All new staff will continue to receive the required training within two weeks of their start date (e.g. May I Help You I & II; Working Together – the OHRC and the AODA; Introduction to the IASR in the OPS; Differences Matter; Workplace Discrimination and Harassment Prevention).
- New managers will continue to take “Inclusive Leadership: Leading Diversity.”
- Continue to implement a service disruption protocol to fully meet the requirements of the ASCS.
- Staff provide appropriate responses to all ministry feedback related to accessibility.
- MAA’s Accessibility Lead will continue to advise program areas on the effective design of programs, services and processes, ensuring that the needs of persons with disabilities are considered up front.

### **2014 – 2016**

- As part of the 2014 OPS employee survey, staff will be asked to identify any barriers they have encountered on accessible employment and services.
- Select staff in the ministry’s Strategic Human Resources Business Branch will take the OPS Inclusion Lens train-the-trainer sessions, as available.
- Review policies, procedures and practices in key program areas to ensure that accessibility is considered.
- By January 1, 2016 all ministry websites (internal and public-facing) will conform to WCAG 2.0 Level AA (except live captions and audio descriptions).

## **Information and Communications**

**MYAP Outcome:** Information and Communications are available in accessible formats to all OPS staff and customers.

## **MYAP Deliverables and Timelines**

2013 – Accessibility criteria built into decision-making, project management, procurement, technology, infrastructure, I & IT and training.

2013 – Accessibility Expo.

2014 - 2016 – Communications, websites, technology solutions and documents employ accessibility best practices.

2014 - 2016 – Accessibility Expo continues annually.

## **Ministry Proposed Measures**

### **2013 – 2014**

- Continue to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) standards.
- Continue to use accessibility criteria in the ministry's procurement activities and advice to project managers.
- Encourage staff to attend OPS-led sessions on creating web-ready and accessible documents.
- Communicate availability of accessible formats and communication supports to the public by January 1, 2014.
- Encourage staff attendance at the annual Expo/JOIN conference (Toronto) in order to stay current on the topic of employment for persons with disabilities.

### **2014 – 2016**

- Continue to use accessible format standards and templates based on best practices.
- Train staff on ministry protocols, the procurement process and using specific accounting codes for dealing with requests for alternate formats and when arranging for communication supports as part of hosting accessible events.
- Promote staff awareness of accessibility within the ministry through use of OPS-wide information opportunities.

## **Employment Accommodation**

**MYAP Outcome:** People with disabilities who are OPS employees participate fully and meaningfully in services and employment.

### **MYAP Deliverables and Timelines**

2013 – Increased awareness in OPS of accessibility best practices in customer service and the workplace.

2013 – Senior managers have accessibility performance commitments.

2014 - 2016 – Best practices on employment accommodation and return to work implemented.

2014 - 2016 – Managers and staff have accessibility performance commitments.

## **Ministry Proposed Measures**

### **2013 – 2014**

- Promote OPS policy on preventing barriers in employment through the OPS Accessibility@Source information campaign on OPS policies, practices and resources.
- Increase manager awareness of employment accommodation directives, policies and plans through the support of OPS awareness initiatives.
- Ensure that managers understand how to make accessible formats and communication supports available for employees.
- Include performance commitments on inclusion (which includes accessibility) for all managers and executives.
- Include accessibility commitments for staff and managers in annual performance development process.

## **2014 – 2016**

- Analyze MAA's results from the OPS Employee Survey to assess if employees are being appropriately accommodated.
- Include accessibility commitments for staff and managers in annual performance development process.

## **Built Environment**

**MYAP Outcome:** There is greater accessibility into, out of and around OPS facilities and public spaces.

## **MYAP Deliverables and Timelines**

2013 –Continue to develop strategies for addressing infrastructure barriers.

2014 - 2016 – OPS ready to implement requirements of AODA.

## **Ministry Proposed Measures**

### **2013 – 2014**

#### **Government Facilities**

- The ministry is committed to greater accessibility within and around the buildings and public spaces it occupies.
- All planned facility alterations and improvement projects, as well as any new construction, are designed and implemented in compliance with the Ontario Infrastructure (IO) Guidelines for Barrier-free Design of Government Facilities.

## **2014 – 2016**

### **Accessible Barrier-free Design in Buildings and Public Spaces**

- Increase manager awareness of the Design of Public Spaces Standards of the AODA, barrier-free design requirements of the Ontario Building Code and Infrastructure Ontario's (IO) Guidelines for Barrier-free Design of Government Facilities.

### **Leadership in Accessibility**

**MYAP Outcome:** *The OPS endeavours to demonstrate leadership for accessibility in Ontario.*

### **MYAP Deliverables and Timelines**

2013 – Ongoing consultations with persons with disabilities.

2013 – Ministries continue to publish annual accessibility plans.

2014 - 2016 – Accessibility continues as strong organizational commitment.

### **Ministry Proposed Measures**

#### **2013 – 2014**

- MAA regularly makes use of the OPS Inclusion Lens to ensure their policies, programs and processes are free of barriers for persons with disabilities.
- Reaffirm the MAA accessibility working group.

#### **2014 – 2016**

- Increase awareness among staff of mental illness in the workplace by promoting OPS resources and program initiatives.

## **Section Three: Report on Legislative Review**

In support of the OPS commitment to improve accessibility for people with disabilities, the Ontario Public Service will continue to review government initiatives, including legislation and policies, to identify potential barriers that need to be removed.

The OPS Diversity Office and the Ministry of the Attorney General are working together to support a coordinated approach to legislative review across government.

### **Acts, Regulations and Policies Reviewed**

Currently, there is no legislation or regulation mandated to the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs.

## **Glossary of Terms and Acronyms**

AODA – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

ASCS – Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation

IASR – Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation

MAA – Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs

MYAP – Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

OPS – Ontario Public Service

ODA – Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001

SCMD – Supply Chain Management Division

TTY – Telephone Typewriter or Telecommunication Device for the Deaf

WCAG – Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

## How to Contact us

Questions or comments about the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs accessibility plan are always welcome.

Please contact the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs at:

- Telephone – Toll free: 1-866-381-5337 (Monday to Friday 8:30 am to 5:00 pm, except statutory holidays)
- TTY number: 1-866-686-6072
- Fax: 1-416-326-4017
- E-mail: [public.maa@ontario.ca](mailto:public.maa@ontario.ca)
- Ministry website address: [www.ontario.ca/aboriginal](http://www.ontario.ca/aboriginal)

Visit the [Ministry of Community and Social Services Accessibility Ontario](#) web portal. The site promotes accessibility and provides information and resources on how to make Ontario an accessible province for everyone.

Alternate formats of this document are available free upon request from:

### [ServiceOntario Publications](#)

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