

## **How to do a Neurodiversity Flag Raising**

### **by Autistics for Autistics, Canada**

If your city or town has a celebratory/commemorative flagpole where people raise flags for occasions:

**1. Contact your town or city government** at least 3 months prior to April (the month we raise the ND flag). Tell them:

- “I’m from [group name]. We are an organization of autistic people that does work in the community on education and community-building.”
- “We would like to raise a flag on your commemorative flagpole sometime in April.”
- “It’s the neurodiversity flag, which celebrates differences like autism.”
- “There are other neurodiversity flag raisings around the world in April, such as the US, Canada and the UK.”
- “We’re part of autism awareness month, celebrating neurodiversity.”

**2. If the City says yes, ask them:**

- “Do you have size specifications for the flag?”
- “Does the flag need to have a certain number of grommets?”
- “When do you want us to deliver the flag prior to the flag raising?”
- “Are there any forms we need to fill out or sign?”

**3. Tell the City:**

- How long the event will be (see below).
- Whether you need a microphone and podium.
- How many people you expect at your event.
- That you will have a sign language interpreter (accessibility, also required by some municipalities).
- Whether you will be serving any food or drink.
- Whether you will be inviting any City officials to the event.
- Whether you will be inviting media to the event.

**4. Get your flag ready**

- Find a high-resolution image of a rainbow infinity (If you have problems finding one, please contact A4A).
- Save the image on a USB.
- Bring the USB to a screen printing company, along with the flag size specifications from the City.
- Ask them to print it on a white flag (screen printing shop will provide the right materials for the flag).
- When flag is finished, pick it up and deliver it to the City by their due date.

## **5. Prepare for the event activities**

- Send invitations to any City Council members who you would like to speak at or attend the event (at least 8 weeks in advance).
- Choose your speeches, and who will read them. We recommend keeping speeches to 10-15 minutes.
- Hire a sign language interpreter (at least 6 weeks in advance).
- If you're having cake after the event, delegate a member to order and pick up the cake/s.
- Decide who will raise the flag (1 to raise, 1 to help).
- Invite members and allies to attend.
- Invite media to attend (1 week prior).

## **6. Written materials**

- Print up speeches that will be read.
- Print up copies of a Programme to hand to attendees (sheet of paper welcoming people, including your website url and info about the event).

## **7. Day of the event**

- 2-3 members should arrive at least 30 minutes before the event.
- Typically, the City will have the flag affixed, at the bottom of the flagpole for raising.
- Typically, a City representative will meet you at the start of the event.
- Read speeches, then raise the flag.
- Celebrate!

## **8. After the event**

- Designate a member to retrieve the flag from the City and store it for safekeeping till next year.

