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International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD)

December 3 was International Day of Persons with Disabilities. This month's newsletter highlights the origins of this important day and offers information and tools to promote a greater understanding of accessibility issues and actions in Ontario.

Websites and Web Content Accessibility: January 1, 2021

Beginning January 1, 2021 **all** public websites and web content posted after January 1, 2012 must meet WCAG 2.0 Level AA standard. This month's newsletter provides additional information and resources related to this requirement. The articles are intended to provide resources, answer your questions and help you comply with this requirement.

For businesses and non-profits with 20 or more employees, the deadline to file an

Reference Number: PEP1829

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Did you enjoy this newsletter?

Do you know someone who is interested in accessibility? If you liked this newsletter and know others who would also benefit from receiving these updates, feel free to forward them this link so that they can subscribe to the newsletter, or visit ontario.ca/accessibility.

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Let us know if the newsletter is working for you! Please visit the following link to the survey and provide us your feedback www.surveymonkey.com/r/VCT687C.

IDPD 2020: Building Back Better: toward a disability-inclusive, accessible and sustainable post COVID-19 World

Proclaimed by the United Nations (UN) in 1992, International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) is observed annually on December 3. The UN's annual observance of persons with disabilities focused on the

report has been extended to June 30, 2021

Ontario has Accessibility Laws - Businesses and non-profits with 20 or more employees must submit an Accessibility Compliance Report before June 30, 2021.

Learn how to file your 2020 Accessibility Compliance Report at: ontario.ca/AccessibilityReport

Access Now for COVID

Imagine if you could open your maps app of choice and quickly identify which places were accessible? That's exactly what Access Now has accomplished! Access Now is an app that crowdsources accessibility information about different locations. Users can place a pin on an interactive map, which lets other users know about the accessibility

World'.

People with disabilities are disproportionately affected by the health, social, and economic consequences of the global COVID-19 pandemic. In this context, this year's theme emphasizes the importance of strengthening our collective efforts for universal access to essential services, including immediate health and social protection, education, digital infrastructure, accessible information, employment and other socio-cultural opportunities in order to ensure that persons with disabilities are not left behind in times of crisis and beyond.

To learn more about IDPD and this year's theme, please visit: United Nations IDPD

United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities logo

Mental Health Resources for the COVID-19 Pandemic

As the COVID-19 pandemic unfolded this year, immediate concerns focused on protecting physical health. However, as disruption to daily life impacted livelihoods, social interactions, and lifestyles, the pandemic also has had a significant impact on the mental health of Ontarians over the past several months. This has resulted in higher levels of stress and other impacts on mental health.

Two previous EnAbling Change Program partners, the Conference Board of Canada and the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) of Ontario have developed resources that support the mental health and wellbeing of both employees and employers, as Ontarians continue to meet the challenges of the pandemic.

Learn more about the Access Now story here
https://accessnow.com/about/

To address barriers resulting from COVID-19, Access Now is connecting their community with a new resource: their Access from Home Initiative. This initiative highlights businesses that are accessible from home. Check out this valuable bank of knowledge here:
https://map.accessnow.com/access-from-home

Access Now logo

Resources to Help Make Websites Accessible

ECP Partner Created Resources

Guide to Hiring a Web Developer
Guide to help organizations through the process of assessing and hiring a web developer.
gaates.org

Guide for Web Developers
Guide to help website developers understand how to create accessible websites and web content.
gaates.org

Professional Web Accessibility Auditing Made Easy
This free intensive e-course from Ryerson University will

of Canada that covers a variety of topics including gratitude, dealing with job loss, and ways to reduce mental fatigue. The podcasts provide strategies so that individuals can manage some of the challenges posed by the pandemic.

The Canadian Mental Health Association (Ontario) has published Tips to manage mental health during COVID-19, addressing topics including anxiety and selfcare. Return to the workplace: a psychological toolkit for heading back to work, created in collaboration with Mental Health Works and Bounce Back Ontario, provides help for both employees and employers across different economic sectors as they transition during the pandemic.

In addition to specific supports for pandemic challenges, there are accessibility resources to help employers – both big and small - make their workplaces accessible, including the Conference Board's Accessibility Toolkit: Making Ontario Workplaces Accessible to People With Disabilities, 2nd Edition, which has checklists, tips, and techniques to support employers to meet their obligations under the AODA and create an inclusive work environment for all employees. Making Your Business Accessible for People with Disabilities is another valuable resource which provides practical guidance for small businesses. Another workplace resource that looks at supporting positive mental health is CMHA Ontario's Mental Health in the Workplace: An Accommodation Guide for Managers and Staff.

All Ontarians can fulfill their potential in an accessible workplace, especially if their health and wellbeing are considered. With the impact of the pandemic, accessibility and inclusive environments are even more important for both employees and employers.

