

ONTARIO MARKS NATIONAL ACCESS AWARENESS WEEK

McGuinty Government Breaking Down Barriers For People With Disabilities

NEWS

May 30, 2008

As part of its commitment to break down barriers for people with disabilities, Ontario is celebrating National Access Awareness Week, May 26 – June 1, 2008.

People with disabilities face daily barriers that prevent them from working, enjoying and participating in their communities. Each year, National Access Awareness Week encourages Canadians to think about the [barriers](#) people with disabilities face, and to find ways to help remove them.

Under its landmark [accessibility legislation](#), Ontario is making progress toward its goal of becoming an accessible province for people with disabilities by 2025. Ontario's first [accessibility standard](#) – for [customer service](#) – is already in force, and new standards are in development for:

- Transportation
- Information and communication
- Employment
- Buildings and other structures.

Across Ontario, businesses and communities are already finding ways to make themselves more accessible to people with disabilities. For example, the Hampton Inn in Ottawa incorporates accessibility into everyday business. The hotel provides guests with accessible rooms, that have wide entrances and accessible washrooms, and staff trained to help people with disabilities.

QUOTES

“Accessibility is good for our economy and our society. It means a bigger talent pool for Ontario's workforce, more customers for our businesses and communities that include people of all abilities,” said [Community and Social Services Minister Madeleine Meilleur](#).

“We are responsible for meeting our customers' needs and respecting those needs, whatever they are. That's our business,” said Franco Falcucci, General Manager, Hampton Inn Ottawa.

QUICK FACTS

- Today, 15.5 per cent of Ontarians have a disability. This number will grow as the population ages.
- Between 2001 and 2006, Ontario's population grew by about seven per cent, but the number of people with disabilities increased by 22 per cent.
- Canadians with disabilities have an estimated spending power of about \$25 billion annually.

LEARN MORE

Find out [how to serve customers with disabilities](#).

Learn more about why accessibility is [good for your business](#).

What are you doing to make the province accessible? [Tell us your story](#).

Julia Sakas, Minister's Office, 416 325-5219
Erika Botond, Media Office, 416 325-5760

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