



Manual	Accessibility Standards	Policy No. :
Section	The Integrated Accessibility Standards	Issued:
Subject	Multi-Year accessibility plan	Effective: January 1 2014
Issue to	All manual holders	Page: 1 – 18
Issued by	Board of Directors	Dated:

Introduction and statement of commitment

The **Integrated Standards Regulation (IASR)** under the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA)** requires Meta Centre to develop a multi-year plan every five years to prevent and remove barriers for persons with disabilities.

Every five years Meta Centre sets a course to prevent, identify and remove barriers for persons with disabilities. Through its multi-year accessibility plan, Meta Centre aims to become barrier free by 2025.

This course includes complying with the following accessibility standards in:

- Customer Services
- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Transportation
- The Built Environment

The 2012 – 2017 accessibility plans will help to inform planning requirements under Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (Integrated Regulation) enacted July 1 2011 under the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)**. The AODA requires Meta Centre to develop, implement and enforce accessibility standards so that goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises are accessible to persons with disabilities.

The multi-year accessibility plan outlines the specific steps Meta Centre is taking to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities and comply with the phased in requirements of the Regulations beginning January 1 2012.

Meta Centre remains committed to improving accessibility through the identification, removal and prevention of barriers in our agency. Working with our employees and with our clients and customers ensure that accessibility is given significant consideration.



This plan has been developed by our Accessibility Advisory Committee in accordance with the Integrated Regulation. It outlines a strategy to prevent and remove barriers and address current and future requirements of the AODA. It will be provided in an alternative format upon request.

In accordance with the requirements, Meta Centre will:

- Report annually on its website on its progress on the implementation.
- Provide all information related to the plan in alternative formats upon request.
- Review and update the plan at least once every five years.

The Human Resources Coordinator, who is part of the Accessibility Advisor Committee, will follow up on the progress of the plan and, if necessary, remind the responsible parties of their roles in implementing the plan. The Committee will meet as required to review implementation to remove and prevent barriers and achieve accessibility under AODA.

The establishment of an Accessibility Advisory Committee promotes the sharing of initiatives and helps develop a culture of accessibility and inclusion.

The Committee is involved in the preparation of the Accessibility Plan in respect of the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005**, Regulations and Standards.



Section One: Report on measures already implemented to identify, remove and prevent barriers in 2012 – 2017

From 2012 – 2017 Meta Centre will continue to comply with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation and continue to implement initiatives to enhance accessibility in other areas under the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulations – Standards for Employment, Information and Communications and Transportation (if applicable). When the Accessibility for the Built Environment becomes law, the same will apply.

This section includes a summary of the initiatives Meta Centre implemented on or before January 2012 and will continue to implement from 2012 – 2017.

1. Standards for Customer Service

Meta Centre met compliance with the requirements set out in the Accessible Customer Service Standard Regulation by:

- Establishing policies, procedures and practices for providing goods and services to persons with disabilities, and posting these in the reception area and on the agency's web site.
- Providing accessibility awareness, AODA and customer service standard training to all staff who interact, or may interact with persons with disabilities.
- Review customer service feedback forms in print and online and providing formats in large print and text formats. For the online form, the drop down menu in the customer service feedback mechanism will be expanded to include a field specifically for accessibility considerations,
- Working with property and landlords to develop a notification service disruption protocol, and communicated the customer service policy to staff so the support persons and service animals are permitted into Meta Centre premises.
- Develop a large print poster to communicate Meta Centre's existing feedback mechanisms, and making it available at all Meta Centre's front offices. In addition, information on the accessible online feedback form has been added to the agencies website.
- Adding an "Accessibility" button to the footer of the website to communicate the customer service policy and provide instructions for enhanced accessibility offerings.



