

For Immediate Release
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**McGUINTY GOVERNMENT MAKES GOOD ON COMMITMENT TO
PROVIDE BETTER CUSTOMER SERVICE TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**
New Customer Service Standard Means Greater Accessibility

TORONTO - The McGuinty government is implementing a new accessible customer service standard that will connect more customers to products, services and employment by requiring businesses to be accessible, Madeleine Meilleur, Minister of Community and Social Services, announced today.

“I am proud to launch the accessible customer service standard which will help people with disabilities get the same level of customer service as everyone else,” said Meilleur. “Improved accessibility makes good business sense. It connects businesses with more potential customers and builds customer loyalty.”

The new accessible customer service standard will require all organizations that have at least one employee to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessible customer service. The standard, which will come into force on January 1, 2008, is based on the recommendations of the Customer Service Standards Development Committee whose membership includes individuals from the business sector, government and people with disabilities.

“The Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario [AMCTO] is proud to be playing a major role in supporting municipalities with training and information to help them comply with the new accessibility standards for customer service,” said Betteane M. Cadman, President of AMCTO. “We are working in partnership with the Accessibility Directorate of Ontario to develop educational materials and resources to support our members so that they can help make customer service across Ontario accessible to all.”

The Ministry of Community and Social Services is working with AMCTO and the Retail Council of Canada to build awareness of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, the new customer service standard and the issue of accessibility in the public and retail sectors.

A Transportation Accessibility Standard has also been proposed and is currently on the ministry website for public review and feedback. The deadline for providing comments and feedback on the proposed standard has been extended to September 28, 2007.

This is just one more example of how, working together, Ontarians are building a more inclusive and prosperous society. Other results include:

- Launching a new public awareness website on accessibility called AccessON.ca, which challenges attitudes and encourages all Ontarians to learn about barriers to accessibility;
- Committing nearly \$276 million to strengthen community supports for adults with a developmental disability; and
- Implementing a new Ontario Child Benefit to help nearly 1.3 million children in low-income families.

“Ontario is a prosperous province with a thriving economy,” said Meilleur. “Accessibility creates opportunities for all Ontarians to contribute to the growth and sustainability of their communities.”

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www.AccessOn.ca

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