# The Sacramento County Logo in multiple shades of blue. The word SACRAMENTO is in a stylized Serif font in all caps in black. Under the word Sacramento, beginning under the “S” and ending underneath the “R” are two wavy lines representing Sacramento’s two major rivers in different shades of blue. To the right of the wavy lines is the word COUNTY in light blue, in a sans serif font in all caps.

# ACCESSIBLE VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING AND EVENT CHECKLIST

All County sponsored public meetings and events must be accessible to people with disabilities, including virtual meetings and events. This checklist has been developed to assist County departments in planning, advertising for and conducting virtual meetings and events to ensure that they comply with federal and state laws in being accessible to persons with disabilities. For hybrid meetings, this checklist may be used in conjunction with the Sacramento County Accessible Public Meeting and Event Checklist.

## MEETING/EVENT INFORMATION

Meeting or Event Name/Description:

Date & Time of Meeting or Event:

Meeting or Event Platform:

Meeting or Event Contact:

Phone: E-mail:

Responsible Department:

Department Contact:

Phone: E-mail:

Department staff members are responsible for ensuring that accessibility is verified at least 10 business days prior to any County-sponsored public meeting or event. This form is provided for your use in ensuring that the virtual meeting or event is accessible to people with disabilities. If it appears that the meeting or event cannot be made accessible, please contact the County’s Disability Compliance Office (DCO) at (916) 874-7642, CA Relay Service 711, or dco@saccounty.gov, to discuss possible alternative solutions. It is recommended that a completed copy of this form is retained by the department, to document the department’s efforts in creating an accessible virtual meeting or event.

## CREATING VIRTUAL MEETINGS AND EVENTS: PREPARATION

1. Meeting Format
2. Choose an accessible platform.

The platform you use should support accessibility for individuals that may have vision, hearing, mobility, cognitive or other disabilities. A variety of devices and resources may be used to enhance accessibility, such as screen reading software for individuals with low vision, and keyboards instead of the mouse for individuals with mobility issues. Popular platforms for virtual meetings that have accessibility features such as support for screen readers, American Sign Language (ASL), keyboard shortcuts, and manual captioning include Microsoft Teams and Zoom Meetings, among others. Accessibility features of the various platforms and accessibility needs of individuals vary, so consider options that will work best for your meeting or event based upon the information you have.

1. Offer dial-in by phone for those without internet or computer access.
2. Provide instructions on how to access the meeting or event, both online and offline. These instructions should be provided well in advance of the meeting or event.
3. Provide instructions for individuals to request accommodations in advance.
4. Provide the timeline and format of the meeting/event in advance, to allow attendees to plan breaks and communicate any needs for late arrival, early departure or other anticipated needs or concerns.
5. Provide a venue for individuals to submit questions or comments regarding the meeting/event both before and after the meeting/event takes place.
6. All meeting/event documents and materials must be accessible. This includes documents and materials used during the meeting/event as well as documents advertising the meeting/event, meeting/event notices, and documents/materials provided following the meeting/event. An accessible document is created to be easily readable for a low-vision or non-sighted reader.
   1. Creating Accessible Word Documents
   * Use Headings

Headings can help individuals without eyesight to understand how the document is organized. Navigation with headings is more efficient for individuals using screen readers or Braille. Use the built-in Heading styles in the Home tab, as simply making text larger and bold does not make it a header for accessibility purposes.

* Use Lists

Use the built-in Bullets and Numbering tools on the Home tab when creating lists. Creating lists without using these tools makes the content more difficult for screen readers to identify and understand.

* Use Recommended Fonts

Basic, simple fonts without extra decorations (san serif fonts) are recommended when creating accessible documents. Recommended san serif fonts include Arial, Calibri, Helvetica, Tahoma and Verdana. Font size should be a minimum of 12 points, but ideally 14 to 20 points wherever possible.

* Add Alternate Text for Images

Microsoft Word allows users to enter alternate text for an image by right-clicking the image and selecting View Alt Text. Enter information describing the image in the field provided.

* Use Accessibility Checker

Microsoft products have a built-in accessibility checker to test the overall accessibility of a document. The accessibility checker provides feedback and tips on how to fix any issues. This feature may be found in the Review tab.

* Use Adobe Acrobat to Create an Accessible PDF

After using the Accessibility Checker in your Word document and making any necessary changes, select File, Save As, and from the dropdown for document type (which would be Word Document for the original document), select PDF. Then select More Options. The Save As dialog box opens, and from there, select Options. Check the box stating, “Document structure tags for accessibility,” then select Ok. Select Save, to save the document as a PDF, in the same location as the original file (or change location as desired prior to saving in the final step).