- Creating a customer service policy that highlights information about accessibility requirements under the AODA including policies, guidelines and mandatory and recommended training requirements for staff and management.
- Reporting compliance to the customer service standards on the Accessibility Compliance Reporting tool at ServiceOntario's ONE-Source for Business website.
- Tracking attendance for accessibility training courses
- Communicating through policies and notices about the best ways to plan accessible events for customers.

Required legislative compliance: January 1 2012

Implemented timeframe: September 2011 – January 2012

Completion date: January 1 2012

2. Emergency response and evacuation plans under the ISAR Standards for Information and Communication and Employment

Meta Centre incorporated accessibility considerations into its emergency response and evacuation plan and procedures. The following measures were taken:

- Instructions were provided to staff regarding evacuation in times of emergency to gather at locations that are accessible.
- Persons with various disabilities were consulted to ensure we meet the needs of all persons with disabilities in our emergency response plan, and that public safety information and instructions are provided in a timely manner if an emergency or disaster occurs.
- Fire and disaster wardens were instructed to identify persons in need of assistance in advance of an emergency to discuss the location of the designated waiting area and how identified persons will be escorted out.
- The emergency response plan and public safety information and instructions were reviewed and modified to take the needs of persons with various disabilities into consideration.
- The emergency response plan and public safety information was posted in both French and English on the agencies website which is in compliance with accessibility standards.



- The emergency response plan and public safety information is available to the public in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports upon request.
- In cooperation with property management, the emergency procedures have been updated to ensure they can be followed by customers or employees with disabilities.
- Individualized workplace emergency response information has been made available to employee's who have disclosed a disability, and such employees will be accommodated according to their disability when and if an emergency or disaster occurs. These individualized plans have been communicated to their supervisors and recorded in their personnel file.
- Meta Centre has instituted a "buddy system" in which a designated individual provides assistance to a specific disabled employee (with the employee's prior consent) to help her / him evacuate the workplace in case of an emergency or disaster.
- Employees have been trained on the emergency response plan and/or public safety information and instructions to ensure that they know how to interact with persons with disabilities (employees and customers) during an emergency, incident or dangerous situation.
- Individualized emergency response information is reviewed when:
 - a) An employee moves to a different location in the agency
 - b) An employee's overall needs or plan are reviewed; and
 - c) When reviewing general emergency response policies

Required legislative compliance: January 1 2012

Implementation timeframe: September 2011 to January 1 2012

Completion date: January 1 2012



Section two: Report on planned measures to identify, remove and prevent barriers 2012 – 2017

This year, Meta Centre’s accessibility plan focuses on five areas. These initiatives will support compliance with the existing Accessibility Standards for Consumer Services. They will also help us enhance accessibility in other areas – information and communications, employment, transportation, and built environment.

1. Standards for Customer Services

Meta Centre is committed to ensuring that people with disabilities continue to receive accessible goods and services beyond January 1 2012. This means they will receive goods and services with the same high quality and timeliness as others as per the customer service policy issued January 1 2012.

Commitment

Meta Centre has adopted the accessible customer service policy and procedures.

Identification of barriers

People with disabilities face a range of physical and attitudinal barriers including stereotyping and prejudice. Inadequate resources and the lack of common objectives with regard to accessibility and equity seriously curb efforts to remove barriers.



Meta Centre has identified that we do have customers that have various disabilities and barriers do exist.

Meta Centre will look at finding and implementing assistive devices or technological enhancements to our information and communication and website for the purposes of improving interaction and communication with persons who have various disabilities.

Many areas of the agency do not have appropriate signage for wayfinding.

