

Land Acknowledgment Guidelines

The Municipality of Clarington's Current Land Acknowledgment Statement:

The Municipality of Clarington is situated within the traditional and treaty territory of the Mississaugas and Chippewas of the Anishinabeg, known today as the Williams Treaties First Nations. Our work on these lands acknowledges their resilience and their longstanding contributions to the area now known as the Municipality of Clarington.

Chippewas: chip-uh-WUHS

Anishinabeg: uh-NISH-in-NAH-bek

What is a Land Acknowledgment Statement?

Land Acknowledgments are a way for people to insert an awareness of Indigenous presence and land rights in everyday life. This is often done at the beginning of ceremonies, lectures, or any public event.

Land Acknowledgments are:

- A way to recognize the history of colonialism and the need for change in settler colonial societies
- a responsibility as they implicate the speaker in the history of the land on which they work, live, and speak
- a time for reflection and demonstrating recognition of Indigenous lands, treaties, and Peoples
- an opportunity to think about what happened in the past and what changes can be made going forward to further reconciliation
- a small and important step in building a positive relationship with Indigenous Peoples
- honoring the land and Indigenous presence which dates back over 10,000 years

When and where should they be delivered?

Land acknowledgment statements should be shared at the beginning of any meeting or event; prior to any business or event activities occurring.

Land Acknowledgment Tips:

1. Find out about the land you are gathering on.

Do your research and find out the land you are gathering on is Treaty Territory (seized through the legal system), Unceded Territory (not seized through legal processes), or

part of Inuit or Metis homelands. Using <https://native-land.ca/> and <https://www.whose.land/en/> are resources to use to find out whose territory you are on.

2. Learn the proper pronunciation of words and practice before you read the land acknowledgment statement

There are many First Nations, Metis, and Inuit groups in Canada, and many territorial names and titles that non-Indigenous people are not used to saying. Do not be afraid to ask questions and find out how to pronounce the names and titles in your acknowledgment.

- Respectfully ask someone from that nation or from a local organization how to pronounce
- Check the nation's website; they may have a phonetic pronunciation available
- Search a Nation's name on social media as there may be videos with pronunciation

If you make a mistake, or feel you have not pronounced something correctly, be professional and complete the statement.

An example of providing phonetic spelling, as seen in the Municipality of Clarington Land Acknowledgment Statement:

Chippewas: chip-uh-WUHS

Anishinabeg: uh-NISH-in-NAH-bek

3. Make the statement meaningful and personal

Clear the room/space of distractions. This also gives those in the room a moment to come together and listen to your words. Ask people to put their phones on silent/vibrate, and to mind the door for any late comers. This will help ensure those at the meeting or event are grounded, present and comfortable. As a participant in a situation when a Land Acknowledgment is shared, be present and focused.

A land acknowledgment must come from your heart, not just be read off a piece of paper; when you state it, mean it.

Ask yourself: how does this land acknowledgment represent my connection to this place? And now that I know about the mistreatment of Indigenous Peoples, what does this land acknowledgment propel me to do?

Reflect and include some steps you are taking personally or in the workplace to work towards Reconciliation.

Examples of Personal and Meaningful Land Acknowledgment Statements:

You may consider including a message around your Land Acknowledgment statement to demonstrate your commitment to truth and reconciliation. These suggestions are only that, suggestions, to add meaning to your statement. Begin by sharing the approved Land Acknowledgment statement, followed by a moment of personal reflection to your commitment to reconciliation.

1. Before starting **this meeting**, I would like to share some truths about myself and about the place that many of us call home: Though I am not Indigenous, rather I am of **settler-colonial/settler ancestry/ an immigrant who has settled on this land**. My heritage extends to _____ (**England, France, Ireland, etc.**), I, like many other settlers, have benefited greatly from living on [Turtle Island](#). As a visitor on this land, I have an important responsibility to acknowledge the grounds on which we are privileged to gather. My experience and respect for the land inspires me to take action, support the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations and be an ally to Indigenous People.
2. I want to start by saying that myself, my family, and my ancestors **are settlers** of where I currently live and work, which includes the Municipality of Clarington. I am extremely grateful to the First Nations people for their care for, and teachings about, our earth. My hope for the work of this committee is that we honor those teachings and I ask that everyone keep that in mind as we continue with our meeting today.
3. While we are joining virtually, I would like to acknowledge that I am currently located within the Municipality of Clarington, which is situated within the traditional and treaty territories of the Mississaugas and Chippewas of the Anishinabeg, known today as the Williams Treaties First Nations. I would like to ask all of you to search out and learn about whose land you are occupying and give thanks to the Indigenous Peoples of those lands for the stewardship of these lands today and since time immemorial and learn more about Indigenous Peoples and the challenges they face.

Beyond Acknowledgment

Reconciliation goes beyond a land acknowledgment statement. It is important to create and foster this relationship with good intentions and actions. It is important to reflect on why one does a Land Acknowledgment, one's commitment to the land and respect for indigenous peoples to continue this journey to reconciliation.

- Support Indigenous businesses
- Learn about Indigenous history from Indigenous peoples and their elders
- Connect with Indigenous communities

- Attend Indigenous Cultural Awareness training sessions

Resources for Clarington:

- [Native Land](#)
- [Whose Land](#)
- [William's Treaties First Nations](#)
- [The Importance of Land Acknowledgments](#)
- [Land Acknowledgment Power Point](#)

Truth and Reconciliation Staff Committee

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission released 94 Calls to Action in 2015 to redress the legacy of residential schools. Many of the Calls to Action are directed to municipal government, as well as other levels of government. The Truth and Reconciliation Staff Committee was formed in 2021 to review the Calls to Action and develop plans for their implementation in Clarington.

The Committee is committed to engaging with Indigenous Communities and fostering reciprocal relationships with them through their work. To learn more about the work of the Committee and to get involved, please visit the [Committee's SharePoint site](#).