



**Truth and Reconciliation Commission**  
**Final Minutes – Public Meeting #12**  
**August 6, 2024**

The meeting was started at 5:04 PM by Commissioner Mackin.

**Attendance:** Melody Mackin, Mia Schultz, Faith Yacubian, Michele Olvera and Ann Miller. **Members of the public** included: Cheryl Van Epps, Michelle Gawerc, Rich Holschuh, Dan Coutu, John Wilmerding.

Commissioner Mackin facilitated the meeting and shared the agenda. Language and accessibility rules were explained. Although no press in attendance, it was stated that if anyone from the press needs to be notified of our meetings in advance, please let us know so that we can make note. We ask that the public request access to any assistance needed in language translation or ASL via [our email](#) at least 72 hours in advance of any public meeting the VTRC holds.

Commissioner Schultz shared our land acknowledgement which is found here on our website: [Land Acknowledgement.pdf \(vermont.gov\)](#).

Commissioner Mackin reviewed the VTRC's working pledge which is posted on our website: [About Us | Vermont Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#).

Commissioners voted and approved the July 2, 2024 public meeting minutes and July 3, 2024 Public Committee Member Meeting Minutes.

Executive Director Yacubian reviewed the budget criteria:

- Marketing/Advertisement for tabling at events, as we initiate Outreach plan.
- Monthly subscriptions for research and marketing software.
- Consultation with experts in reconciliation work, particularly listening sessions.

Executive Director Yacubian gave the VTRC Update:

- Accessibility Checklist for events we host have moved from Committee's feedback to Commissioners' vote.
- Strategic Plan is in draft development phase.
- Fourth Education Series Session was held on July 31st (Migrant Vermonters)
- First Listening Session with Act 128 community is this week. The VTRC is not hosting this event, we are actively listening and supporting this private session.

Announcements:

- "Get Involved" campaign is active. Go to "Get Involved" page to fill-out select ways you wish to be involved.
- Invite us to events that you are hosting or participating in so that we can learn about community needs and cultural work.
- Next Education Series session is August 28th from 5pm – 6:30pm – Families of People with Disabilities

Commissioner Schultz reviewed the Commissioner deliberation with an update. Since last meeting, significant outreach to the community and individuals. Bringing in partners and discussing how to pull in the Committee Members as well as who we might partner with. Commissioners met July 3<sup>rd</sup> to prepare for Strategic Plan Document for Committee. Strategic Plan booklet discussion with staff on July 23<sup>rd</sup>. Outreach mapping and events on July 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Old Business** - Commissioner Schultz reviewed the In-Person and Virtual Accessibility Protocol. Part I was updated from July.

**New Business** - Commissioner Mackin reviewed Part II of the Accessibility Protocol and the Safety Protocol. This will be placed on our website for public review. Commissioners voted to approve.

Legal Counsel Olvera updated us on the status of the interns and their activities.

Commissioner Mackin opened the floor to the public and those that would like to speak.

**Cheryl Van Epps** explained her experience at an event in Washington DC and the lack of assistance to someone that traveled many miles to attend, only to have no way to speak due to disabilities. Those running the event did not allow for someone with speaking disabilities the time or the floor to share their own story. The Committee Member (Cheryl Van Epps) wanted to share what she witnessed so that it doesn't happen to the VTRC. Commissioner Schulz asked for clarification and stated that the VTRC will consider for our own future events.

With no further questions or comments, Commissioner Mackin closed the meeting at 5:48 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Ann Miller, Administrative Assist  
Faith Yacubian, Executive Director

**NEXT Public Committee Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 8<sup>th</sup> – at 3PM.**

**NEXT Education Series Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, August 28<sup>th</sup> at 5PM**

**NEXT regularly scheduled PUBLIC MEETING is TUESDAY, September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024 at 5PM**



## Accessibility and Safety Checklist – Draft

Approved 8/6/2024 in Public Meeting as FINAL

### Purpose

The Vermont Truth and Reconciliation Commission (VTRC) believes that a person’s ability to fully participate in matters that affect them is a human right. In this spirit, VTRC has created and will continue to revise accessibility protocols that ensure Vermonters full access.

The VTRC is committed to creating equitable and accessible in-person activities and virtual events. The VTRC is taking guidance from State disability organizations and local activists that shape and advocate for accessible protocols and practices.

### Disclaimer

Effort has been made to avoid complex language and maintain people-first language. Terms used are meant to reflect the variedness of humans. Like other entities of the State, the VTRC aims to make all aspects of its charge inclusive and reflective of human diversity.

### Contact

The VTRC recognizes that disabilities might take a range of forms, including intellectual, mental or physical. Please contact the VTRC team at [VTRC@vermont.gov](mailto:VTRC@vermont.gov) to request accessible services for in-person or virtual meetings or events.

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## In-Person Checklist

\*In-Person events will include **hybrid** option when possible. The checklist below includes a hybrid process.