* 1. Creating Accessible PowerPoint Slides

Microsoft PowerPoint is widely used for presentations. Below are some key tips to ensure that your PowerPoint presentation is accessible to individuals with disabilities.

* Use Alt Text on graphics
* Use the PowerPoint-provided templates; they work with screen readers and other accessibility devices, making navigation easier
* Have a digital copy of the slides available for people in the audience
* Check to ensure that links to external content such as websites or videos are accessible
* Use the PowerPoint accessibility checker to verify that the presentation is accessible to people with disabilities

* 1. Creating Accessible Excel Spreadsheets
* Use accessible templates (From Home screen, select More Templates, Type “Accessible Templates” in Search for online templates field)
* Use the Excel accessibility checker, located in the Review tab
* Remove blank columns, rows and sheets
* Avoid blank cells wherever possible, but when not possible, enter “No Data” in any blank cells
* Create clear labels for columns and rows
* Do not use hidden columns and rows
* Provide links to other sheets when there are multiple sheets in the file
* Use text wrap or adjust the columns and rows manually

1. Provide meeting/event documents and materials ahead of time, particularly when providing them in an accessible format by request.
2. Advertising for the Virtual Meeting/Event
3. Identify accessibility accommodations that are being provided generally, separately from individual specific requests.
4. Provide accessibility information about the specific platform that will be used for the event.
5. Include a point of contact to request accommodations, providing a phone number and email address for the contact. Also provide a timeline for making requests (typically at least three business days before the event, but also dependent upon what is being requested).
6. Virtual Invitations and Presentations
7. Use good color contrast.
8. Use large and easy to read fonts (additional information above, under Creating Accessible Word Documents).
9. Use plain language.
10. Avoid flashing or strobing animations.
11. Provide detailed, step by step instructions on how to access the event, both by computer using the selected platform and by phone. Include any links, dial-in numbers, and any other information needed, such as login codes if applicable.
12. Provide the contact information (phone number and email address) of the person (or persons) who can provide technical assistance, both before and during the virtual meeting/event.

1. Protecting A Virtual Meeting/Event
2. Utilize security options in the settings section of the platform being used.
3. Update your platform and other applications to the latest versions to ensure that you have the most current security features and other improvements.
4. Avoid allowing “join before host” so that the meeting will not start until the host starts it.
5. Restrict access to the meeting as appropriate.
6. Explore the settings of the platform being used for security features.
7. Consider using a Waiting Room setting that requires attendees to be verified and then admitted to the event by the host, where this is warranted.
8. Allow only signed-in users (this will identify all attendees to the host and will allow for post-meeting communication).
9. Remove disruptive participants.
10. Host should be able to mute and unmute individuals or all participants at once.
11. Host should be able to turn off participants’ videos to block inappropriate material as needed.
12. Turn off file transfer feature to prevent participants from sharing undesirable or inappropriate files through the in-meeting chat boxes.
13. Additional Host/Speaker Preparation
14. Host and speakers should ensure that they are in a quiet place without interruptions as much as possible.
15. Host and speakers should ensure that their audio feeds are clear, prior to the event. Use of headsets may be necessary to improve audio quality.
16. Host and speakers should ensure that their faces will be well-lit and can be seen clearly on the video display.
17. Ensure that methods to be used by attendees for flagging to speak, or for voting or other participation activities such as selecting answers to multiple choice questions, are accessible to all attendees, as much as possible.
18. Plan to allow time for questions and comments during the meeting/event.

1. Establish and practice a pace that allows for processing time, considering individuals who have intellectual or developmental disabilities.
2. Schedule breaks throughout the program, in consideration of the needs of all participants.
3. Select speakers/presenters who can be patient with attendees who may not be familiar with the platform and who may need some assistance during the meeting or event. Hosts and speakers should become familiar with the platform prior to the meeting or event. Practice sessions with volunteer attendees may be helpful, even better if some volunteer/practice attendees use accessibility features.

## DURING THE VIRTUAL MEETING/EVENT

1. Begin the meeting/event with an access check.
   1. Check in with attendees, address any access issues as much as feasible.

* 1. Share information about accessibility features for the meeting/event.
  2. Ask if you are speaking loudly enough.
  3. Ask if you are speaking too fast.
  4. Advise how to best alert the speaker when he/she is not speaking loudly enough or speaking too fast, during the meeting or event.

