

Communications Guidelines: Tips for Ministerial Events and Media

When meeting and engaging with Veterans and their families

Do arrive early at events in order to allow for meaningful exchanges with Veterans, family members and stakeholders in attendance.

Do thank Veterans for their service, and do so in a meaningful and genuine manner.

Do begin a conversation with a Veteran by asking about their medals – “Tell me about your medals.”

Do listen to them, without interruption.

Do not hesitate to defer to the Deputy Minister/Assistant Deputy Minister/Departmental official when a question is very specific in nature. If a Veteran raises their individual case, listen and ensure that they are connected with Ministerial or Departmental staff for follow-up.

Don't use a pin (e.g. Canada Remembers Pin, Maple Leaf Pin) to secure your poppy.

Don't try and guess a Veteran's rank, ask instead (they won't mind).

Don't call a Veteran Sir or Ma'am unless absolutely certain they were an Officer.

Don't call a Veteran soldier unless absolutely certain they were in the Army.

When interacting with media

Do provide clear, concise responses using full sentences. One question = one idea.

Do refer any questions or interview requests to the communications officer on-site when uncertain of the answer. They will ensure to follow-up with the reporter through the media relations team.

Do proceed to a quick fact check with a VAC employee on-site (notably communications or commemoration) should you make last minute changes to remarks/speeches.

Don't speak about any active litigation.

Don't answer hypothetical questions.

Don't comment on any individual cases, for privacy reasons (this includes even acknowledging whether or not someone is a client of the Department – this is considered personal information under the *Privacy Act*)

Don't engage in interviews without having a member of the Ministerial or Departmental staff present.