### Prep Work Planning

Learn the accessibility needs (including language interpretation and translation) ahead of time by contacting invitees through social media and email through VTRC’s listserv. Write a message that conveys intention, such as “We strive to host inclusive, accessible events that enable all individuals, including individuals with disabilities, to engage fully. To be respectful of those with allergies and environmental sensitivities, we ask that you please refrain from wearing strong fragrances. To request an accommodation or for inquiries about accessibility, please contact (name, email, phone).” (Cornell University, <http://www.hr.cornell.edu/>)

Alternative Option: Write an email with the following RSVP:

“I will need the following accommodations in order to participate:

- Assistive listening device
- Captioning
- Reserved front row seat
- Large print
- Braille
- Advance copy of slides and on-site hardcopies to be projected
- Fidget Space/Low-Sensory Space
- Wheelchair access
- Wheelchair access to working tables throughout room
- Scent-free room
- Lactation room
- Food Restrictions. Specify restrictions: \_\_\_\_\_
- Audio to text option
- Pacing
- High contrast illustration
- \*Language translation (including ASL). Specify language: \_\_\_\_\_
- \*\*Language interpreter. Specify language: \_\_\_\_\_
- Hybrid option (attend remotely)

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Definition = language translation is the written word.

\*\*Definition = language interpretation is spoken word.

Inform public about accessibility services that will be available and how to request other services

Follow-up with requests and offer alternative methods of involvement if requests cannot be achieved

Create email and social media post to request that participants **minimize fragrance use** and **bring masks**. VTRC's protocol for in-person events includes the use of masks to reduce the spread of infectious diseases

Inform speakers of accessibility procedures, including receiving power-points and other documents ahead of time to share with the public; verbally describe visual material; make material on screen readable from a distance; microphone use; activate captions; create breaks every hour; create distance between groups for smaller conversations

## Before Event

Instructions: Write or type an "x" beside the action (left column) after the action has been completed.

### Material

#### "x" Actions

	<b>Pledge</b> – Provide document and accountability statement
	<b>Health Safety</b> - check for HEPA filters, masks, hand sanitization
	<b>Food</b> - create signs for available food options available (indicate allergens, gluten free, vegan, nut-free)
	<b>Make Accessibility Tool Kit</b> - communication cards, *assistive technology, make forms/documents in large print and braille, signs to direct the public into primary space and low sensory/rest spaces
	<b>QR Codes</b> – add code to publications and documents with announcements in advance. Add descriptions for visual cues.

	<b>Accessibility One-Sheet</b> – make document about available accessibility options available at the event (VTRC Language Accessibility and Interpretation Protocol)
	<b>Share Information to Public in Advance</b> - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide transcripts and presentation material, including power-points, in advance of meeting when possible and when applicable</li> <li>• Accessibility One-Sheet</li> </ul>
	<b>Translation Option</b> – <a href="#">Check 7 Step Language</a> Translation if translation of written documents is requested
	<b>Reduce Sensory Input</b> - create signs for laptop/digital device use (back of the room) and low sensory/rest spaces
	<b>Presentations</b> - make presentations accessible using Power-Point and Word Accessible Guidelines. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use <a href="#">Plain Language Protocol</a> from Green Mountain Advocates and Neuroinclusive <a href="#">Communication</a> recommendations. Adjustment for readability, write out numbers between zero and nine.</li> </ul>
	<b>Communication Notification Systems</b> – decide on a method to communicate text, vibrations, low light flicker, etc.
	<b>Zoom</b> – if hybrid, check Zoom’s Accessibility practices <a href="https://zoom.us/accessibility">https://zoom.us/accessibility</a> , follow Virtual Protocol, and VTRC Language Accessibility Protocol. Acquire hybrid technology for Zoom video communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff or volunteer dedicated to hybrid participation</li> </ul>
	<b>Safety</b> - Verify Safety Protocol <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create Safety Resource Document (resources at event and contacts for post event)</li> </ul>
	<b>Information Sharing</b> - make sure VTRC Team is aware of accessibility protocols for event
	<b>Feedback</b> - create feedback forms to improve accessibility. Use paper and digital forms

\* Assistive Technology examples:

- Screen readers
- Ipads with word enhancement, dictation, and language interpretation
- Noise cancelation headphones
- Hearing Loop system
- Microphones that can roam and amplifiers (if room is conference size)



## Venue Check

### “x” Actions

	<b>Verify Locations Hybrid Compatibility</b>
	<b>Check Venue’s Accessibility</b> - close bus stop
	<b>Check Handicap Parking and Entrance Venue’s Accessibility</b>
	<b>Check Primary Space’s Accessibility -</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• entrance/exit for wheelchairs and other assistive devices</li> <li>• elevator</li> <li>• **bathrooms</li> <li>• movability within room (cords or cables along the parameter of a room or taped down)</li> <li>• accessible outlets</li> <li>• signs for laptops, ipads, etc. use at the back of the room</li> <li>• paths without obstructions</li> </ul>
	<b>Check Presentation Needs -</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internet</li> <li>• Technology</li> <li>• Projector and Screen. Screen accessible from any angle</li> </ul>
	<b>Check Lighting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• venue’s dimmable lighting capability</li> <li>• lit spaces for ASL interpreters</li> </ul>
	<b>Check Accessible Tables and Chairs</b> (seating for all body types)
	<b>Check Entrance Tables</b> (for placing material)
	<b>Check Low/No Sensory and Rest Rooms</b>
	<b>Create an Accessibility Map</b> - include gender inclusive bathrooms
	<b>Check Service Animals Accessibility</b> - close proximity to outside and water

\*\*Gender Inclusive Accessible Bathrooms.