Planned Action(s)

To meet ongoing compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation requirements and removal of barriers to persons with disabilities, Meta Centre will:

- Continue to highlight the CS Policy in education, training and activities.
- Review Meta Centre's existing feedback process and incorporate more efficient tracking and response mechanisms for accessibility-related feedback.
- Consider accessibility related feedback through all channels (i.e. online feedback form, correspondence, inquires, meeting evaluation etc.) by assessing and responding to feedback as required.
- Remind property and landlord(s) of the building-specific service disruption notification protocols.
- Assess premises and other areas where barriers may exist that prevent customer access to our goods and services.
- Review effectiveness of policy, procedures and practices and make necessary adjustments.
- Review training requirements for staff who have interaction with the public; retrain on the customer service policy and procedures, the law and any general or existing accessibility matters.
- Continue to track and report on training compliance on an annual basis.
- Implement and promote awareness of TTY technology to communicate with someone who is deaf, deafened or hard of hearing. Train employees on how to use TTY and communicate the existence of this assisted device to customers.



- Encourage staff to consider accessibility when planning meetings and events with customers, including vendors and suppliers.
- Use visual or tactile signs to identify branding and to display posters, signage and brochures for all locations within the premises.
- Provide appropriate wayfinding signage and instruction to clients and visitors.
- Improve emergency evacuation procedures for deaf persons.
- Update customer service policy on providing services to people with disabilities in regard to accessibility formats under Integrated Regulations.

Regulated legislative compliance: January 1 2013

Implementation timeframe: January 2012 – January 1 2013

Completion Date: January 1 2013

2. Standards for Integrated Accessibility general requirements

2.1 Accessibility policy and statement of commitment to IASR Commitment

To implement a statement of commitment and policy on how Meta Centre will achieve accessibility through meeting IASR's requirements.

Identification of barriers

Meta Centre will assess physical, attitudinal and communication barriers across the agency to ensure we remove and prevent barriers to access for persons with disabilities in our agency.

Planned Action(s)

- Draft a policy that addresses how Meta Centre will achieve or has achieved accessibility through meeting the IASR's requirements.
- Meta Centre's Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation policy and statement of commitment will be made available to the public on the premises and on the agencies website.



- Meta Centre Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation policy and statement of commitment will be available in an accessible format upon request. We will consult with the person with a disability when identifying the appropriate format.

Required legislative compliance: January 1 2014

Implementation timeframe: January 2012 – January 1 2014

Completion date: January 1 2014

2.2 Accessibility plan maintenance

Commitment

Establish, implement and maintain a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements.

Post the accessibility plan on the agencies website at least once every five years.

Required legislative compliance: January 1 2014-01-12

Implementation timeframe: January 2012 – January 1 2014

Completion date: January 1 2014

2.3 Self-service kiosks

Commitment

To implement a process for making features of the self-service kiosks accessible through meeting IASR's requirements.

Identification of barriers

Meta Centre does not employ self-service kiosk at this time; unable to identify barriers.



Planned Action(s)

If and when Meta Centre employs self-service kiosks, put a process in place to:

- Use accessibility criteria and features when acquiring and using self-service kiosks, except where it is not practical to do so.
- Upon request, provide an explanation when it is not practical to do so.

Required legislative compliance: January 1 2014

Implementation timeframe: to be determined when applicable

Completion date: N/A

2.4 Training

Commitment

To implement a process for ensuring that all employees, volunteers, persons who deal with customers and the public on the agencies behalf receive the appropriate training that meets the requirements under Integrated Regulation.

Identification of barriers

Ensure meetings and training sessions are accessible for employees with learning and other disabilities.

Planned Action(s)



Meta Centre will:

- Provide training on the requirements of the Integrated Regulation and on the **Human Rights Code** as it pertains to persons with disabilities to all employees, volunteers, contractors, other third parties who interact with persons with disabilities on behalf of the agency and persons involved in the creation of policies.
- Keep and maintain a record of the dates when training is provided and the number of individuals to whom it was provided.
- Ensure training is provided on the requirements of the accessibility standards.
- Provide training in respect to any changes to policies on an ongoing basis.

Required legislative compliance: January 1 2015

Implementation timeframe: January 2012 – January 1 2015

Completion date: N/A

3. Standards for Information and Communications

Meta Centre is committed to making agency information and communications accessible to people with disabilities. The information we provide and the ways we communicate are key to delivering our goods, programs and services to the public.

