



Accessibility Status 2020

[Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005](#)

The Office of the Ontario Ombudsman has historically undertaken to ensure a fully accessible environment for all persons with disabilities. We have continued to build upon and improve our practices to meet the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities as per the specific requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and its regulations.

In early 2020, we obtained new office space to accommodate staff for our French Language Services and Children and Youth Units, which became part of our Office in 2019. The design of this new office space focuses on accessibility and includes accessible washrooms, sit-stand workstations, wide doorways and aisles, and accessible service counters and reception desks.

As of March 16, 2020, all non-essential public servants were mandated to work from home, all non-essential businesses were closed, and public health officials called on everyone to stay at home to minimize the spread of COVID-19. In accordance with the directives of public health authorities and the provincial government, our Office closed on that date. Our staff adapted quickly to the requirement to close the Office. As of the writing of this report, the Office is still closed and staff are working remotely. During this period, we continue to consider accessibility in all steps taken, and to review our services to ensure they are accessible. Initially, and throughout the pandemic, we have indicated how to access our services by posting this information on our website.

Even as we work remotely, we continue our practices of training new staff about accessibility, providing the public with documents in an accessible manner, accommodating accessibility needs in the recruitment process, and including accessibility terms in all contracts for services.

As reported last year, we have established an internal accessibility committee to explore accessible systems and tools for knowledge-sharing. This committee met several times in 2020. Work on implementing these systems continues, but has been delayed due to the need to refocus resources on providing services to the public during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The online recruitment system and the website passed an audit at WCAG 2.0 Level AA.