Note: In the event Porta Potties are needed, we'd made contact with [Porta Potty Rentals in Vermont | Portable Restrooms \(portapottyrentalvt.com\)](http://Porta Potty Rentals in Vermont | Portable Restrooms (portapottyrentalvt.com)) Admin: Judy at x643

-one unit/50 people

-\$295/unit

## At Event

### “x” Actions

	<b>Accessibility Coordinator</b> - Inform public of the Accessibility Coordinator
	<b>Signs</b> - Hang signs to direct public (into primary space and low sensory/rest spaces)
	<b>At Entrances</b> - Place accessible maps, assistive technology, one-sheets, masks and hand sanitizers at entrance of all rooms.
	<b>Clear Entrances</b> – Ensure there is easy of entry and exiting
	<b>Reserved Seating</b> – Identify seats at the front for ASL interpreter and audience members who communicate with ASL.
	<b>Announce Speaker</b> - Always announce self before speaking
	<b>Descriptions</b> - Provide brief visual descriptors first time speaking
	<b>Clearness and Pace</b> - Verify that speakers will speak clearly and slowly
	<b>Presentation Closed Captions</b> - Use power-point live (closed caption)
	<b>Apply Plain Language</b> - Use <a href="#"><u>Plain Language Protocol</u></a> from Green Mountain Advocates and <a href="#"><u>Neuroinclusive Communication</u></a> recommendations
	<b>Summarization</b> - Repeat take-aways
	<b>Repetition</b> - Repeat questions and answers from self and audience
	<b>Reduce Distractions</b> - If hybrid, clear background and mute participants not speaking
	<b>Content Warnings</b> - Offer Content Warnings to minimize triggers/activation
	<b>Accessibility One-Sheet</b> – make document about available accessibility options available event (VTRC Language Accessibility and Interpretation Protocol)

	<b>Review Safety Measures and Available Resources</b> – if appropriate discuss Care Team role and how to identify them (Care Team is a term used by Education Justice Coalition of Vermont)
	<b>Safety</b> – Apply Virtual Safety Protocol <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make Safety Resource Document (resources at event and contacts for post event) available</li> </ul>
	<b>Pledge</b> – Provide document and accountability statement

## After Event

### “x”                    Actions

	<b>Feedback</b> - Distribute feedback forms to learn better ways to make events accessible. (paper and digital)
	<b>Wrap-Up</b> - Remove signs, cords, and equipment after the public has left
	<b>Keep Organized</b> - Pack Accessibility Took Kit
	<b>Check-In</b> – Offer a debrief or check-in with Presenters, Interpreters, Safety Volunteers, and Impacted Communities

## Helpful Links

- [Accessibility by Disability \(sharepoint.com\)](https://sharepoint.com)
- [Accessible Events and Meetings Handout.pdf \(adobe.com\)](https://adobe.com)
- [Accessible Meetings.pdf \(adobe.com\)](https://adobe.com)
- [Plain-Language-Checklist.pdf \(selfadvocacyinfo.org\)](https://selfadvocacyinfo.org)
- Language Interpretation - [Vancro](https://vancro.com) and [Language Link](https://language-link.com)

## Work Cited List

- 
- Cornell University, <http://www.hr.cornell.edu/>
- Heath Hicks, Agency of Human Services (3/2024) [Minimum Accessibility Requirements \(sharepoint.com\)](https://sharepoint.com)
- [Accessible Meeting and Event Checklist \(cornell.edu\)](https://cornell.edu)
- Green Mountain Self-Advocates ~ 2019 ~ [www.gmsavt.org](https://www.gmsavt.org)

## Virtual Checklist

### Prep Work Planning

Learn the accessibility needs (including language interpretation and translation) ahead of time by contacting invitees through social media and email through VTRC's listserv. Write a message that conveys intention. (Cornell University, <http://www.hr.cornell.edu/>)

Alternative Option: Write an email with the following RSVP:

"I will need the following accommodations in order to participate:

- Captioning
- Advance copy of slides and other shared materials
- High contrast illustration
- \*Language translation (including ASL). Specify language: \_\_\_\_\_
- \*\*Language interpreter. Specify language: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Definition = language translation is the written word.

\*\*Definition = language interpretation is spoken word.

