



**Canadian Association of  
Statutory Human Rights Agencies**

**Association canadienne des  
commissions et conseil des droits de la personne**

## **CASHRA Accessibility, Inclusion and Accommodation Checklist**

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### **PURPOSE**

This Checklist was created to support CASHRA's Accessibility, Inclusion and Accommodation Policy. It is was The Checklist is a guide (but not an exhaustive list of expectations) to help CASHRA ensure its documents, communications, meetings and events, including conferences and training sessions, are accessible for people with human rights related needs.

### **ACCESSIBILITY CHECKLIST**

#### **Coordination and active offer**

- Involve staff, or hire consultants if need be, with expertise in planning accessible events
- Where possible, deal with facility staff who have experience providing accessible customer service; are familiar with the accessibility features of their facility; and can confirm accessibility features are operational
- Do a site visit and apply this Checklist before booking a location
- If organizing hotel blocks, visit the hotel to assess the level of accessibility and number of rooms available
- Provide information on accessible transportation to and from the event
- If planning activities outside the event, make sure they are accessible
- Require that presenters provide their material in accessible electronic format in advance of making their presentation and double check that it is accessible
- Notify participants in advance (verbally and/or through invitations, agendas and other notices) about available accessibility features for documents, meetings and events
- Make an active offer to everyone about accommodating any individual human rights related needs
- Follow-up with individuals who require accommodation to confirm arrangements
- Ensure CASHRA staff, presenters and volunteers are sensitive to the needs of participants with disabilities and are advised about particular accommodation requirements, where appropriate
- Prepare agendas with adequate time for meal and health breaks
- At meetings and events:
  - Introduce participants to their accommodation service providers
  - Check with participants to make sure their accommodation needs are met
  - Ask if they require anything else
- Invite participant feedback on how well accommodation needs were met
- De-brief with staff, presenters and volunteers afterward

- Make changes to improve accessibility and accommodations for future meetings and events

## **Materials**

- Distribute all materials in accessible electronic format to all recipients at the same time, making advance requests or last minute conversion unnecessary
- Accessible materials include invitations, agendas, documents, presentations, promotional materials, etc. prepared in electronic format, e.g.:
  - Text documents in MS-WORD format (preferred over PDF documents)
  - PDF documents in accessible text format rather than a scanned image
  - Spreadsheets in accessible format
  - Documents in 12 point sans serif fonts (e.g. Arial) or larger, using high contrast colours (text vs. background)
  - PowerPoint presentations in 18 point sans serif font or larger using high contrast colours
  - Images, tables and charts are embedded with descriptive “alt-text”; tables and charts content summarized in document and/or presentation text
  - PowerPoint presentations and Word documents use built in styles, templates and headers
  - Video materials are captioned for people with hearing disabilities and descriptive narration provided for people with vision disabilities
  - Content is written in plain language, precise and to the point, especially in presentations
  - For more tips on how to create accessible documents, see Algonquin College tutorials referenced under “Other Resources” at the end of this document
- Ensure sufficient quantities of accessible electronic material are on hand for unregistered participants or for those who may have forgotten theirs
- Provide large print, Braille or other formats upon advance request
- Indicate on print materials that accessible electronic formats are available and other formats are available upon request
- Post public materials to CASHRA website in HTML format, or in a downloadable WORD format, and in accessible PDF format if desired, but never only in PDF format

## **Communication supports**

- Appropriate communication supports can include: sign language interpreters, intervenors, real time captioning, note takers as well as audio and assistive listening systems
- Offer communications supports upon request for invitational meetings
- Make available for “walk-in” events open to the public that do not require advance registration
- Make audio systems available for any medium to large size meeting or event
- Arrange services three to four weeks prior to the meeting or event

- Presenters and participants should identify their name, speak clearly and slowly, one at a time, using the microphones provided. Presenters should make sure to verbalize all relevant aspects of any projected material

## **Exterior facility access**

Ensure, where possible:

- Accessible transit serves the facility
  - E.g. low floor buses, level access trains, street cars, and/or elevator accessible stations
- Accessible pedestrian signals are at nearby intersections for individuals with vision disability
- Barrier free paths of travel run from the street and the parking lot to an accessible drop off area at the main building entrance and include:
  - Curb cuts
  - Ramps with railings on both sides
  - Ramp inclines safe for independent travel
  - Sidewalks separated from roads and driveways
  - Well lit drop off area protected by awning or overhang
- Accessible parking includes:
  - Level access, firm slip-resistant surface and curb cuts are in close proximity to accessible entrance
  - Sufficient number of spaces available for attendees with mobility disabilities
- Signage:
  - Accessibility symbol signs direct people to accessible paths, ramps, entrances, etc.
  - Key directional signage is in Braille
  - Regular signage is easily readable for people with low vision
  - Signage is mounted at eye or body level and in locations for easy access
- Snow or construction is not affecting facility access

## **Interior facility access**

Ensure, where possible:

- Main entrance or another entrance is equipped with an automatic door
- Signage and way finding:
  - Facility signage, event signage, name tags, posters, etc. have large print and contrasting colours
  - Tactile facility signage installed for washrooms, elevators, emergency exits and other primary directions (raised pictograms, lettering and dome Braille on a contrasting background, mounted 1.5 metres above floor)
  - Signage is mounted at eye or body level and in locations for easy access
  - Staff and volunteers are on hand to direct participants to meeting rooms
- Visual fire alarms are installed in corridors, restrooms and meeting rooms
- Lobby and corridors are large enough for wheelchairs and other mobility devices
- Door handles have easy use levers

