

Environment and Land Tribunals Ontario (ELTO)
Multi Year Accessibility Plan

November 2013

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Environment and Land Tribunals Ontario Multi-Year Accessibility Plan | 3 |
| Accessibility Policies and Plans for Environment and Land Tribunals Ontario | 3 |
| Accessibility Policies and Plans | 3 |
| Statement of Commitment | 3 |
| Reporting Requirements | 3 |
| ELTO Consultation Plan | 4 |
| Accessible Emergency Information | 4 |
| Training | 4 |
| Public Inquiry Unit | 5 |
| Procurement | 5 |
| Training Procurement | 6 |
| Other Types of Procurement | 6 |
| Accessible Feedback Processes | 7 |
| Accessible Formats and Communication Supports | 7 |
| Accessible Employment Practices | 8 |
| Accessible New Websites and Web Content | 9 |
| Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment | 9 |
| Capital Projects | 9 |
| Appendix A | 10 |
| Definitions and Terms | 10 |

Environment and Land Tribunals Ontario

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

Accessibility Policies and Plans for Environment and Land Tribunals Ontario

This 2013-21 accessibility plan outlines the policies and actions that Environment and Land Tribunals Ontario (ELTO) will put in place to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.

Accessibility Policies and Plans

As of January 1, 2013, ELTO committed to developing accessibility policies for its employees and clients. In establishing and maintaining its multi-year accessibility plan, ELTO commits to auditing its current policies and practices, built environment, procurement processes, employment practices, and any proposed new website development to ensure that it meets the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and its Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR). Any potential or noted breaches will be identified and remedied. In developing these policies and plans, ELTO will consult with persons of disabilities, in the disability community, and with persons with disabilities who are staff members to ensure that its policies and plans are inclusive and consider how to remove any barriers that may be present for its clients and staff.

Statement of Commitment

ELTO is committed to treating all people in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. We believe in integration and equal opportunity. We are committed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner, and will do so by preventing and removing barriers to accessibility and meeting accessibility requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Reporting Requirements

By December 31, 2013, ELTO will annually post on its website a report which details its progress in complying with the AODA requirements and its plans for future compliance. The annual status report will be provided in an accessible format, upon request.

ELTO will establish, maintain, document and post on its website its multi-year accessibility plan to remove barriers. ELTO will provide its plan in an accessible format, upon request, and update it at least once every five years in consultation with persons with disabilities.

By January 1, 2014, ELTO will file an accessibility report through the ServiceOntario portal, using its unique Business Number. The report will detail its compliance with all requirements up to and including January 1, 2014. ELTO will make its accessibility report available to the public. ELTO will file accessibility reports as of December 31 for the years: 2017, 2019, 2021, 2023 and 2025.

ELTO Consultation Plan

In developing its multi-year plan, ELTO worked with the Diversity and Inclusion office, as well as its sister tribunals, Social Justice Tribunals Ontario (SJTO), Criminal Injuries Compensation Board (CICB) and Safety, Licensing Appeals and Standards Tribunals Ontario (SLASTO), in developing consultations with its stakeholder groups to ensure that the policies and plans it has developed to address attitudinal and systemic barriers for people with disabilities, are effective and responsive to their needs. Stakeholder discussions contemplated the barriers to justice an individual with a disability may face in accessing justice and ELTO's services.

As well, ELTO will consult with stakeholders and staff to identify the barriers individuals with multiple disabilities and cultural differences face in accessing ELTO's services. It is recommended that ELTO consult with persons with physical disabilities as well as those with mental health issues to better understand their unique issues when accessing its services.

ELTO will consult with staff as to how to remove barriers to ELTO's services and allow staff to function fully in an integrated work environment that is inclusive and barrier free. Consultations will focus on how ELTO will monitor the accessibility, inclusiveness, appropriateness and effectiveness of its programs so that it may report back on its successes and identify areas for improvement. This committee's function will be part of the Employee Engagement Committee's mandate to promote an inclusive work environment which focuses on continuing education and training related to diversity, accessibility and inclusion. The Committee will promote learning events such as lunch-and-learns, seminars and speakers on various topics.