Inform public about accessibility services that will be available and how to request other services

✔ Follow-up with requests and offer alternative methods of involvement if requests cannot be achieved

✔ Inform speakers of accessibility procedures, including receiving power-points and other documents ahead of time to share with the public; verbally describe visual material; activate captions; create breaks every hour; create break-out rooms for breaks or for small-group conversations

## Before Event

### “x” Actions

	<b>Pledge</b> – Provide document and accountability statement
	<b>Check Zoom Accessibility Protocol</b> – <a href="https://zoom.us/accessibility">https://zoom.us/accessibility</a> and VTRC Language Accessibility and Interpretation Protocol <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Avoid Closed Caption as a replacement of ASL. The English language in written form is not the same as ASL</li><li>• Alternative to Closed Caption – contract with <a href="#">White Coat Captioning</a> if necessary.</li></ul>
	<b>Check Language Interpretation Needs</b> - when possible, request language interpretation needs and use Zoom Interpretation tool
	<b>Recording and Transcription</b> – check recording and transcription capability
	<b>Speech to Caption</b> - Ensure speaking and written captions are synchronized
	<b>Device Check</b> - Verify that Closed Captions, or alternative to CC, can work on tablets, iPhones, computers, etc.
	<b>Accessibility Check</b> - Check accessibility with checker for Power-Points and Microsoft Word <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use <a href="#">Plain Language Protocol</a> from Green Mountain Advocates and <a href="#">Neuroinclusive Communication</a> recommendations. Adjust for readability like screen-readers and write out numbers between zero and nine.</li></ul>

	<b>Accessibility One-Sheet</b> – check document about accessibility options available event (VTRC Language Accessibility and Interpretation Protocol)
	<b>Translation Option</b> – <a href="#">Check 7 Step Language</a> Translation if translation of written documents is requested
	<b>Signs</b> - <a href="#">Accessible Signage Icons</a> – use when accommodation is available
	<b>Colors</b> – Create docs for high contrast colors on screen
	<b>Speech</b> – Prep to use concise, active, and direct language
	<b>Consistency</b> – Create docs to use same font (Sans), color (High Contrast), size (12 +)
	<b>Cultural Awareness</b> – Prep for cultural sensitivity regarding colloquial terms, imagery, and euphemisms
	<b>Videos</b> - Video clips need a written summary when applicable
	<b>Share Information to Public in Advance</b> - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide transcripts and presentation material in advance of meeting when possible and when applicable</li> <li>• Accessibility One-Sheet</li> </ul>
	<b>Reduce Sensory Input</b> – Check for Blur Background
	<b>Safety</b> - Verify Virtual Safety Protocol <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create Safety Resource Document (resources at event and contacts for post event)</li> </ul>
	<b>Information Sharing</b> - make sure VTRC Team is aware of accessibility protocols for event
	<b>Feedback</b> - create feedback forms to improve accessibility. Use paper and digital forms

## At Event

### “x” Actions

	<b>Pledge</b> – Provide document and accountability statement
	<b>Zoom Accessibility Protocol</b> – <a href="https://zoom.us/accessibility">https://zoom.us/accessibility</a> and use VTRC Language Accessibility and Interpretation Protocol
	<b>Recording and Transcription</b> – when possible, record and transcribe events

	<b>Plain Language</b> - Use <a href="#">Plain Language Protocol</a> from Green Mountain Advocates and <a href="#">Neuroinclusive Communication</a> recommendations. Adjustment for readability, write out numbers between zero and nine.
	<b>Signs</b> - <a href="#">Accessible Signage Icons</a> – use when accommodation is available
	<b>Descriptions</b> - Provide brief visual descriptors first time speaking
	<b>Announce Self</b> – Say your name each time speaker changes
	<b>High Contrast Colors</b> – use high contrast colors on screen
	<b>Speech</b> - use concise, active, and direct language
	<b>Consistency</b> - use same font (Sans), color (High Contrast), size (12 +)
	<b>Viewing</b> – magnify content on screen if possible
	<b>Cultural Awareness</b> – Apply cultural sensitivity
	<b>Videos</b> – Apply written summary when applicable
	<b>Reduce Sensory Input</b> – Blur Background
	<b>Safety</b> – Apply Virtual Safety Protocol <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make Safety Resource Document (resources at event and contacts for post event) available</li> </ul>

## After Event

### “x” Actions

	<b>Feedback</b> - Distribute feedback forms to learn better ways to make events accessible. (paper and digital)
	<b>Check-In</b> – Offer a debrief or check-in with Presenters, Interpreters, Safety Volunteers, and Impacted Communities

## Helpful Links

- [Accessibility by Disability \(sharepoint.com\)](#)
- [Accessible Events and Meetings Handout.pdf \(adobe.com\)](#)
- [Accessible Meetings.pdf \(adobe.com\)](#)
- [Plain-Language-Checklist.pdf \(selfadvocacyinfo.org\)](#)
- Language Interpretation - [Vancro](#) and [Language Link](#)

