



MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES


Planning an accessible meeting: A checklist
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Choosing the location

- Did you do a site visit before booking a location? (You'll want to check the location's accessible features for yourself.)
- Is any renovation or construction work scheduled during the time of your event? (This may affect accessibility.)
- Are staff of the facility trained in providing accessible customer service?

Exterior Access
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Signage

- Are the signs for the street address or building name:
 - clearly visible from the street?
 - well lit at night (for evening events)?

Parking

- Are there a reasonable number of accessible parking spots available for the estimated number of attendees with disabilities? If not, can you arrange for more designated parking spaces close to the building during the event? Is there accessible metered parking or public parking lots with accessible spaces close by?
- Are designated parking spots for people with disabilities on a firm, slip-resistant surface and located close to the entrance of the building?
- Is there a curb cut or level access from the parking area to the main entrance?
- Are parking areas clear of snow and ice?

Sidewalks/Path of Travel

- Is there a barrier-free path of travel from the parking lot or drop off area to the meeting entrance? Stairs, sudden changes in level, slippery or unstable ground can impede accessibility.
- Are walkways clear of snow and ice?
- Are ramps gradual in slope and have handrails on both sides?
- For safety reasons, are sidewalks separate from roads and driveways?

Accessible Transit

- Can attendees get to the event using accessible transit?
- Is there a drop-off area in front to the building? Is the drop-off area protected (i.e. under an awning)?

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Interior Access
Entrances and lobbies

- Are entrances (especially the main entrance) wide enough for people using a wheelchair or scooter?
- If the main entrance is not accessible, is there a sign, clearly visible at the front of the building indicating the location of an accessible entrance?
- Are entrances well lit? Are they away from isolated areas?
- Is entry only through locked doors with buzzers or bells that must be pushed?
- Are door handles easy to open? Ideally doors should have lever handles and be equipped with an automatic door opener. Having to turn a door knob can be difficult for people with physical disabilities, such as arthritis.
- Are there signs in the lobby that clearly indicate where in the building the meeting is being held?

- Are signs large enough and clear enough so that people with low vision can read them?
- Are signs mounted at a comfortable height so that people who use wheelchairs can read them?
- Can you arrange for staff or volunteers to be at entrances and throughout the facility to help people with disabilities to the meeting room?

Elevators

- Are elevators located close to the meeting room? Are the elevators large enough to accommodate people who use wheelchairs and scooters?
- Are there enough elevators to safely and conveniently transport the number of attendees who use mobility devices?
- Do elevators have Braille buttons and raised numerals for people who are blind or have low vision?
- Are the elevator controls mounted at a comfortable height for a person using a wheelchair or scooter?
- Does the elevator have an auditory signal to alert people who are blind or have low vision?
- Does the elevator have a visual cue system in each elevator lobby to alert people who are deaf or hard of hearing?

Accessible washrooms

- Do washroom doors have a raised (tactile) male or female sign or Braille lettering?
- Are washroom doors equipped with an automatic or push button door opener?
- Are washrooms large enough to accommodate people who use scooters and power wheelchairs? Do washrooms have at least one accessible stall? and are equipped with at least one accessible stall.
- Is there at least one accessible unisex washroom on the same floor as the event? Remember: A minimum of a five-foot turning radius is needed for wheelchair users to manoeuvre without restriction.
- Can someone using a wheelchair or a scooter reach the faucets and turn the water on using one hand?
- Are washroom accessories and dispensers also within easy reach of a person using a wheelchair or scooter?
- Are the accessible washrooms located near the meeting rooms?

Hallways and corridors

- Are major hallways and all essential doorways throughout the facility wide enough to accommodate people using wheelchairs and scooters?
- Are the interior doors easy to open with one hand without having to twist the wrist?
- Do floor coverings (such as low pile carpeting, hardwood flooring or tile) allow people using mobility aids (such as wheelchairs and scooters) to easily move through the facility?

Meeting and conference rooms

- Is the meeting room located on the building entry floor?
- Is the meeting room large enough to provide circulation and seating for an adequate or anticipated number of participants who use wheelchairs, scooters, guide dogs or other mobility aids?
- Is accessible seating available throughout the meeting space?
- Are the reception/refreshment areas located in an area large enough to easily accommodate people who use wheelchairs, scooters, guide dogs or other mobility aids?
- Are the stages and speaking areas, including lectern or podium, accessible to people using wheelchairs and scooters?
- Is there a well-lit space for the sign language interpreters?
- Are there any background noises (ventilation systems, noise from adjacent rooms etc.) which may be distracting?
- If the meeting room has windows, are there drapes or blinds that can be used to reduce light or glare?
- Are cables, wires and microphones are well secured and away from aisles and other traffic areas?
- Have you reminded guest speakers and exhibitors to provide printed handout materials in alternative formats should they be requested ahead of time?

Refreshment and dietary arrangements

- Are you giving participants an opportunity to indicate any dietary needs ahead of time (i.e. when registering for the event)?
- Where beverages are being served, are bendable straws and lightweight cups available within easy reach of people using wheelchairs or scooters?
- Are sugar-free beverages, juices and water available for people with dietary concerns such as diabetes?
- If food is provided buffet style, will someone be on hand to help serve people who have visual and physical disabilities?
- If pastries and cookies are on the menu, will you also have fresh fruits and vegetables available for people with dietary concerns?

Invitations and promotional materials

- Do your invitations and promotional material about your accessible event include the International Symbol of Accessibility and other accessibility symbols?

- Are you providing invitations and event information in alternate formats for people or organizations that require or request them (i.e. Braille, on audiotape, via e-mail, in large print, on computer disk)?
- Do the invitation and promotional materials include a note that lets participants request any additional requirements they may have?

Accessible communications

Making sure information is accessible involves more than just providing alternate formats to print. You'll have to consider how you will make oral presentations available to people who are Deaf or hard of hearing.

- Have you arrange for a sign language interpreter and/or real-time captioner to be present?
- On your print materials, have you included information that your materials are available in alternative formats and in French as well as information on how to obtain them?
- Have you calculated the the quantities of multiple format documents you will need according to the anticipated audience? For example, if your audience is geared towards seniors, you may want to produce a greater number of printed materials in large print.

Here is a guide to help you figure out quantities for a general public event, such as a trade show or exhibit:

- One English and one French Braille copy for display
- Two English Braille copies and one French Braille copy for distribution
- One English and one French large print copy for display
- Five large print copies of English and three large print copies of French for distribution
- One English and one French audio cassette for display with large print/Braille labels. Consider CD ROM format in addition to tape.
- Five English and two French audio cassettes for distribution with large print/Braille labels. Consider CD ROM format in addition to tape.
- One English and one French computer disk for display with large print/Braille labels. Consider CD ROM format in addition to disk.
- Five English and two French computer disks for distribution with large print/Braille labels. Consider CD ROM format in addition to disk.
- For small sized promotional materials such as a bookmark, copies are available in English and French with Braille overlay indicating the name of the document and contact information. For an anticipated audience size of 500 attendees, 200 English and 50 French copies.

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Learn more

[Making information accessible](#)

[About the International Symbols of Accessibility](#)

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