

# Activities, Festivals, & Events Sector

## Providing a Welcoming, Inclusive Experience for Travellers with Disabilities

According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2023), an estimated 1.3 billion people - about 16% of the global population currently experience significant disability. This includes visitors with disabilities travelling to Nova Scotia attending activities, festivals, and events.



This activities and events sector information sheet provides ways to enhance services, improve amenities and offers tips on how to provide an inclusive guest experience for people with disabilities. This resource pairs with a broader guide focused on working with disabilities, for all tourism businesses.

### Booking the Experience

- Ask if attendees require support during registration or check-in (whether online or in-person).
- Offer accessible ticket pricing or discounts for caregivers, support workers, and people with disabilities.
- Provide a written description of the accessibility features your activity, festival or event will offer.
- Describe the grounds, schedule, and what to expect once on site. Share information such as loud noises, surround sound, flashing lights, smoke, indoor/outdoor venue, grass / pavement surface.
- Provide various ways for attendees to contact you for more information (such as e-mail, phone number, and in-person service).

### Accessing the Experience

- Have support workers and American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters at the event to assist those needing support. Have available assistive listening devices for those who are hard of hearing.
- Offer a 'touch-tour' in advance to allow visually impaired attendees to familiarize themselves with the physical space.
- Provide portable seating for lineups or a policy for people who are unable to wait in line.
- Offer priority seating for people with disabilities, with space for their entire party and room for wheelchairs.
- Consider doing a live stream so people unable to access the venue in person can still experience the event.

## Keep Your Guests Informed and Supported

- Gain public support by sharing that you are accessible and welcoming to all through your digital and printed information.
- Provide guests with a detailed description of what level of mobility is required to access the activity or event. Consider every location and activity your guests will encounter from entrance to exit. Remember to include the washroom as part of the description.
- Provide assistive devices or modified equipment that guests with different disabilities may require to participate and enjoy the event or activity fully - for example, gripping aids, water chairs, pool lifts or adaptive horseback riding harnesses.
- Ensure your staff is aware of the physical and intellectual requirements for the experience and receive training on how to assist visitors with different needs.
- Offer the service of an assigned staff member to aid individuals with physical, visual, or auditory impairments in navigating the premises.
- Provide training for staff and management on inclusion, accessibility, and supporting people with disabilities.



## Resources

- Canadian Standards Association – Accessible Design for the Built Environment - See Annex A for dimensions needed when designing space for people who use mobility devices.
- Nova Scotia Accessibility Directorate provides resources, guidelines, and tool kits.
- Events Nova Scotia works with communities and events organizers to attract and develop major events across the province.