- Digital Accessibility: Communication and Marketing
  - [Minimum Accessibility Requirements \(sharepoint.com\)](#)
  - <https://youtu.be/uAz4jVx9bjk>

**Work Cited List**

- Cornell University, <http://www.hr.cornell.edu/>
- Heath Hicks, Agency of Human Services (3/2024) [Minimum Accessibility Requirements \(sharepoint.com\)](#)
- [Accessible Meeting and Event Checklist \(cornell.edu\)](#)
- Green Mountain Self-Advocates ~ 2019 ~ [www.gmsavt.org](http://www.gmsavt.org)

<b>Virtual Safety Checklist</b>
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**Important Numbers**

Ann Miller, Executive Assistant	802-261-7387
Faith Yacubian, Executive Director	802-261-7386

**Before Event**

**“x” Actions**

	<b>Zoom Registration</b> – Require registration for documentation purposes
	<b>Breakout Rooms</b> – Create breakout rooms to offer healing space. Assign invitees a room but do not open rooms until it is needed
	<b>Accessibility</b> – If applicable, check ASL and other interpretation contacts are invited
	<b>Private Chat</b> – Remind the public that “private chat” is recorded on transcripts
	<b>Care Team</b> – Determine if a Care Team is needed and Protocol of Care Team (if needed, create a document that describes some details about them and make it available at event).



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protocol – The Care Team will be comprised of cultural brokers, spiritual healers, restorative counselors, mental health professionals, etc. or well-trained volunteers who are equipped with culturally-relevant mental health support and de-escalation tactics.</li> </ul>
	<b>Victim Services Directory</b> – VTRC One-sheet of services
	<b>Apply Individual Personal Safety Plan and Follow-Up</b> – If possible, send an email in advance that requests safety needs. See Appendix 1. Draft – Individual Safety Plan Purpose (Michele Olvera, Esq.)
	<b>Safety Personnel</b> – Determine needs for and contract with safety/security officials. Ex: Chocolate Thunder

## At Event

### “x”                      Actions

	<b>Pledge and/or Agreement</b> – State VTRC standards of conduct and culture of humility
	<b>Breach of Civility</b> – Share actions that will be taken to reduce harm, including warnings and removal
	<b>Introduce Care Team Members and Role</b> – Explain their function and how you can reach them during the event.
	<b>Breakout Rooms</b> – Explain use of breakout rooms and when they will be used, such as when a violation of our agreement has occurred and assessing harm and creating healing space are important
	<b>Accessibility</b> – If applicable, discuss how to access ASL and other interpreters on Zoom
	<b>Communication</b> – Use plain language to reduce confusion/misunderstanding. Avoid command statements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ex: “Keep both feet on the floor while doing this breathing exercise,” can be written, “If it’s more comfortable, you can keep both feet on the floor while</li> </ul>

	<p>doing this breathing exercise.”) - <a href="#">National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma &amp; Mental Health - Writing Guide</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ex: “FAILURE to respond by ...” feels intimidating, but “You have the right to request or disagree with the determination....”” <a href="#">Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) - Tip Sheet</a></li> </ul>
	<b>Safety Personnel</b> – Place safety/security staff at entrances/exits.

## After Event

### “x” Actions

	<b>Debrief</b> (if applicable) – Check-in with Presenters, Interpreters and Impacted Communities, Care Team, and safety personnel
	<b>Send Survey</b> – Ask participants to fill-out survey (make available in hardcopy and electronical formats) to assist with improving events.

## Helpful Resource

- Outright VT [LGBTQ+ Youth Support and Empowerment – Outright Vermont \(outrightvt.org\)](http://outrightvt.org)
- Kristen Cameron, MPA, Vermont Department of Health; HealthVermont.gov
- [Trauma-informed Design Resources](#)
- Vermont Victim Service Directory (see PDF)

## In-Person Safety Checklist

### Important Numbers:

Ann Miller, Executive Assistant	802-261-7387
Faith Yacubian, Executive Director	802-261-7386

## Before Event

### “x” Actions

	<b>Accessibility</b> – If applicable, check that ASL and other interpretation contacts are invited.
	<b>Infectious Disease Mitigation</b> - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When possible, reduce in-person events to mitigate the spread of infectious diseases.</li> <li>• Check material inventory (masks, hand sanitizers, HEPA Filter)</li> <li>• Announce Protocol - The VTRC Team and public are asked to wear masks in enclosed spaces during public, in-person events to help mitigate the spread of infectious diseases and illnesses, like COVID-19. This protocol recognizes personal choice and health factors that inform the use of masks. We ask those who are sick and/or contagious to attend virtually.</li> </ul>
	<b>Hire Chocolate Thunder as Safety Personnel</b> – Follow contracts/agreements
	<b>Care Team</b> – Determine if a Care Team is needed and Protocol of Care Team (if needed, create a document that describes some details about them and make it available at event). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protocol – The Care Team will be comprised of cultural brokers, spiritual healers, restorative counselors, mental health professionals, etc. or well-trained volunteers who are equipped with culturally-relevant mental health support and de-escalation tactics. (ex: <a href="#">The Root Social Justice Center</a>)</li> </ul>
	<b>Victim Services Directory</b> – One-sheet of services
	<b>Head-Sets</b> – Purchase heads-sets for <u>Event Team</u> and provide protocol/use one-sheet
	<b>Protocol for Imminent Threat</b> – Apply Protocol, for example: moving to virtual platform.
	<b>Check First Aid Kits</b> – Purchase more supplies if inventory is low.
	<b>Extreme Weather Conditions</b> – Assess safety and, if necessary, implement Protocol for Imminent Threat.
	<b>Apply Individual Personal Safety Plan and Follow-Up</b> – If possible, send an email in advance that requests safety needs. See Appendix 1. Draft – Individual Safety Plan Purpose (Michele Olvera, Esq.)

