

DWCC 2025-180 - DDBHH Accessibility of the National Public Alerting System

DDBHH Accessibility of The National Public Alerting System

The Deaf Wireless Canada Consultative Committee ([DWCC](#)) is conducting a national survey to help improve the National Public Alerting System (NPAS), with a focus on accessibility for Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and Hard of Hearing individuals across Canada.

The initiative is part of the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commissions ([CRTC](#)) ongoing proceeding to improve the public alerting systems: [CRTC 2025-180](#).

What are Public Alerts?

Public alerts are important messages sent by the government to warn people about emergencies or danger. These alerts help keep people safe during urgent situations like wildfires, floods, or missing children. You might see or feel these alerts on your phone, TV, radio, or other devices. It is also known as an emergency alert. In this survey, we will use the word “emergency alert.”

What is the survey about?

This survey asks about your experiences with emergency alerts (also known as public alerts or public alerting) which are the messages sent to your phone, TV, or other devices during emergencies like wildfires, floods, or missing persons.

DWCC wants to better understand:

- Accessibility barriers to receiving alerts
- Preferred languages and sign languages
- Nationwide gaps or inconsistencies in alerting
- How the system can be monitored and improved over time with feedback

This is an opportunity to have your voice and perspective included in national discussions about accessibility and public safety for DDBHH individuals in Canada.

Survey Details:

- Available in English, French, ASL, and LSQ
- Hosted on SurveyMonkey
- Available by request: PDF or paper mailed copy
- Up to 38 questions, covering both multiple choice and open-ended responses
- Approved by the CRTC (see link)

Why is this important?

DWCC’s goal is to ensure that NPAS becomes fully accessible, especially through:

- Alerts in sign languages (ASL and LSQ)
- Compliance with the Accessible Canada Act, which aims to remove barriers for people with disabilities by 2040.

- Compliance with Canadian Human Rights Act to duty to accommodate persons with disabilities including Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and Hard of Hearing individuals across Canada

Your participation will provide valuable data that can help guide policy and implementation of accessible alerts in Canada.

Conditions for participation

To take this survey, you must be:

1. At least 18 years old; and
2. A Canadian consumer of a wireless or internet company for at least one year; and
3. Deaf, Deaf-Blind, Hard of Hearing, Oral deaf, or Late-deafened.

Your privacy, confidentiality and trust are important to us. All data collected will be stored according to industry wide data security standards. At the end of the survey you will have the option, it is your choice, to enter your name and e-mail to enter your name in a prize draw. *This contact information is used only for the verification purposes for the prize draw. Once the draw finishes, your contact information will be erased from our records.*

If you have any concerns or questions, you may contact Jeffrey Beatty, DWCC Chair at chair@deafwireless.ca.

Thank you for participating in this survey.

PART I: QUALIFYING QUESTIONS (3 questions)

1. I hereby consent that my responses will be used to present the information to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) Notice of Consultation [2025-180](#).

Answering this “Yes” will allow you to continue, or if answering “No,” you cannot do the survey.

- a. Yes ☐
- b. No ☐

2. Are you Canadian or a resident of Canada?

Answering this “Yes” will allow you to continue, or if answering “No,” you cannot do the survey.

- a. Yes ☐
- b. No ☐

3. Are you 18 or older?

Answering this “Yes” will allow you to continue, or if answering “No,” you cannot do the survey.

- a. Yes ☐
- b. No ☐

PART II: DEMOGRAPHICS (8 questions)

ABOUT YOU (6 questions)

4. Are you Deaf-Blind or DeafBlind? (answers will lead to related questions)
If answer Yes → Continue to Question 5. If answer No → Skip to Question 6.

- a. Yes ☐
- b. No ☐

5. Which modes of communication do you use?

After answering → Skip to Question 7.

- a. Sign Language ☐
- b. Tactile ASL or Tactile LSQ
(hand on hand communication) ☐
- c. Protactile ☐
- d. Two hand manual ☐

6. How do you self-identify?*

- a. Deaf (a sign language user—
for example: ASL or LSQ) ☐
- b. Hard of Hearing ☐
- c. Oral deaf ☐
- d. Late-deafened ☐

7. How old are you?

- a. 18 to 24 years ☐
- b. 25 to 34 years ☐
- c. 35 to 44 years ☐
- d. 45 to 54 years ☐
- e. 55 to 64 years ☐
- f. 65 years or older ☐
- g. I prefer not to provide information. ☐

8. What is your gender?

- a. Female ☐
- b. Male ☐
- c. Non-binary ☐
- e. I prefer not to provide information ☐

9. Which languages do you use? Click on all applicable languages.

- a. ASL ☐
- b. LSQ ☐
- c. English ☐
- d. French ☐

RESIDENTIAL INFORMATION (2 questions)

