

Legislative Assembly of Alberta: Keeping the Public Engaged in the Parliamentary Process

The Legislative Assembly of Alberta continues to strengthen parliamentary democracy in the face of the COVID-19 health crisis.

This time last year, following the announcement of the pandemic, the Assembly continued to sit, the only jurisdiction to do so. The Alberta Legislature committees also switched gears, and Members were able to attend meetings from their home constituencies with minimal disruption. The virtual meeting of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts on April 27, 2020, was among the first for legislatures and parliaments in Canada. To increase accessibility to Legislature proceedings, social media streaming was added to our standard broadcasts on television and online.

We launched a new website (assembly.ab.ca) in September, and online resources and video tours filled the gap as on-site programs, public tours and visitor centre spaces were closed to the public. Stay tuned for the www.capitalgifts.ca, an e-commerce site for Capital Gifts, the Legislative Assembly gift shop, which will be launching store in the coming weeks.

While we miss hosting annual events such as Canada Day, Celebrate the Season in December, and Family Day last month, Albertans from all corners of the province have a front row seat to attend Assembly events online, including the installation of Alberta's new Lieutenant Governor in August 2020 from the Chamber and a number of virtual events hosted by Speaker Nathan Cooper from the Legislature rotunda. Most recently, the Speaker hosted the Legislative Assembly's Black History Month celebration, where performers joined remotely from as far away as Nigeria and more than 7,000 people watched online.

With July 1 coming soon, we are considering opportunities to co-operate with other capital cities on a virtual Canada Day celebration. If you are interested, contact [Janet Schwegel](mailto:Janet.Schwegel@assembly.ab.ca).

Finally, initiatives such as the #AbLegTrivia and Speaker Cooper's vignettes featuring his counterparts from throughout the Commonwealth continue to keep audiences engaged and excited to learn about parliamentary process and traditions.

For more news and announcements, please visit: [News and Announcements \(assembly.ab.ca\)](http://News and Announcements (assembly.ab.ca))



Speaker Nathan Cooper, centre, along with MLA David Shepherd and Hon. Kaycee Madu, watch a remote performance on the online feed at the Black History Month celebration in early February. The event was broadcast from the Legislature Building rotunda with no public in attendance.