## At Event

“x”                      **Actions**

	<b>Pledge and/or Agreement</b> – State VTRC standards of conduct and culture of humility
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	<b>Breach of Civility</b> – Share actions that will be taken to reduce harm, including warnings and removal
	<b>Infectious Disease Mitigation</b> - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When possible, reduce in-person events to mitigate the spread of infectious diseases.</li> <li>• Make masks, hand sanitizers, HEPA Filter available</li> <li>• Announce Protocol - The VTRC Team and public are asked to wear masks in enclosed spaces during public, in-person events to help mitigate the spread of infectious diseases and illnesses, like COVID-19. This protocol recognizes personal choice and health factors that inform the use of masks. We ask those who are sick and/or contagious to attend virtually.</li> </ul>
	<b>Introduce Care Team Members and Role</b> – Explain their function and how you can reach them during the event
	<b>Lock Doors (if appropriate and does not limit egress)</b> - To reduce non-invitees from causing safety threats
	<b>Position Safety Personnel at Entrances/Exits and Inside Main Room</b>
	<b>Accessibility</b> – If applicable, discuss how to access ASL and other interpreters on Zoom
	<b>Communication</b> – Use plain language to reduce confusion/misunderstanding. Avoid command statements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ex: “Keep both feet on the floor while doing this breathing exercise,” can be written, “If it’s more comfortable, you can keep both feet on the floor while doing this breathing exercise.”) - <a href="#">National Center on Domestic Violence, Trauma &amp; Mental Health - Writing Guide</a></li> <li>• Ex: “FAILURE to respond by ...” feels intimidating, but “You have the right to request or disagree with the determination....”” <a href="#">Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) - Tip Sheet</a></li> </ul>

## After Event

### “x” Actions

	<b>Debrief</b> (if applicable) – Check-in with Presenters, Interpreters and Impacted Communities
	<b>Send Survey</b> – Ask participants to fill-out survey (make available in hardcopy and electronic formats) to assist with improving events.

## Helpful Resource

- Outright VT [LGBTQ+ Youth Support and Empowerment – Outright Vermont \(outrightvt.org\)](https://outrightvt.org)
- Kristen Cameron, MPA, Vermont Department of Health; [HealthVermont.gov](https://healthvermont.gov)
- [Trauma-informed Design Resources](#)
- Vermont Victim Service Directory (see PDF)

### **Appendix 1. Draft – Individual Safety Plan Purpose (Michele, Olvera, Esq.)**

An individualized safety plan for our purposes is a unique plan that addresses whatever that individual is contending with or might need to contend with if they participate in any public forum or other event with the Commission. The first step is for the person to identify the risk and also what they have as a goal related to their participation in the event. It's important for them to guide the plan. For example, if there is an individual that may attend the event that they do not want to have any opportunity to speak to them perhaps pre-planned seating will work or perhaps they need a dedicated person to watch the individual's location at all times. It is also possible we could prearrange with the individual who is the threat to follow a certain protocol. In other words, we can all brainstorm a solution but the person whose plan it is must be comfortable with it or else it is not a safety plan. There are many different reasons for a person to feel unsafe and we cannot name them or judge them. Too many for us to even try to name them all here. Our goal is for everyone to feel safe and free to participate in the Commission's event fully, peacefully, and freely.

## Plain Language Checklist

### “x” Actions

	<b>Grade Level</b> – Use everyday words; 6 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> grade level
	<b>Pronouns</b> – Use you and other pronouns
	<b>Active Voice</b> – Use an Active voice, not passive (ex: “Wash fruit. Then, cut and peel them.” Passive voice = “Fruits should be washed before they are cut and peeled.”)
	<b>Direct Speech</b> - Avoid metaphors, imagery, and acronyms
	<b>Tone</b> – Use positive tone; inflection
	<b>Pace and Patience</b> - Take the time necessary to ensure clear understanding and give time to put the thoughts into words, especially when responding to a question
	<b>Concise</b> - Keep it concise, simple, and main point at the start. Repeat when necessary
	<b>Directions</b> – Avoid directional terms, like east-west