1. Establish rules for participation
   1. Inform attendees that only one person should speak (or communicate, for non-verbal participants) at a time and that individuals should mute themselves when they are not speaking. Advise of how the meeting host may communicate with the group when a reminder of this is needed, so that people are aware. Additionally, advise attendees of the mechanism for requesting to speak/communicate and how each will be informed of their turn to speak/communicate.
   2. Advise attendees of any planned timing during the meeting/event for questions/comments and if questions are encouraged/allowed throughout the meeting as well. If not, minimally provide a mechanism for attendees to communicate other needs (such as to have something repeated, request to speak louder, etc.) throughout the meeting/event.
   3. Ask attendees to say their names each time they speak so that all attendees including captioners will know who is speaking.
   4. Host should be familiar with how to mute individual attendees as well as the entire group (except for the current speaker) when necessary, to keep background noise minimized.
2. Host/Speaker Reminders
   1. Describe all images, videos and gestures that appear on the screen.
   2. Read any text that appears on the screen.
   3. Use plain language.

## AFTER THE VIRTUAL MEETING/EVENT

1. Follow-Up Items
2. Share the meeting materials in an accessible format.
3. Post, email or otherwise distribute the materials as appropriate depending upon the nature of the information being shared, for both attendees and those unable to attend.
4. Provide an easy mechanism for attendees to submit feedback or comments on the event. Offer multiple ways to respond, such as in writing, by dial-in, and by recording.

## RESOURCES

### Sacramento County Disability Compliance Office

For additional information, or to receive a copy of this document in an alternate format, please contact us:

Disability Compliance Office

Department of Personnel Services

9310 Tech Center Drive

Sacramento, CA 95826

Phone: (916) 874-7642

CA Relay Service 711

Fax: (916) 874-7132

Email: dco@saccounty.gov

### Helpful Links

City of Philadelphia Website and Accessible Virtual Meetings/Events Policy

[ADA-Website-and-Virtual-Events-Policy-October-2020.pdf (phila.gov)](https://www.phila.gov/media/20201015190307/ADA-Website-and-Virtual-Events-Policy-October-2020.pdf)

[Create Accessible Meetings | Section508.gov](https://www.section508.gov/create/accessible-meetings/)

[Virtual Meetings: Accessibility Checklist & Best Practices](https://www.americanbar.org/groups/diversity/disabilityrights/resources/covid-resources/virtual-meetings-checklist/)

### Accessible Document Resources

[Create accessible PDFs - Microsoft Support](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/create-accessible-pdfs-064625e0-56ea-4e16-ad71-3aa33bb4b7ed#:~:text=Microsoft%20365,%20Office)

[Creating accessible PDFs in Adobe Acrobat](https://helpx.adobe.com/acrobat/using/creating-accessible-pdfs.html#:~:text=Broadly%2C%20the%20process%20of%20creating%20accessible%20PDFs%20includes,5%20Evaluate%20the%20PDF%20and%20repair%20tagging%20problems.)

[Video: Improve accessibility with heading styles - Microsoft Support](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/video-improve-accessibility-with-heading-styles-68f1eeff-6113-410f-8313-b5d382cc3be1?ui=en-us&rs=en-us&ad=us)

[Make your Word documents accessible to people with disabilities - Microsoft Support](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/make-your-word-documents-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-d9bf3683-87ac-47ea-b91a-78dcacb3c66d)

[Make your PowerPoint presentations accessible to people with disabilities - Microsoft Support](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/make-your-powerpoint-presentations-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-6f7772b2-2f33-4bd2-8ca7-dae3b2b3ef25)

[Accessibility best practices with Excel spreadsheets - Microsoft Support](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/accessibility-best-practices-with-excel-spreadsheets-6cc05fc5-1314-48b5-8eb3-683e49b3e593)

## APPENDIX

### Sample Accessible Virtual Meeting/Event Notice

Accessible Virtual Meeting or Event Information

Meetings are audio described and open-captioned. Materials in alternative formats, American Sign Language interpreters, and other accommodations will be made available upon request. Please make your request for alternative format or other accommodations, to [Name, Phone, Email]. Providing at least three (3) business days’ advance notice prior to the meeting will help to ensure availability. Requests should be made as soon as possible prior to the meeting, as some accommodations take longer to provide. Late requests will be considered and attempted where feasible.

Additionally…

* Identify any other accessibility accommodations that are being provided generally, separately from any individual specific requests.
* Identify the specific platform that will be used for the event and provide accessibility information about that platform.

For inquiries or requests for accommodations, please call (V) or 711 (TTY), or email \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.