

Accessibility Quick Guide

Hybrid Meetings and Events

Coordinated Accessibility Strategy
January 2026

How to Use this Quick Guide

Use this Quick Guide alongside the Accessible Meeting and Event Guide when planning accessible hybrid meetings and events. [Consult the Accessible Meeting and Event Guide](#) for more detailed information.

Planning, Scheduling & Registration

1. Email invitations should include:
 - Clear & brief subject line.
 - Outline of accessible accommodation.
 - Inclusive language.
 - Descriptive hyperlinks.
 - o For example, hyperlink the phrase “more details on our upcoming event.”
2. Designate an Access Coordinator on your team for the online event or meeting to:
 - Receive, confirm, and track all access requests from participants.
 - Manage and implement accommodations.
 - Request interpreters and captioners one month in advance.
 - Communicate accommodations arrangements with participants and staff.
 - Identify assistants who will be available to help with access-related tasks.
 - Coordinate all materials for accessible distribution several days in advance.
 - Develop and implement access training for event staff and volunteers.
3. Keep meeting length reasonable. Choose times that align with public transit availability. Consider the preparation needs of individuals who use attendant services when selecting the event start time. Include 5–10-minute breaks.
4. Ensure that venue setup and technology support both in-person and remote participants equally.
5. Share agenda, link, and accessibility features at least 1 week in advance.

Accommodations and Access Requests

1. Ask about access needs during registration/invitation (e.g., mobility, hearing, dietary) so that these adjustments are managed as part of the event.
 - Carleton suggests using this language to invite access requests: "Should you require accessibility or dietary accommodations, please contact [Event Access Coordinator] by [RSVP date]."
2. If booking interpreters or live captioning (CART), you will need to book at least 3 weeks ahead of the meeting/event.
3. Ensure captioning and interpretation are available to both online and in-person attendees.
4. Provide accessible copies of materials before and after (e.g., slides, handouts, transcripts).
5. Prepare simple supports: extra chairs, straws, labelled food, sensory/fidget tools, and clear signage.

Venue & Technology

1. When selecting a venue:
 - Do a site check to confirm accessible entrance, washrooms, and clear pathways.
 - Provide strong, reliable internet, and test connections before the meeting.
 - Use cameras and microphones that capture both speakers and audience clearly.
 - Ensure adequate lighting.
2. When setting up the venue, arrange seating flexibly:
 - Leave wide aisles.
 - Don't group people with disabilities together.
 - Reserve some front seating for Deaf, hard-of-hearing, or low-vision participants.
 - See an example of an accessible floor plan in the [OMSSA Accessible Floor Plans](#) document.
3. Provide a quiet/decompression space, if possible.

Food & Refreshments

1. Serve food with multiple dietary options (e.g., vegan, gluten-free, dairy-free, Halal), and clearly label ingredients in large print.
2. Provide tables and adapted cutlery/straws if needed.
3. Always keep the floor clear. Food on the floor can distract service dogs and create a tripping hazard.
4. Provide a mini fridge to store medicine.

Staffing & Roles

1. Designate a point person (Access Coordinator) to manage requests and troubleshoot.
2. Equip volunteers/staff with badges or armbands so they are easy to identify.
3. Train staff on respectful communication (e.g., use person-first language: “person who is blind”).
4. If attendants or interpreters are present, ensure they are introduced, and attendees are aware of available support.
5. Assign a tech support person (Production Coordinator) to monitor online/in-person integration.
6. Direct staff to review the following resources, as applicable, prior to the event:
 - [Ontario Accessible Events Checklist](#)
 - [OMSSA Accessible Floor Plans](#)
 - [Event Registration Accessibility Requirements Field Queries](#)
 - Also consider using an Accessible Customer Service training module, such as [AccessForward: Training for an accessible Ontario](#).

Accessibility in Materials

1. Ensure that materials being presented or distributed are formatted for accessibility. Use built-in accessibility checkers (available in MS Word and PowerPoint) and be sure to:
 - Use sans serif fonts (e.g., Arial, Calibri).
 - Use large text.
 - Use strong colour contrast.
 - Ensure images have alt text, or are marked as decorative.
 - Place captions below images. Avoid placing text over images.
 - Avoid charts, tables, or drop-down menus that can be inaccessible for assistive technology.
 - Offer materials in multiple formats (e.g., digital, large print, accessible PDFs).
 - Include [accessibility icons](#) to indicate which supports or accommodations are available in specific spaces/activities.

Communication Practices

1. Introduce all speakers and identify yourself when talking, speak clearly, and avoid jargon.
2. Speakers should wear colours that contrast with their skin tone, otherwise the lighting can 'wash out' their faces and make reading lips difficult.
3. Ensure visuals are described (read aloud slide content, explain images/charts) and share instructions verbally and in chat for remote participants.

Participant Engagement

1. Set clear participation rules (e.g., mute when not speaking, use raise-hand/chat).
2. Provide multiple ways to contribute (e.g., online chat, live discussion, polls).
3. Acknowledge both remote and in-person attendees equally during Q&A.
4. Assign a moderator to monitor chat/questions so online participants aren't overlooked.

Emergency & Back-up

1. Appoint an Emergency Response Lead and keep a preparedness kit: first aid, unscented markers, extra wheelchair or mobility aid, snacks, water, and earplugs.
2. Know attendee allergies, medical needs, and evacuation plans.
3. Share tech support contact info and a phone-in option for remote participants. Have a backup plan if tech fails (alternate link, dial-in, or rescheduled session).
4. Be sure to compile contact information for:
 - FMP Service Desk (door openers, elevators, etc.)
 - Campus Safety (evacuation plans, etc.)
 - Pharmacies: nearest and 24-hour.
 - Urgent Care, E.R., and crisis hotline.
 - Accessible transportation.
 - Veterinary office, emergency vet, and pet stores.