	<b>Sentences</b> - Short sentences and paragraphs; avoid sentences with comas or semicolons
	<b>Questions</b> - When asking questions, phrase them to get accurate information. Verify responses by repeating each question in a different way
	<b>Design</b> - Easy-to-follow design features (lists, headers, tables)
	<b>Visuals</b> - Offer visuals to accompany directions, procedures, or learning
	<b>Limit Text</b> - Reduce wordiness; consider bullet-points with only necessary details
	<b>Write “Decorative”</b> - If an image does not have substantive information
	<b>Electronic Versions</b> - Send to participants prior to event (PDF & PowerPoint)
	<b>Instruction</b> - Give direct instruction. Ex: "Be back from lunch at 12:30," not "Be back in 30 minutes". Avoid giving multiple instructions at one time

### Work Cited

- Kirsten Murphy (VT Developmental Disability Council)
- [document-accessibility-basics.pptx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

## Word & PDF Checklist

### “x” Actions

	<b>Plain Language</b> - Limit the use of jargon, abbreviations, acronyms, and technical language when possible.
	<b>Contractions</b> - Avoid break words, like “can’t”. Write-out the word, like “cannot”
	<b>Color as an Indicator</b> - Color cannot be the only indication of information. Ex: "The red text identifies tasks that have not been completed."
	<b>High Contrast</b> - Use <a href="#">high color contrast</a> text colors like dark grey on white
	<b>Font</b> - Use Sans Pro or Arial and Size 12+ (update your default settings)
	<b>Columns and Margins</b> - Reduce use of columns, unless in tables. Use wide or normal margins.

	<b>Charts and Graphs</b> - Describe charts or graphs in one or two sentences; add trends or relevant information in the visual
	<b>Content</b> – Avoid cramming information into a single page
	<b>Subject Line</b> - Add a descriptive subject (ex: “Welcome Email to Committee Members”)
	<b>Background</b> - Don't use background patterns. (Adjust windows view settings to adjust color display.)
	<b>Font Emphasis</b> – Avoid all Caps, Italics, Bolded small text, and underlining
	<b>Text-to-Speech</b> – When possible, use text-to-speech
	<b>Visuals</b> – Limit emojis and always use Alt Text or detailed captions
	<b>Images</b> – Place images in line with text. Shapes must have alternate text or detailed photo captions. Mark images as “decorative” if they don’t offer substantive information or if the information is already conveyed in the body of the document
	<b>Lists</b> – Use lists or bullet-points to organize information
	<b>Tables</b> – If you use tables, use styles, headers, and alternat text. Use built-in headers
	<b>Descriptive Links</b> – Links should be the title/descriptive of the link. Avoid “click here”. <a href="http://www.examplelink.com">www.examplelink.com</a> . Example of descriptive link: <a href="#">Microsoft   Create Accessible Links Video</a> here”
	<b>Styles</b> – Use headings and subheadings
	<b>Use the Microsoft and PDF <a href="#">Accessibility Checker</a></b>
	<b>Files</b> - File names should reflect the document <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use lower-case letters and dashes, such as “document-accessibility-checklist”</li> <li>2. Avoid dates in the file name or “draft” unless it’s the title of a report, such as 2020 Report on Health Differences</li> </ol>
	<b>PDF Conversion</b> – for Adobe Acrobat Pro DC use “Create PDF” <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For Adobe Reader use “Save as Adobe PDF”</li> <li>2. Avoid “Print to PDF” and “Save As” by using PDF extension</li> </ol>

## Work Cited

- [SOV – Inclusion and Accessibility](#)

## Resource

- [Video: Check the accessibility of your document - Microsoft Support](#)



## Social Media Checklist

### “x” Actions

	<b>Plain Language</b> - Use <a href="#">Plain Language Protocol</a> from Green Mountain Advocates. Adjustment for readability, write numbers between zero and nine (Ex: Five, not 5)
	<b>Capitalization</b> – Only capitalize first word in a sentence and titles
	<b>Headers</b> – Apply headers to break-up text and sections.
	<b>Contractions</b> – Avoid break words, like “can’t”. Write-out the word, like “cannot”
	<b>Camel Case</b> – Use multiword hashtags, such as iPhone or #BlackLivesMatter

	<b>Descriptive Links</b> – avoid vague terms like “click here”, “this”, “link”, etc.
	<b>Visuals</b> – limit emojis and always use Alt Text or detailed captions
	<b>Contact Information</b> – make phone number and email available on the account page for the public to access VTRC
	<b>QR Codes</b> – Create QR Codes that direct the public to events, sign-ups, website, etc. Add description underneath code to indicate where the QR code will direct user.
	<b>Charts and Graphs</b> – Describe them in one or two sentences with trends or relevant information
	<b>Videos</b> – Add descriptions and provide descriptive audios
	<b>Write “Decorative”</b> - If an image does not have substantive information
	<b>Interpretation or Translation</b> – use ASL and other translated versions to increase reach
	<b>Multi-Channels</b> – Create easy access threads, daily email digests, or social media widgets to website
	<b>Support Services</b> – Add contact of supportive staff and post accommodations