Accessible Emergency Information

ELTO is committed to providing its customers and clients with publicly available emergency information in an accessible way upon request. It is committed to providing employees with disabilities with individualized emergency response information when necessary.

Emergency and public safety information includes evacuation procedures, floor plans, information about alarms or incidents that may threaten life, property, operations or the environment. ELTO is committed to developing emergency plans and procedures before an emergency occurs, in accordance with the Fire Code, to ensure that evacuation procedures provide effective provisions for people requiring assistance.

Training

ELTO will provide training to employees and other staff members on Ontario's accessibility laws and on the Ontario Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities. Training will be provided in a way that best suits the duties of employees, volunteers and other staff members.

By January 1, 2014, ELTO will ensure employees are provided with the training needed to meet Ontario's accessible laws. Training for staff on the IASR will be delivered using the on-line course, "The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation in the Ontario Public Service." Training for staff on the Ontario Human Rights Code will be delivered using the on-line video "Working Together."

- All ELTO's executives and managers will be trained by December 31, 2012.
- All ELTO's staff, and OIC appointed board members, will be trained by December 31, 2013.

ELTO will:

- track and monitor staff's training on accessible service delivery standards.
- train and monitor to ensure that its adjudicators use inclusive practices and are responsive to accessibility needs that arise in the adjudicative setting.
- ensure its staff have learning commitments for accessibility embedded in their performance plans
- ensure its staff is trained on using alternate formats in its communications by requiring staff be trained using the "Mission Possible" series of videos developed to assist OPS staff create accessible documents:
 - "A Word about Word: Making Microsoft Word Documents Accessible"
 - "PDF: Making PDFs Accessible and Checking for Accessibility"

Public Inquiry Unit

ELTO will take the following steps to ensure its employees consider the needs of people with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring devices for use in its Public Inquiry area so that they can be used independently and securely. By January 2013 ELTO will ensure that:

- the built environment is accessible to wheelchairs or other mobility devices
- the point of sale device is accessible to persons using a wheelchair.
- the photocopier available to the public is accessible to people with disabilities
- the hearing room information screens are accessible to persons with low-vision issues by using high contrast colours and clear fonts to differentiate information provided
- the card reader on public photocopier in the public area is easily found by using clear signage
- instructions for use of these devices are simple and easy for all users to understand, including people with cognitive, physical or learning disabilities. Instructions will be available in alternate formats.

Procurement

ELTO will ensure its employees consider accessibility for persons with disabilities criteria and features when procuring goods and services, including goods and services acquired through Vendor of Record arrangements, regardless of value. Procurement documents will specify accessibility criteria to be met by vendors and provide guidelines to its vendors as to the evaluation of their proposals as it relate to the accessibility criteria.

ELTO will consider the following, using the Inclusion Lens as a guide, when procuring goods, services or facilities:

- What are the barriers people with disabilities may face in trying to use or access goods, services and facilities at ELTO
- What are the appropriate accessibility criteria and how can they be incorporated into ELTO's procurement process

Training Procurement

When acquiring facilitators for training sessions and determining room configurations for training or hearings, ELTO will ensure that the location is wheelchair accessible and consider any additional accommodations may be required to enable the full participation of all attendees. Accommodations could include sign language interpretation, closed captioning and materials provided in alternate formats, etc.

Other Types of Procurement

When ELTO acquires computers or other desktop equipment, including telephones, it will consider whether the systems have the capacity for adaptive technology upgrades such as speech reading, voice activated software or large fonts.

When ELTO acquires delivery and installation of office furniture, through an approved VOR arrangement, suppliers must be capable of supplying furniture and attachments which can be used by persons with disabilities, and individuals with accommodation needs.

