

**Minister for Seniors and Accessibility**

Minister

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**Ministre des Services aux
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Dear Friends:

As Remembrance Day approaches, communities across Ontario are planning events to honour the brave men and women who have served and continue to serve our country. In addition, memorial ceremonies are held year-round for first responders who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

A wide range of Ontarians attend these events, including veterans, people with disabilities, seniors with accessibility requirements and families with strollers. If you are holding a Remembrance Day or memorial ceremony, it is important to keep accessibility in mind to ensure everyone can fully participate.

To assist you with your planning, I am pleased to provide you with two documents:

- [Creating Accessible Remembrance Day and Memorial Ceremonies](#)
- [Planning Accessible Events](#)

Both documents contain information on how you can make your event welcoming to all Ontarians.

If you have any questions, please contact our Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Contact Centre (ServiceOntario) at:

Email: accessibility@ontario.ca

Phone: 416-849-8276 or 1-866-515-2025

TTY: 416-325-3408 or 1-800-268-7095

Thank you for your on-going efforts to pay tribute to the men and women who have given their lives for the peace and freedom we enjoy.

Sincerely,

Hon. Raymond Cho
Minister for Seniors and Accessibility

Creating Accessible Remembrance Day and Memorial Ceremonies

November 11 is a day to honour the men and women who have served and continue to serve our country. Across generations, Ontarians have fought and died to make our world a safer place. They have defended the Canadian values of freedom and democracy.

A memorial ceremony can pay tribute to heroic first responders who have lost their lives in the line of duty. Numerous police officers, firefighters, paramedics and others have died while protecting their communities and keeping Ontario safe.

Holding these ceremonies shows our appreciation of Ontario's veterans, first responders and their families.

When planning a commemorative ceremony, take the time to consider accessibility. By considering accessibility from the start of planning, you can ensure that everyone can fully participate.

This package contains information on how to:

- make the physical space where the ceremony will take place more accessible



- provide accessibility and customer service training to staff and volunteers
- communicate information in an accessible way.

You will find an "[Accessible Events Checklist](#)" on page 4.



Make the physical space accessible to everyone

The first step in creating an accessible ceremony is to think about people with disabilities who may attend your event, and the barriers they could face before, during and after the ceremony.

Address these barriers in advance; for example:

- Move or remove any temporary barriers, such as trash bins or sandwich boards, so that there is at least a one-metre-wide path of travel for people using wheelchairs or walkers.
- Assign a volunteer to help resolve accessibility barriers that attendees may experience before, during and after the event (e.g. assistance or information regarding accessible transit or parking).



The Town of Aurora cenotaph has a paved walkway that circles around to the back of the monument and doubles as a ramp to provide access.

Creating Accessible Remembrance Day and Memorial Ceremonies

- Provide seating for those who cannot stand for long periods.
- Check that surfaces are level, firm and stable.
- Avoid soft, thick pile carpeting or loose mats.



If a cenotaph or memorial could be inaccessible to people with canes, crutches, wheelchairs or strollers, consider setting up a temporary ramp. Have volunteers nearby to assist.

Train staff and volunteers

It is a good idea to train staff, volunteers and anyone who interacts with the public about:

- how to communicate with people with different types of disabilities
- your emergency procedures for people with disabilities
- your accessibility features
- how to give feedback to festival organizers about the event's accessibility.

Remind your volunteers not to make assumptions about what a person with a

disability can or cannot do. Tell them to simply ask, "How may I help you?"

Free training modules and resources to train your staff and volunteers are offered at [AccessForward.ca](https://www.accessforward.ca).

Provide accessible communication

Leading up to your event, be sure to post information about the communications supports you will provide on your website and in other places you provide general information about the ceremony. Provide contact information for people to request communication supports in advance of the ceremony.

Since most ceremonies involve poems, prayers and commitments that are recited verbally, consider alternative means of communication, such as regular and large-print programs so people can follow along easily.

Questions? We're here to help

Telephone: 1-866-515-2025

International: 1-416-849-8276

TTY: 1-800-268-7095

Fax: 416-325-3407

Email: accessibility@ontario.ca

Find out more:

For free tools, resources and to learn about how Ontario is becoming more accessible, visit [ontario.ca/MSAA](https://www.ontario.ca/MSAA).

Accessible Events Checklist

Use this checklist to help you plan your event so that everyone can participate.

Venue

- Accessible parking and passenger drop-off area
- Located near public transportation
- Outdoor and indoor pathways free of barriers
- Doors easy to open
- Accessible washrooms
- Adjustable lighting
- Good acoustics (minimal echo)

Invitations and Promotion

- Due dates and contact information for accessibility requests included
- A variety of communication methods used
- A minimum of 12-point font for printed materials

Food and Refreshments

- Food, drinks and utensils easy to reach for people using wheelchairs
- Bendable straws and cups with handles available
- Food buffet assistance available

Room Set-up

- Clear, easy-to-read signs
- Clear floor space
- Cables and wiring secured
- Chairs provided and volunteer stand-ins near registration or ticket sales tables
- Reserved seating available

Speeches and Presentations

- Speakers provided tips on accessibility

Service Animals

- Relief area for service animals
- Water bowl provided

Volunteers

- Volunteer assigned to resolve accessibility barriers
- Volunteers reminded to ask guests, "How may I help you?"



This document was produced by the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility.

Ce document est également disponible en français.