



Mental Health
Commission
of Canada

Commission de
la santé mentale
du Canada

Mental Health
First Aid Canada



Veterans Affairs
Canada

Anciens Combattants
Canada

Guide to Hosting a Mental Health First Aid Canada Veterans Community Course

MHFA Canada would like to thank you for hosting a MHFA Canada course within your organization. In this handout you will find everything you need to know when booking and hosting a MHFA Canada course.

If at any time you have questions regarding the process or hosting a course please do not hesitate to contact Katie Lemenchick, National Program Coordinator at 1-866-989-3985 option 2 or directly at 1-613-683-3957 or klemenchick@mentalhealthcommission.ca. We look forward to working with you to make your course a success.

Who this course is intended for

The Department of Veterans Affairs has generously sponsored this course to be delivered at no cost to up to 3000 members of the Veterans community. This Mental Health First Aid Veteran Community is tailored to address the needs of Canadian Armed Forces Veterans and the people who care for and about them. Participants in this course could vary immensely, but all will have some connection to the Veteran Community. They could be Veterans themselves, former members of the RCMP, family members, friends, relatives, health professionals, providers of Veteran services, volunteers, and other caring community members.

This course is not a treatment for mental health problems and is not appropriate for someone who is currently experiencing mental health issues. The material and discussions may be too difficult for someone whose mental health is compromised and it may be a detriment to their well-being. They should be encouraged to seek assistance from a mental health professional.

Host Organizations Responsibilities

As the hosting organization you will be responsible for the following:

- Finding and booking a venue
- Ensuring room setup according to MHFA Canada guidelines
- Marketing and promoting the course – a poster will be provided for your use; you can modify the contact name, phone number, e-mail, date, time, and location only.
- Managing course registrations
- Final confirmation

You will find additional information on each of these responsibilities listed in the corresponding sections below.

Finding and Booking a Venue

As the host agency, you will be responsible for securing a location for the course that is appropriate and easy to find. Ideally, it has been suggested that the MHFA course be held off the base. However, there is recognition that the location is often determined by cost and availability. The course may be scheduled at your organisation if you have appropriate space, at a local community center or at other community agencies.

Venue locations must seat at least 25 participants comfortably. Participants must have enough room to sit 4 to a table (round or rectangular) ensuring no one has their back to the front. The venue must also be large enough so that participants have enough space to move around and do various activities. If possible please make sure that there are no obstructions in the room e.g. pillar obstructing the view of the participants from seeing the instructor or each other.

It is important to ensure that any potential location being considered has a private room for the course; that there is no visible alcohol or bar; and that a second private space is available for participants to go if they are triggered.

The room will need to be booked all day for each day of the training session. The instructor will need to be able to access the room at 7:30 am each day. The room should be able to be locked so materials can stay in the room overnight.

Once the venue is booked, send the venue information to Katie Lemenchick at klemenchick@mentalhealthcommission.ca

A contact person, address, email, and phone number is required. If course materials need to be shipped elsewhere, also provide an address and contact person to ship course materials to the course location a week prior to the course.

Room Set Up

For both days of the course please ensure the venue is set up as follows:

- Screen at the front of room (projector screen)
- Large table at the front to put laptop, LCD, speakers and handouts on
- Flipchart stand and two flipchart pads
- Wall space: Space on the walls to display flipcharts - please confirm that we can use masking tape on the walls to hang flip chart paper.
- Seating arrangement and tables – round tables or rectangular tables with 4 seated at each table. Please ensure no one has their back to the front or an obstructed view.
- Internet connection (if possible)
- Please confirm that the room will be open by 7:30 am in the morning, as our Instructor requires access.

The instructor will bring with them:

- Laptop
- LCD projector
- Speakers
- Extension cords

Approximately one week prior to the course, MHFA will ship the following to the address and contact person you provide:

- MHFA Participant manuals
- ALGEE wallet cards
- Participant List
- Handouts for course participants
- Name tags
- Markers

Promoting the course

As the host organization you will be responsible for communicating to participants about the upcoming MHFA Canada course and ensuring that the course attendance is as near full as possible (25). The minimum number of participants is 8. You are encouraged to promote the course using your usual channels, including notifying VAC Field Operations so that they may promote the course in the field as well (send poster with your course information to Sophie Briere, Psychology Consultant , Directorate of Mental Health, VAC, sophie.briere@canada.ca and to klemenchick@mentalhealthcommission.ca

You are also encouraged to promote the courses to the following partners:

- MFRC: Military Family Resource Center
- JPSU: Joint Personnel Support Unit
- IPSC: Integrated Personnel Support Centers
- OSISS: Operational Stress Injury Social Support
- OSIC: Operational Stress Injury Clinics
- OTSSC: Operational and Trauma Stress Support Centers
- The Royal Canadian Legion
- Caregivers Brigade caregiversbrigade@outlook.com
- Soldier On
- Hope Program: Helping Our Peers by Providing Empathy
- Commissionaires

Course Registrations

As the hosting organization you will be responsible for registering participants. You may utilize the system that works best for you (paper, online, other). Please ensure that you obtain at minimum participant name and e-mail address (personal e-mail address is preferred over work e-mail given firewalls).

Registration should be prioritized for Veterans and their family members ($\frac{1}{3}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ of the seats) but is open to any member of the Veteran community. It is recommended that course participants be 18 years of age and over. We suggest that you keep a waitlist in case there are cancellations prior to the start of the course. It is important to maximize class attendance, reaching as close to 25 participants as possible.

Please ask registrants if they need to cancel, to please let you know so that you can offer their spot to the first person on the waitlist.

Please inform participants that military attire is not required and that meals, transport, and lodging are not included. Participants are encouraged to pack a lunch and refreshments.

- Note: Exceptionally, some clients may be eligible for reimbursement for meals, transport, and lodging. For such inquiries they should communicate with their local Veterans Affairs Canada area office.

Inform potential participants that there is an evaluation component to the program, which helps measure the effectiveness of the course. Participants are encouraged to participate, however, their participation in the evaluation is strictly optional and can be revoked at any time.

MHFA Canada courses run on the following schedule, but may vary slightly throughout the day:

08:30-09:25 - Session
09:25-09:30 - Break
09:30-10:25 - Session
10:25-10:30 - Break
10:30-11:25 - Session
11:25-11:30 - Break
11:30-12:00 - Session
12:00-13:00 - Lunch
13:00-13:55 - Session
13:55-14:00 - Break
14:00-14:55 - Session
14:55-15:00 - Break
15:00-15:55 - Session
15:55-16:00 - Break
16:00-16:30 - Session

Alternate start times can be arranged by request.

Cancellation policy

For courses that are cancelled or rescheduled by the client, the date of the cancellation or rescheduling determines if the course is still payable, in part or in full, as follows:

45 or more days: Fully refundable

30-44 days: 50% refundable

Less than 30 days: Payable in full

The MHCC will make every attempt to reschedule any course that must be postponed due to inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances.

Final confirmation

Two weeks prior to the MHFA Canada course date, Katie Lemenchick will contact you to obtain the participant list, the name of the onsite person, the location where the course will be held and the location where materials should be shipped if different from the course location. MHFA Canada will arrange to have course materials sent to the venue or another location (as specified above).