When ELTO acquires temporary help, through an approved VOR arrangement, suppliers are required to provide temporary help workers who are sensitive to the needs and diversity of OPS employees and the public it serves. ELTO management will ensure that the workers supplied meet this requirement and bring any concerns to the agency's attention. When screening, interviewing and testing temporary help workers, ELTO is committed to ensuring a barrier-free recruitment process and ensuring that any testing required is reliable, valid and based on bona fide job requirements.

As of January 1, 2013, as per the IASR, when ELTO acquires video production services to produce training videos for staff and the public, and is considered new content to be housed on any new website, proponents will meet the WCAG 2.0 Level AA accessibility requirements. Exceptions include (live) captions and (pre-recorded) audio descriptions. To be in compliance, ELTO will require the successful vendor provide video products which:

- are available in accessible formats and demonstrate diversity;
- exemplify accommodations for persons with disabilities including:
 - open captioning transcripts, audio description and ASL/LSQ interpretation (standard 30 frame/second for sign language interpretation insert) or
 - provide a transcript;
- ensure language in the videos is consistent with the Ministry document "Talk About Disabilities: Choose the Right Word."

Accessible Feedback Processes

ELTO will, by January 1, 2014, ensure that its feedback processes are accessible by ensuring that its complaint process is available online and upon request in various accessible formats. To comply, ELTO will require any documents posted on its website be created in an accessible format before it is posted to the website. Processes must allow for feedback in a variety of ways, including in person, by telephone, writing or email. The feedback policy will detail the specific actions ELTO will take when a complaint is received. Comment cards or surveys must be provided in accessible formats upon request.

ELTO established in December 2009 an Accessibility portal on its website where the public can provide feedback and request accommodation when accessing its adjudicative tribunals. The Accessibility Coordinator is responsible for ensuring the public's accessibility requests are dealt with in a timely, responsive and equitable manner. The Coordinator also monitors and updates ELTO's inventory of accessible hearing locations across the province.

All accessibility and feedback requests are monitored and reported to the Executive Sponsor.

Accessible Formats and Communication Supports

By January 1, 2015, communication supports and accessible formats will be provided, upon request, in a timely manner, to individuals that require assistance in communication such as:

- accessible electronic formats such as HTML and MS Word
- Braille
- accessible audio formats
- large print
- text transcripts of visual and audio information
- reading written information aloud to a person, upon request
- exchanging hand-written notes or providing a note taker or communication assistant
- captioning or audio description
- assistive listening devices
- augmentative and alternative communication methods and strategies such as the use of letter, word or picture boards, and devices that speak out messages
- sign language interpretation and intervener services
- repeating, clarifying or restating information

ELTO staff will consult with the client making the request to determine their accessibility needs. No additional fees will be charged to provide the alternate format. ELTO will notify the public that it will provide accessible formats and communication supports on its website or through its published materials.

NOTE: Some materials such as large maps and diagrams may be difficult or impossible to convert into an accessible format. If ELTO, upon consultation with the person making the request, determines that it is unable to convert the information, ELTO will explain why it is unable to provide the document and provide a summary of its contents.

ELTO is committed to reviewing its public and internal documents to ensure documents are created using accessible formats. In 2013, ELTO's communications staff will be trained to prepare documents using formatting tools to ensure documents are accessible using reading devices such as JAWS and voice recognition software. Board decisions will be formatted and available on ELTO website in accessible formats.

In addition, in 2013 ELTO will provide guidelines to its staff on preparing emails and documents using accessible formats, (e.g. font type, font size, colour contrast, plain language). ELTO will encourage staff to embed e-mail attachments in the body of the e-mail rather than as attachments. When preparing documents, staff will be taught to use pre-set heading, styles for formatting and tables of contents. Staff will be trained on how to make PDF documents accessible and will request staff avoid the use of PDF attachments to relay information, where possible.

ELTO has assistive hearing devices available for many of its hearing rooms located at the Toronto office. Alternate methods of providing access to the adjudicative process such as video conferencing are under consideration.