Focus

Access to information involves matters relating to format and availability of content, including the means of access and technologies associated with it. While access to publications and information is usually the responsibility of the specific department, there are also related responsibilities in all departments that produce publications and websites, such as promotions, marketing and communications.



Commitment

Meta Centre will incorporate new accessibility requirements under the information and communications standards to ensure that its information and communications system and platforms are accessible and provided in accessible formats that meet the needs of persons with disabilities. Meta Centre will endeavour to provide necessary communication support in a timely manner.

Identification of barriers

Meta Centre will assess its communication methods and attitudes to identify and remove barriers to information and communication with people with disabilities.

Potential barriers include:

- Lack of website accessibility standards for the agencies website
- Lack of a method to obtain user feedback on accessibility
- Lack of awareness among agency's webmasters regarding website accessibility barriers
- Information overload and conflicting information recommendations for website accessibility standards
- Inaccessible PDF documents
- Inaccessible HTML forms

In addition, a barrier identification assessment will be conducted by the Accessibility Advisory Committee to identify attitudinal and communication barriers, and will recommend solutions and categorize barrier removal status as short- mid -term or long-term.

Planned Action(s)

To meet compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Information and Communication under IASR requirements and remove barriers to persons with disabilities, Meta Centre will:



- Upon request, provide or arrange provision of accessible formats and communication supports to persons with disabilities in a timely manner, taking into account the person's accessibility needs.
- With the Accessibility Advisor Committee, identify problems and provide recommendations for PDF documents and forms.
- Provide specific instructions to webmaster on how to best create HTML forms
- Post the accessibility plan on the agency's website
- Post a statement on the website about accessibility and the availability of accessible formats and communication supports
- Provide, upon request, accessible formats and communication supports for receiving and responding to feedback from persons with disabilities
- Work with the webmaster to ensure changes are implemented to enhance accessibility
- Ensure internet websites and web content on those site conform to WCAG 2.0 Level A by January 1 2014
- Ensure all websites and web content conform to WCAG 2.0 Level AA other than success criteria 1.2.2 Captions (Live) and success criteria 1.2.5 Audio Descriptions (Pre-recorded) by January 1 2021

Feedback

- Ensure that processes for receiving and responding to feedback are accessible to persons with disabilities by providing or arranging for provision of accessible formats and communication supports, upon request
- Consult the person making the request to determine suitability of format
- Notify the public about availability of accessible formats and communication supports.

Required legislative compliance: January 1 2016

Implementation timeframe: January 2012 – January 1 2016

Completion date: N/A



4. Standards for Employment

Meta Centre is committed to fair and accessible employment practices that attract and retain talented employees with disabilities.

4.1 Recruitment

Commitment

Meta Centre will incorporate new accessibility requirements under the employment standard to ensure that barriers in recruitment are eliminated and agency policies are followed where applicable.

Identification of barriers

Meta Centre will assess recruitment policies, practices and procedures, methods and attitude to identify and remove barriers to employment of people with disabilities.

Planned Action(s)

To meet compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Employment under the Integrated Regulation requirements and to remove barriers to persons with disabilities in recruitment, Meta Centre will:

- On the Meta Centre website and in job advertisements, specify that accommodation is available for applicants with disabilities
- Notify employees and public about the availability of accommodation in its recruitment processes for applicants with disabilities
- Inform candidates about the availability of accommodation;
 - When called for an interview
 - During selection process
 - At the time of job offer
 - At orientation



- If the selected applicant requests an accommodation, consults with the applicant and arrange for the provision of a suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs.
- When making offers of employment, notify the successful applicant of policies for accommodating employees with disabilities.

Required legislative compliance: January 1 2016

Implementation date: January 1 2016

Compliance date: N/A

4.2 Support information for employees

Commitment

Meta Centre will incorporate new accessibility requirements under the Employment standard to ensure that barriers in information that supports employees are eliminated and agency policies are followed where applicable.