- Floor surfaces are stable, firm and slip-resistant and made of tile, hardwood or low pile carpeting and don't impede mobility devices
- Elevators (or stair chair lifts) reach meeting or event floor and have:
  - Room for mobility devices
  - Large control buttons with raised characters and Braille at comfortable height for individuals who use wheel chairs
  - Audio floor indicators (voice and chime)
- Accessible washrooms:
  - Are located near meeting rooms
  - Doors have raised (tactile) male or female or gender neutral / family sign or Braille lettering
  - Entry has automatic door opener or is left open, and wide enough for mobility devices
  - Washroom and accessible cubicle are large enough for scooters and other mobility devices
  - Accessible cubicle has grab bars and raised toilet seat
  - Taps, soap, and paper towel dispensers or hand dryers have accessible levers or automatic activation; mirrors and waste bins are reachable for individuals using wheelchairs or scooters
  - Washroom policy or practice is inclusive for transgender individuals and recognizes the right to access washrooms based on lived gender identity
  - Gender neutral, single use, accessible washroom is available for individuals with accommodation needs related to disability, gender identity or family status
- Meeting / conference rooms / auditoriums:
  - Entry has automatic door opener or is left open, and wide enough for mobility aids
  - Room setup (tables, chairs, aisles etc.) accommodates space for mobility aids (e.g. motorized scooters, service animals, etc.), sign language interpreters, captioning equipment, translation booth, documents table, food and refreshments etc.
  - Seating is reserved in appropriate location for people who use wheelchairs, motorized scooters, service animals, interpreters, captionists or note takers etc.
  - Stage or speaking areas, including lectern or podium, are accessible to people using wheelchairs and scooters
  - Tables are at an accessible height and items on tables are placed within reach for people using wheelchairs, motorized scooters, etc.
  - Background noise from ventilation system or adjacent rooms does not impede hearing
  - Assistive listening systems and/or devices are available if required
  - Windows have drapes or blinds that can be used to reduce light or glare
  - Cables, wires and microphones are well secured and away from aisles and other traffic areas
- Promote scent-free environment:
  - Participants, staff and volunteers are reminded in invitations to refrain from wearing scented products

- No strong odours are coming from newly installed carpet, or fresh paint or other sources
- Public telephones:
  - Hearing aid compatible with volume control
  - At accessible height
- Designated area is available nearby to relieve and walk service animals and provide them with water
- Lighting:
  - Low glare (louvers direct light downward) and dimmable for brightness
  - Ideally, halogen, LED or incandescent bulbs in pot lighting are available as an alternative to fluorescent bulbs
- Private room or personal space is available for rest or attendant care, prayer, breastfeeding, etc.

### **Personal attendant care and breaks**

- Provide free attendant care services upon request where the service is not normally covered by a member's or participant's employer, organization or service provider
- Provide sufficient breaks during a virtual or in-person meeting for attendant care, service animal care or other personal time related to disability, creed, pregnancy, family status, etc.
- Provide for attendants and interpreters during networking breaks to allow for full inclusion and participation

### **Refreshment and dietary needs**

- Ask participants during advance registration about any dietary needs related to disability or creed
- Make personal assistance available at buffet style food service to help participants with visual and physical disabilities
- Provide bendable straws and light weight cups
- Ensure, where possible, that any on-site food services have menus available in Braille and large type or electronically on a website, or by other means

### **Emergency preparedness**

- As part of the site visit, confirm proper emergency evacuation and related procedures with facility staff
- Ask participants with disabilities if they require assistance in case of emergency
- Provide a list of participants with evacuation support needs to facility manager
- Designate persons to help evacuate participants with specific needs in case of emergency
- Make sure passageways, stairwells and emergency exits are free of debris

## Budgeting

- Estimate and/or solicit quotes for accessibility costs including conversion of material to alternative formats, note taker services, sign language services (ASL and LSQ), real time captioning, audio systems, dietary requirements, attendant and personal care, etc.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Guide to Conducting Accessible Meetings (Ontario Municipal Social Services Association) <http://omssa.com/accessible-community-engagement/omssa-guides/view-the-guides/guide-to-conducting-accessible-meetings>
- Guide to Planning Inclusive Meetings (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada) [www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/disability/arc/inclusive\\_meetings.pdf](http://www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/disability/arc/inclusive_meetings.pdf)
- A Planning Guide for Accessible Conferences (Council of Ontario Universities) [www.accessiblecampus.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/A-Planning-Guide-for-Accessible-Conferences.pdf](http://www.accessiblecampus.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/A-Planning-Guide-for-Accessible-Conferences.pdf)
- On-line tutorials for creating accessible documents (Algonquin College Accessibility Office) [www.algonquincollege.com/accessibility-office/accessible-education-tools/creating-accessible-documents/](http://www.algonquincollege.com/accessibility-office/accessible-education-tools/creating-accessible-documents/)
- Venue Selection Checklist (Ontario Treasury Board Secretariat)
- Ready. Set. Access! (Ontario Ministry of Government and Consumer Services)
- Accessibility Checklist (Canadian Human Rights Commission)
- Venue Accessibility Checklist (Ontario Human Rights Commission)