



## **Halifax Pride Safer Spaces Event Guide**

Being able to create a safer space for yourself, a group, a community, or an event makes it harder for oppression to thrive. It stifles stereotypes, shrinks bias, expands perspective and opens communication.

Hosting successful safer spaces requires action, care, and community buy-in. We must be thoughtful, responsive, and reliable in our actions and commitment to safer spaces. Our community and guests have to recognize and appreciate the work to ensure they feel safe and supported in a space. The following is a list of tangible actions, which when followed, can improve the likelihood of a space being considered safer for the public.

### **Actions to facilitate safer event spaces**

- Train staff and volunteers on inclusive language and safer spaces practices
- Communicate intent and goals to all team members, highlighting that safety and inclusion is prioritized in all interactions
- Prepare a Safer Spaces Statement that outlines expectations and rules to be shared in event descriptions, signage, and verbally at the event. (You can find an example/template at the bottom of this document).
- Prepare and present a land acknowledgement you understand and support (if you don't understand why you're doing it or its significance then it is meaningless).
  - Find resources online if you do not understand land acknowledgments or the need for them.
  - Find templates online if you are unsure of how to create a land acknowledgment.
- Inform people of photography and videography.
- Book ASL interpreters as required for on site or streamed events.
- Clearly communicate the public health safety guidelines being used for the event:
  - Enforce social distancing
  - Clean thoroughly before and after the event
  - Provide sanitizer
  - Ensure attendees wear face masks
- Make sure that sanitary supplies are easily accessible.
- During the planning stages of your event, identify accessibility issues that may arise and solutions for them.
- Clear articulate accessibility features or limitations before and during the event
- Prioritize venues that allow full access for those with diverse mobility needs (reflecting on entrances, pathways, inclines/declines, steps, washrooms, parking, transit, etc.).
- Identify on site washrooms.

- Install temporary gender neutral signage
- Identify on site services such as childcare, accessible viewing areas, decompression areas, and active listener volunteers.
- Try to have a separate space for people to remove themselves from the group.
- Active listening guides/training are available online for volunteers and staff.

## **Safer Spaces guidelines for attendees**

- Respect others' physical, mental, and emotional boundaries.
- Respect your own physical, mental, and emotional boundaries.
- Remember that everyone is welcome to remove themselves and take space from a group if needed.
- Always adhere to public health safety guidelines.
  - Keep up to date on changing guidelines at <https://novascotia.ca/reopening-nova-scotia/>
- Always ask for explicit verbal consent before engaging with or touching someone.
- Respect others' identities and backgrounds, including pronouns and names.
- If possible, find out what pronouns people prefer or use neutral pronouns.
- Don't assume the race, ethnicity, culture, sexuality, gender, pronouns, history with violence etc. of others.
- Respect others' right to privacy. Don't push anyone to answer questions or discuss topics of discomfort to them.
- Respect the privacy of information, narratives and experiences that others share with you.
- Be aware that some actions and words may have unintended effects on other people, and that their feelings are valid, regardless of the intent.
- Assume positive intent. If someone does or says something that crosses a boundary, gently let them know, but do not assume they intended harm.
  - Remember that everyone makes unintentional mistakes.
  - Encourage the use of 'I' statements as much as possible to state reactions or experiences.
- When attending events hosted for or by marginalized communities
  - Remember you are guest
  - Don't bring your all white circle of friends
  - Refrain from taking centre stage (dancing on stage, excessive commentary)
  - Don't impose your interests or input on the performers (don't make requests to the DJ)
  - Help monitor other white folk who are out of line
  - Move through the space with patience and respect

## **Example Safer Space Statement**

\_\_\_\_\_ is dedicated to providing space that is accessible, inclusive, and free from oppression, harassment, and discrimination.

In this space, we will treat each other with respect and dignity, regardless of age, race, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, levels of ability, and all our other diverse identities. Everyone entering this space has a responsibility to uphold these values.