### Helpful Links

- [Minimum Accessibility Requirements \(sharepoint.com\)](https://sharepoint.com)
- [Accessibility by Disability](#)

## Power-Point Checklist

\*In addition to Social Media recommendations

### “x” Actions

	<b>Color as an Indicator</b> - Color cannot be the only indication of information. Ex: "The red text identifies tasks that have not been completed.
	<b>Headers</b> – Apply headers to break-up text and sections.
	<b>Contractions</b> – Avoid break words, like “can’t”. Write-out the word, like “cannot”
	<b>Slides and Written Word Color</b> - Use high contrast color schemes. <a href="#">Link: WebAIM Contrast Checker</a> . Avoid white writing when possible. It causes fuzziness, or halation. It’s difficult to read for folx with astigmatism.
	<b>Font Size</b> – Use a large (size 24 or greater), clear, Sans Serif font such as Sans Pro, Arial, or Calibri.
	<b>Font Emphasis</b> – Avoid all Caps, Italics, Bolded small text, and underlining
	<b>Animation</b> - Avoid excess animation. Avoid use of it if you can.
	<b>Use the Accessibility Checker and Immersive Reader in PowerPoint</b>
	<b>Limit Text</b> – reduce wordiness; consider bullet-points with only necessary details
	<b>Write “Decorative”</b> - If an image does not have substantive information
	<b>Electronic Versions</b> – Send to participants prior to event (PDF & PowerPoint)

### Resources

- Department of Health - [document-accessibility-basics.pptx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)
- Accessibility Checklist - [Document Accessibility Checklist \(vermont.gov\)](#)

### Work Cited

- Video for Accessible PDFs: <https://youtu.be/DUPHWF2ZPPg>
- [Accessibility tools for PowerPoint - Microsoft Support](#)

## Email Checklist

\*In addition to Social Media recommendations

### “x” Actions

	<b>Plain Language</b> – Limit the use of jargon, abbreviations, acronyms, and technical language when possible.
	<b>HTML</b> – Use HTML when possible (see “Email Messaging Using”)
	<b>Color as an Indicator</b> - Color cannot be the only indication of information. Ex: "The red text identifies tasks that have not been completed.
	<b>Contractions</b> – Avoid break words, like “can’t”. Write-out the word, like “cannot”
	<b>High Contrast</b> - Use high color contrast text colors like dark grey on white
	<b>Font</b> – Use Sans Pro or Arial and Size 12+ (update your default settings)
	<b>Text</b> – Avoid all caps, italics, and underlines (except links)
	<b>Subject Line</b> - Add a descriptive subject (ex: “Welcome Email to Committee Members”)
	<b>Background</b> – Avoid using background patterns. (Adjust windows view settings to adjust color display)
	<b>Font Emphasis</b> – Avoid all Caps, Italics, Bolded small text, and underlining
	<b>Text Walls</b> - Avoid large text/wordiness, use bullet points or lists, and headings
	<b>Visuals</b> – limit emojis and always use Alt Text or detailed captions
	<b>Images</b> – Place images in line with text. Shapes must have alternate text or detailed photo captions
	<b>Tables</b> – If you use tables, use styles, headers, and alternate text
	<b>Descriptive Links</b> – Links should be the title/descriptive of the link
	<b>Styles</b> – Use headings in Word
	<b>Accessibility Checker</b> – Test accessibility with Immersive Reader and Microsoft Accessibility Checker

### Work Cited

- [SOV – Inclusion and Accessibility](#)

## Spreadsheet and Tables Checklist

\*In addition to Social Media recommendations

### “x” Actions

	<b>Plain Language</b> – Limit the use of jargon, abbreviations, acronyms, and technical language when possible.
	<b>Contractions</b> – Avoid break words, like “can’t”. Write-out the word, like “cannot”
	<b>Color as an Indicator</b> - Color cannot be the only indication of information. Ex: "The red text identifies tasks that have not been completed.
	<b>High Contrast</b> - Use high color contrast text colors like dark grey on white
	<b>Font</b> – Use Sans Pro or Arial and Size 12+
	<b>Text</b> – Avoid all caps, italics, bolding small text, and underlines (except links)
	<b>Images</b> – Use Alternate Text or detailed photo captions
	<b>Visuals</b> – limit emojis and always use Alt Text or detailed captions
	<b>Images</b> – Place images in line with text. Shapes must have alternate text or detailed photo captions.
	<b>Tables</b> – If you use tables, use styles, headers, and alternat text. Insert tables, avoid drawing tables. Headers should repeat if the table exceeds the first page. Minimize merging or splitting cells.
	<b>Descriptive Links</b> – Links should be the title/descriptive of the link.
	<b>Styles</b> – Use Headings in Word
	<b>Accessibility Checker</b> – Test accessibility with Immersive Reader and Microsoft Accessibility Checker

### Work Cited

- [SOV – Inclusion and Accessibility](#)