New Grant Program Which Supports the Ontario Government's Advancing Accessibility Framework

Ontario is investing $3.5 million over two years through its new Inclusive Community Grants program to strengthen communities and provide local opportunities for older adults

de.ryerson.ca

Enabling Access Through Web Renewal Handbook
Wilfrid Laurier University developed handbook to help take necessary steps to make websites accessible.
www.wlu.ca

Naturally Accessible Resource Guide
This handbook, from the Ontario Land Trust Alliance, helps public sector organizations take necessary steps to make their websites accessible.
olta.ca

Accessible Digital Office Document Project
Website to help you create accessible office documents and choose accessible office programs your organization can use.
adod.idrc.ocadu.ca

Other Helpful Resources

AccessAbility 2: A Practical Handbook on Accessible Graphic Design
Handbook aimed at educating graphic design and web design professionals to effectively deliver accessible web design solutions that meet AODA requirements.
rgd.ca

Resources Within the AccessAbility 2 Handbook – Websites
World Wide Web Consortium (w3c)'s hub for extensive accessibility initiatives, strategies, standards, and resources.
w3.org/wai

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 document is the version of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines utilized in most web accessibility standards and compliance. It covers a wide range of recommendations for making web content more accessible.
w3.org/TR/WCAG20

Adobe website hub for the company's accessibility resources. It has a growing body of instructional support for creating accessible media with Adobe products.
adobe.com

Canadian National Institute for the Blind's (CNIB) site is home to resources for people with visual impairments. It is also an excellent benchmark for accessible website design.
cnib.ca

Inclusive Design Research Centre's (1DRC) site is home to a wealth of information on the subject of adaptive

- undertaking local needs assessments to determine gaps in existing supports for seniors and people with disabilities;
- developing action plans and implementing virtual programs;
- retrofitting buildings with ramps and accessible washrooms; and
- installing self-serve kiosks with software that people with vision or hearing loss can use.

Through the Inclusive Community Grant, municipalities and local organizations across Ontario can receive up to $60,000 for projects that foster inclusive community involvement for older adults and people with disabilities, using the province's age-friendly community planning guide or local multi-year accessibility plans.

Inclusive communities respond to both the opportunities and challenges of an aging population by creating physical and social environments that support independent and active living and enable older adults and people with disabilities to continue contributing to all aspects of community life.

Community leaders and residents in inclusive communities work together to ensure that local policies, programs and services support the social and physical environments that enable all Ontarians to live safe, active and meaningful lives.

Federal Funding Program for Accessibility Hardware and Software Innovations

The Accessible Technology Program is investing in hardware and software solutions that help Canadians with disabilities overcome barriers that inhibit their full participation in the workplace. This program co-funds projects from eligible private sector, not-for-profit organizations, and research institutes that will develop innovative assistive and adaptive digital devices and technologies designed to help people with disabilities.

Since its start in 2017, this program has worked with organizations to provide greater opportunity for Canadians

NVDA Screen Reader: This site provides the free and open-source NVDA screen reader for Windows. It is a useful tool for accessibility testing, and a life-changing technology for people around the world who previously could not afford screen reader software.
nvaccess.org/download

WebAIM offers complete web accessibility services, and their website also provides practical articles and unique research on the subject.
webaim.org

Resources Within the AccessAbility 2 Handbook – Tools
W3C Markup Validation Service: This site provides a validator for the markup of web documents in HTML, XHTML, SMIL, MATHML, and more. It will flag syntax issues and provide suggestions for potential remediation.
validator.w3.org

AChecker: This tool checks single HTML pages for conformance with accessibility standards to ensure that the content can be accessed by everyone.
achecker.ca

Axe Developer Tools: These accessibility testing tools can be integrated into Chrome and Firefox using browser plugins and can also be accessed through Android and iOS apps. This open-source library is completely self-contained, allowing its highly accurate accessibility testing engine to be used in offline testing environments.
deque.com

Colour Contrast Analyser: This desktop application for macOS and Windows can be used to analyze the colour contrast of any elements that appear on a computer screen. It provides WCAG 2.1 compliance indicators, as well as a colour blindness simulator.
developer.paciellogroup.com

Sim Daltonism: This color blindness simulator lets you visualize colors as they are perceived with various types of color blindness. Use the camera on your iOS device, or use the Mac app to filter a region of the screen.
michelf.ca

Dynolitics: This enterprise level accessibility reporting service will scan and review an entire website for accessibility problems. It utilizes webAIM's WAVE engine to identify issues, assess potential impact on users, and make suggestions for remediation.
dinolytics.com

participate in their workplace and in the digital economy. The Government of Canada is currently accepting proposals for the January 2021 intake period. Project proposals are encouraged to be in the implementation and/or commercialization phase and must have a start date no earlier than April 1, 2021 and a completion date by March 31, 2022.

For more information about the program, and to learn how to apply visit:
https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/118.nsf/eng/00002.html.