Accessible Employment Practices

ELTO will, by January 1, 2014, establish processes to ensure that it meets the accessible employment practices by:

- incorporating accessibility in its recruitment practices
- providing job-related information in accessible formats, upon request
- developing written processes for development of documented accommodation plans
- accommodating employees returning to work after disability-related absences through the development of individual accommodation plans
- considering employee's accessibility needs for employment opportunities
- mitigating barriers to recruitment, selection, promotion and retention of staff to ensure that its established processes for recruitment are accessible and inclusive.
- ensuring employees' accessibility needs are considered
- reviewing its interview process for biases and incorporating diversity into its interview panels.
- ensure invitations to candidates for testing and interviews make reference to ELTO's willingness to provide accommodation upon request

ELTO has in place orientation materials for staff and Board Members which detail accessibility, diversity and Health and Safety training ELTO requires staff to complete. ELTO will ensure all staff have received an active offer of accommodation and have individualized accommodation plans, if required.

OPS recruitment staff have removed barriers from job advertisements. All job advertisements are in plain language, available in alternate formats and include information for applicants on how to request accommodation or assistance.

ELTO management staff will work with its Human Resource professionals to review its resume screening practices and interviewing practices to ensure barriers are removed.

ELTO's hiring managers will be required in 2014 to review new training materials, "Manager's Guide to Removing Barriers from the Recruitment Process" and a "Barrier-Free Interview and Selection Best Practices" checklist. In addition, management will employ the techniques set out in the "Best Practices in Recruitment Tip Sheet" to ensure that hiring practices are fair, transparent and consistent.

Accessible New Websites and Web Content

ELTO will, by January 1, 2014, ensure that any new websites and web content on them are accessible to people with disabilities by conforming with WCAG 2.0 level A to ensure that its websites conform to international standards for website accessibility.

ELTO will, by January 1, 2021, ensure that all internet websites and web content conforms with WCAG 2.0 Level AA by, except where meeting the requirement is not practicable, by preparing for the transition over the upcoming years. ELTO staff will audit its site for compliance issues and review the standards set out in WCAG 2.0 Level AA to ensure that its websites will meet compliance.

In 2013-14, ELTO commits to reviewing its online web-based appeal forms to ensure they are accessible and in compliance with the IASR. ELTO's clients will receive better online service through an accessible application process that meets the needs of Ontarians.

Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment

ELTO will ensure that the design of any public spaces such as its hearing rooms and Public Inquiry counter at the ELTO office in Toronto, and office space for its staff, are accessible by conducting a threat risk assessment (TRA) to ensure that it has included accessibility considerations in its design. The accessibility coordinator will work closely with an architect from PATD (Policy and Adjudicative Tribunals Division) in designing and developing its space in accordance with good accessibility design principles to ensure that it does not inadvertently create barriers to accessibility, and that it will capitalize on opportunities to increase accessibility when changes are being made to its space.

ELTO's accessibility coordinator will continue to work with municipality stakeholders in maintaining an inventory of accessible municipal locations and hearing rooms across the province.

Capital Projects

All new ELTO capital projects and construction will meet the design and construction requirements for barrier-free designs in Ontario government facilities. ELTO will use the OPS Inclusion Lens as a tool to improve the accessibility assessments of capital proposals. The lens has components which are designed to assess accessibility when programs are developed and reviewed.

Appendix A

Definitions and Terms

Definitions:

AODA – Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

ELTO – Environment and Land Tribunals Ontario

IASR – Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (Ontario Regulation 191/11)

“extranet website” means a controlled extension of the intranet, or internal network of an organization to outside users over the Internet

“internet website” means a collection of related web pages, images, videos or other digital assets that are addressed relative to a common Uniform Resource Identifier (URI) and is accessible to the public

“intranet website” means an organization’s internal website that is used to privately and securely share any part of the organization’s information or operational systems within the organization and includes extranet websites.

“kiosk” means an interactive electronic terminal, including a point-of-sale device intended for public use that allows users to access one or more services or products or both. O. Reg. 191/11, s. 6 (5).

“New intranet website” means either an intranet website with a new domain name or an intranet website with an existing domain name undergoing a significant refresh.

WCAG – Web Content Accessibility Guidelines