10. Which Canadian province or territory do you currently live in?

- a. British Columbia ☐
- b. Yukon ☐
- c. Alberta ☐
- d. Northwest Territories ☐
- e. Saskatchewan ☐
- f. Nunavut ☐
- g. Manitoba ☐
- h. Ontario ☐
- i. Québec ☐
- j. Newfoundland and Labrador ☐
- k. Nova Scotia ☐
- l. Prince Edward Island ☐
- m. New Brunswick ☒

11. Where do you live (metropolitan vs. rural)?

- a. City or metropolitan/suburban area (50,000 or more people) ☐
- b. City or town (between 2,500 – 50,000 people) ☐
- c. Village (fewer than 2,500 people) ☐
- d. I am nomadic, living from town to town ☐
- e. I prefer not to provide information ☐

PART III: DEVICE AND SERVICE USAGE (3 questions)

12. Do you use wireless and/or internet services?

- a. Wireless only (LTE/5G) ☐
- b. Internet only (WIFI) ☐
- c. Both, Wireless and Internet (WIFI) ☐

13. Do you currently have a wireless Accessibility Plan (a plan that offers a discount or features specifically for people with disabilities)?

- a. Yes ☐
- b. No ☐
- c. I did not know such a plan exists. ☐

14. What kind of device do you own that you receive or do not receive the alerts on? Click on all applicable answers.

- a. Apple iPhone ☐
- b. Android (i.e. Blackberry, Google, LG, Samsung, Sony). ☐
- c. Windows device ☐
- d. Tablet (i.e. Apple iPad, or Android: Galaxy, Lenovo, or Amazon) ☐
- e. I do not receive any alerts ☐
- f. Other (please specify): **[Please type or write in the text box]:** ☐

15. What other platforms do you receive emergency alerts, other than smartphones or tablets? (Select all that apply)

- a. TV ☐
- b. Visual Display in transportation centres
(airport, ferry or train stations). ☐
- c. Visual Signage on highways ☐
- d. Public spaces in building spaces (ie. lobby) ☐
- e. Instant Messenger and Chat ☐

- f. Social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter/X) ☐
- g. Email or text from government sources ☐
- h. Emergency Alert app ☐

PART IV: NATIONAL PUBLIC ALERTING SYSTEM (EMERGENCY ALERTS)

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE (3 questions)

16. Have you ever received an emergency alert on your device(s)?
(If Yes → Skip to Question 18. If No → Continue to Question 17.)

- a. Yes ☐
- b. No ☐

17. If you do not receive any alerts, why not?
(Please type or write in the text box below. After answering → Skip to Question 24.)

18. What kind/type of emergency alerts have you received? Click on all applicable answers.

- a. Test Alert (Alert Ready system test) ☐
- b. AMBER Alert (child abduction emergency) ☐
- c. Weather Alert (tornado, blizzard, extreme heat/cold, severe thunderstorm, etc.) ☐
- d. Natural Disaster Alert (wildfire, flood, earthquake, etc.) ☐
- e. Civil Emergency Alert (dangerous person, shooting, bombing, etc.) ☐
- f. Environmental & Technological Hazards (radiological, chemical, infrastructure failure, etc.) ☐
- g. Emergency Alert (9-1-1 service outage, public health, etc.) ☐

19. Do you want to be able to review past alerts?

- a. Yes ☐
- b. No ☐

TEST EMERGENCY ALERTS (3 questions)

20. Have you ever received a test emergency alert?

(If Yes → Continue to Question 21. If No → Skip to Question 24.)

- a. Yes ☐
- b. No ☐

21. Is it important that you give feedback on a test emergency alert?

(If Yes → Continue to Question 22. If No → Skip to Question 24.)

- a. Yes ☐
- b. No ☐

22. Where would you like to submit your feedback about the alert?

- a. Click a button on the alert notification ☐
- b. Email ☐
- c. Designated text number ☐
- d. [Alert Ready](#) website ☐
- e. Provincial or Territorial Emergency Management Office ☐
- f. Local Broadcaster or Wireless Carrier ☐
- g. I don't know/Not sure ☐

23. Why is it important for you to be able to give feedback on a test emergency alert?

- a. To ensure alerts are delivered in accessible formats
(e.g., visual, text, tactile, braille). ☐
- b. To verify that alerts are effective for DDBHH individuals. ☐
- c. To test the technical effectiveness of current alert delivery
methods. ☐
- d. To identify how alert language, visuals, or delivery might
cause confusion. ☐
- e. To educate about the specific needs of the DDBHH community. ☐
- f. To support the development of more inclusive public
safety systems. ☐

- g. To raise awareness about accessibility issues in emergency communication ☐

EMERGENCY ALERTS ACCESSIBILITY (6 questions)