Online Training Available: Invisible Disabilities and Use of Service Animals

Are you interested in participating in free training about invisible disabilities and service animals in Ontario? Courageous Companions is offering a free online course Awareness & Sensitivity Training on Invisible Disabilities and the Use of Service Animals (Log in / account creation required).

This course provides an overview of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and its regulations with an emphasis on increasing public education and awareness on the attitudinal barriers people with invisible disabilities and their service animals face in the hospitality, transportation and food industry sectors.

In partnership with the Government of Ontario, Courageous Companions has developed a series of videos and handouts included in this course. These resources aim to change the dialogue around service animals, illustrating their positive effect on inclusion and quality of life for people with invisible disabilities. Topics include:

- The legal rights of people who use service animals
- How to engage a customer if they are unsure whether their animal is a pet or a service animal
- Myths and misperceptions around people with invisible disabilities and their need for service animals

To access the course, you can visit Courageous Companions' website at courageouscompanions.ca.

Tech Soup Canada:

to customize the visual presentation and save their individual preferences. It includes ready-to-use components that enable a website to provide individualized visual accessibility.
fluidproject.org

Kontrast: This web browser plugin for Chrome and Firefox can be used to check the colour contrast of a webpage, and then adjust those colours in real-time within the browser. It has a free version with limited utility, while the full $5 version is a robust tool for analyzing and correcting colour contrast problems on webpages.
getkontrast.com

Other Selected Training Resources

Ryerson University: Digital Accessibility Courses
A curriculum on digital accessibility is now available as a free open educational resource for teaching and learning digital accessibility.
Textbook downloads:

- Introduction to Web Accessibility
- Digital Accessibility as a Business Practice
- Professional Web Accessibility Auditing Made Easy
- Understanding Document Accessibility
- Web Accessibility for Developers

Instructor-led experiences at Ryerson's Chang School of Continuing Education can be found on their website, including these offerings:

- Web Accessibility Auditing and Reporting
- Web Accessibility for Developers

Many Ontario Colleges and Some Universities Offer Related Programs, Such As:
OCAD University – **ocadu.ca**
George Brown College – **georgebrown.ca**
Ryerson University – **ryerson.ca**

A Coupe Ontario Based Online Training Options Include:
DPA Communications – **dpac.com**
Eliquo, Inc. – **eliquo.ca**

A Web for Everyone: Designing Accessible User Experience
Sarah Horton and Whitney Quesenbery
Rosenfeld Media, 2013
This book gives an introductory overview to the process of accessible and inclusive web design. It has a very user-centric focus, with special considerations for the diverse range of people who may be considered outliers.

Accessibility and Inclusion

Designing with accessibility in mind helps ensure that digital devices, products, and pages meet the needs of diverse individuals by limiting barriers to user experience.

TechSoup Canada is a program of the Centre for Social Innovation located in downtown Toronto, and a member of the TechSoup Global Network. Tech Soup Canada functions as a non-profit organization dedicated to helping address challenges facing the Canadian non-profit sector.

To support non-profit organizations, Tech Soup has developed and runs a Technology Donations Program that connects non-profit organizations with donated and discounted technologies. Additionally, Tech Soup creates and curates valuable learning resources such as their Design for Non-Designers blog series that explores a wide range of design tools, tutorials, and tips to help elevate a non-profit's story and reach. As part of the series, Designing for Digital Accessibility and Inclusion, a blog published on Aug 20, 2020, examines the importance of designing with accessibility in mind. By offering tips and links to tools for those who are not developers, the blog highlights this mindset as one way to ensure that digital devices, products, and pages meet the needs of individuals with disabilities or sensory impairments.

Information and Communications Final Report Posting

The Government of Ontario is pleased to announce that the Information and Communications Standards Development Committee's Final Recommendations Report is now posted online.

The report reflects the results of review process and an extensive examination of the existing Information and Communications Standards in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation. The Committee is a non-governmental committee comprised of industry experts, persons with disabilities, and government representatives established under the Accessibility for Ontarians with

Past Editions

To view past editions of the newsletter, please visit:
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u=c0c14c37aeafba38714735e2a&id=8c59ae32e5

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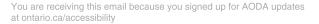**t** Follow us on Twitter

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The report focuses on the areas of general regulatory amendments, feedback processes, alternative formats and communication supports, emergency preparedness and planning, digital accessibility (websites and mobile apps), and educational or training recommendations. The Final Report's 33 recommendations are spread across two phases; phase one contains 32 recommendations focused on addressing the gaps in the current regulatory framework and phase two contains a proposal for an entirely new regulatory model that is flexible and responsive to changing technological requirements. The recommendations include a combination of regulatory and non-regulatory (e.g. policy, outreach, training, etc.) considerations to help advance accessibility in Ontario.

View the Final Report - English
View the Final Report – French

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