



# Tips for working with Interpreters

Fact Sheet

## Where can I find an ASL Interpreter?

Freelance interpreters and interpreting agencies are listed in the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing's Communication Access Directory, available online at [acdhh.org](http://acdhh.org) or by calling 602.542.3323 V/VP.

## When scheduling an Interpreter, please provide the following information:

|               |                   |
|---------------|-------------------|
| Who?          | Setting(s)?       |
| What?         | Dress preference? |
| Where?        | Communication     |
| Which day(s)? | Other specifics?  |
| What time(s)? |                   |

## What is an American Sign Language Interpreter?

An American Sign Language interpreter is an intermediary who facilitates communication between people with hearing loss or speech difficulties and those without hearing loss. ASL interpreters may specialize in sign language, oral, or another communication method. Interpreters must be licensed in the State of Arizona unless interpreting in a K-12 educational setting, a religious setting or on a volunteer basis with no pay.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 requires businesses, public entities and places of public accommodation to provide effective communication for people with disabilities. This can include ASL interpreters. To learn more about the ADA, visit [ada.gov](http://ada.gov).

## Requesting an ASL Interpreter

At least a one-week notice is preferred when requesting an interpreter. Medical emergencies or police requests vary depending on availability and time, and requests made with less than 24 hours' notice may cost more. The ASL interpreter or the interpreting agency will ask for details such as the location, day and time the ASL interpreter is needed. They may also ask about the subject matter (i.e. a doctor appointment or business meeting) and if any materials, like a meeting agenda, is available ahead of time.

## What to expect from an ASL Interpreter

ASL interpreters are professionals who abide by a code of professional conduct. They are fluent in ASL and are knowledgeable about Deaf Culture. All subject matter interpreted is confidential and ASL interpreters are to remain objective. ASL interpreters will relay information accurately regardless if it is inappropriate or false. ASL interpreters can be subject to a grievance process if professional conduct is not upheld. Either party - the person with a hearing loss or the hearing person - can lodge a complaint. Complaints can be made through the national Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf or ACDHH.



**Arizona Commission**  
for the deaf and the hard of hearing



## To know more, contact ACDHH directly.

### The Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing

1400 W. Washington

Room 126

Phoenix, Arizona 85007

602.542.3323 V/VP

602.364.0990 TTY

800.352.8161 V/TTY

602.542.3380 FAX

info@acdhh.az.gov

Call for this document  
in an alternative format.

## What ASL Interpreters expect while on an assignment

Interpreting ASL is challenging work that requires concentration. Other people not directly involved in communication with the person needing the ASL interpreter should not ask the ASL interpreter questions about ASL or Deaf Culture while they are interpreting. They should not try to socialize with the ASL interpreter. Future requests for interpreting should be made after the current assignment is completed.

ASL interpreters should not be expected to supervise the behavior of either party they are interpreting for, nor should they be expected to give advice to, or counsel, either party. ASL interpreters have the right to refuse future requests from individuals or businesses.

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## Where can I learn more about interpreting?

- [acdhh.org](http://acdhh.org) Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing
- [arizonarid.org](http://arizonarid.org) Arizona Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf
- [rid.org](http://rid.org) Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf
- [nad.org](http://nad.org) National Association of the Deaf