24. Do you find current alert systems accessible for you as a Deaf, DeafBlind, or Hard-of-Hearing person?

- a. Yes ☐
b. Somewhat ☐
c. No ☐
d. I'm not sure ☐

25. What are the main barriers you face when receiving emergency alerts?

- a. No visual notification (e.g. no flashing light or pop-up) ☐
b. No vibration haptic alert ☐
c. Audio-only alerts without text ☐
d. Alert not available in ASL or LSQ ☐
e. Poor timing or delays in alert delivery ☐
f. Difficult language (too complex or unclear) ☐
g. Alert not accessible on device ☐
h. Lack of instructions in the alert ☐
i. Internet or cellular service too weak to receive alerts ☐
j. Alerts don't match location ☐
k. Information on screen disappeared too quickly/
could not review information ☐
l. Not enough details ☐
m. No photos of the missing person ☐
g. Other **[Please type or write in the text box]:** ☐

26. Which format is the most accessible for you during an emergency? (Select all that apply)

- a. Sign language video (ASL or LSQ) ☐
- b. Text captions ☐
- c. Visual flashing alerts ☐
- d. Haptic alerts ☐
- e. Vibration alerts ☐
- f. Visual icon or emoji for a specific emergency event. ☐
- g. Background and font colours. ☐
- h. Audio alerts ☐
- i. Other (please specify): **(Please type or write in the text box)** ☐

27. Are you satisfied with the information included in the emergency alerts?
(If Yes → SKIP to Question 29. If No → Continue to Question 28.)

- a. Yes ☐
- b. No ☐

28. What information would you like included in emergency alerts? (Select all that apply)

- a. Plain language description of the emergency. ☐
- b. What to do next (instructions), ie, food rationing in supply chain crisis. ☐
- c. Links to where to go for shelter and safety (ie, cooling/warming centre) ☐
- d. Specific phone number, text, or email to contact for help. ☐
- e. Visual alert with symbols or icons ☐
- f. ASL or LSQ video explanation ☐
- g. Location-specific details (e.g. nearby danger zones) ☐
- h. How long the emergency is expected to last (be specific or say “unknown”) ☐
- i. Where to go for updates (website, social media, etc.) ☐
- j. Accessibility support information (e.g. VRS/VRI, DeafBlind assistance). ☐
- k. Other (please specify). **[Please type or write in the text box]:** ☐

PART V: LANGUAGES IN EMERGENCY ALERTS (3 questions)

29. Which languages do you prefer to receive the emergency alerts in? Click on all applicable languages.

- a. ASL (American Sign Language) ☐
- b. LSQ (Langue des signes québécoise) ☐
- c. English ☐
- d. French ☐

30. Do you support a federal requirement for sign language inclusion in all emergency alerts?

- a. Yes ☐
- b. No ☐
- c. Not sure ☐

31. Do you believe emergency alerts should be available in sign language across all platforms (TV, phone, social media)?

- a. Yes ☐
- b. No ☐
- c. Not sure ☐

PART VI: REAL LIFE EXPERIENCES (4 questions)

32. Have you been in a location where there was a disaster, shooting, extreme weather, or any other emergency event(s)?

(If Yes → Continue to Question 34. If No → Skip to Question 35.)

- a. Yes ☐
- b. No ☐

Continue to next page....

33. What kind of emergency event was it?

- a. AMBER Alert (child abduction emergency) ☐
- b. Weather Alert (tornado, blizzard, extreme heat/cold, severe thunderstorm, etc.) ☐
- c. Natural Disaster Alert (wildfire, flood, earthquake, etc.) ☐
- d. Civil Emergency Alert (dangerous person, shooting, bombing, etc.) ☐
- e. Environmental & Technological Hazards (radiological, chemical, infrastructure failure, etc.) ☐
- f. Emergency Alert (9-1-1 service outage, public health, etc.) ☐
- g. Other (please specify): **[Please type or write in the text box]:** ☐

34. Are you willing to participate in a follow-up interview or focus group to share your experiences and barriers you faced in that emergency event(s)?
(If Yes → Continue to Question 35. If No → Skip to Question 36)

- a. Yes ☐
- b. No ☐

35. Please share your preferred contact method (optional):

[Email or Phone] **[Please type or write in the text box]:** [

Note: this contact information is used only for the draw. Once the draw finishes, your contact information will be erased from our records.

PART VII: YOUR COMMENTS

36. Anything else that you would like to share with us and/or with the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) related to accessibility of public alerting?

[Type in text box or do video in ASL, LSQ, any ISLs in YouTube and insert link here].

OR

[Please write on the lines below or on the back of the last page of this survey]

Part VIII: TO ENROLL IN THE DRAW - OPTIONAL

37. I want to enter my name into the prize draw for this survey.

(If Yes → Continue to Question 38. If No → End of Survey.)

- a. Yes ☐
- b. No ☐

38. If you would like to enter your name in the draw for the prizes, choose which prize you want:

- ☐ iPhone
- ☐ Android

Name:

City of Residence:

Province:

Email or phone number (your preferred contact):

☐ By entering this draw, I acknowledge and agree that the winners' names and their cities will be made public. No other identifying information will be made public.

Note: this contact information is used only for the draw. Once the draw finishes, your contact information will be erased from our records.

PART IX: Thank you for your participation.

Thank you for your participation in this survey. Your feedback will help improve accessibility of public alerts for the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing community in Canada.

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