Identification to barriers

Meta Centre will assess its supporting documents, policies, practices and procedures, methods and attitudes to identify and remove barriers to employment of people with disabilities.

Planned action(s)

To meet compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Employment under the Integrated Regulations requirements and to remove barriers to persons with disabilities, Meta Centre will:

- Inform current employees and new hires soon after they begin employment of Meta Centre's policies and procedures supporting employees with disabilities,



including, but not limited to, policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to disability

- Provide information under this section to new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment
- Keep employees up to date on changes to policies
- Provide accessible formats and communication supports to any employees who request them. If requested, the employer will consult with the employee to provide or arrange for provision of accessible formats and communication supports for:
 - Information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job
 - Information that is generally available to employees in the workplace

Required legislative compliance: January 1 2016

Implementation date: January 1 2016

Compliance date: N/A

4.3 Documented individualized plans (i.e return to work, accommodation plan)

Commitment

Meta Centre will incorporate new accessibility requirements under the employment standards to ensure that barriers in accommodation and other plans that support employees are eliminated and agency policies are followed where applicable.

Identification of barriers

Meta Centre will assess its return – to – work and accommodation plans, policies, practices and procedures, methods and attitude to identify and remove barriers to employment of people with disabilities.

Planned action(s)



To meet compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Employment under the Integrated Regulations requirements and remove barriers to persons with disabilities, Meta Centre will:

- Include in the process the manner in which the employee requesting accommodation can participate in the development of the plan
- Include in the process the means by which the employee is assessed on an individual basis
- Provide an individualized accommodation plan in writing to any employee with a disability
- Include in the process the manner in which the employer can request an evaluation by an outside medical or other expert, at the employer's expense, to assist the employer in determining if and how accommodation can be achieved
- Provide an individualized return-to-work plan in writing for any employee who has been absent from work due to a disability and requires disability-related accommodation to return to work
- Include in the process the manner in which the employee can request participation of a representative from his or her bargaining agent
- Take steps to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information
- Outline the frequency in which individual accommodation plans will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which it will be done
- Provide the employee with the reasons for the denial if the individual accommodation plan is denied
- Include in the process the means of providing the individual accommodation plan in a format that takes into account the employee's accessibility needs
- Include any individualized workplace emergency response information
- Identify any other accommodation that is to be provided to the employee

Required legislative compliance: January 1 2016

Implementation timeframe: January 1 2016

Compliance date: N/A



4.4 Performance assessment, career development and advancement, and deployment

Commitment

Meta Centre will incorporate new accessibility requirements under the employment standard to ensure that barriers in performance assessment, career development and advancement, and redeployment are eliminated and agency policies are followed where applicable.

Identification of barriers

Meta Centre will assess its performance review, career development and advancement, redeployment programs, policies, practices and procedures, methods and attitudes to identify and remove barriers to employment of people with disabilities.

Planned action(s)

To meet compliance with the Accessibility Standards for Employment under the Integrated Regulation requirements and to remove barriers to persons with disabilities, Meta Centre will:

- Take the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities and their individualized accommodation plans into account:
 - When assessing their performance
 - In managing their career development and advancement
 - When redeploying them
- Review and revise performance review policy
- Take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities when providing career development and advancement to its employees with disabilities



- Take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities when redeploying employees

Required legislative compliance: January 1 2016

Implementation timeframe: January 2012 – January 1 2016

Completion date: N/A

5. Standards for Transportation

This standard does not apply to Meta Centre

6. Standards for Built Environment

This standard is not yet law; however Meta Centre is committed to greater accessibility in, out of, and around buildings we use. When the standards comes into force or when possible before that happens, Meta Centre will ensure that facilities incorporate the standards for barrier-free design as existing spaces are renovated.