



Sign Language Interpreters

Who is this leaflet for?

Anyone who needs to know about Sign Language Interpreters for deaf people, when to provide one and how to book one.

This leaflet contains information about when Deaf people use an interpreter, how to ensure the interpreter is registered and why it is important that they are registered.

When do Deaf people use an interpreter?

Deaf people need an interpreter whenever important communication is taking place and it is their right to access that information.

For example:

- Hospitals, GPs and other NHS services
- Job interviews or at the job centre
- At work: training courses, meeting, calls
- Schools, colleges and universities
- Attending a public meeting or council appointment
- Attending court or a police station
- Banks, other providers of services

What is a registered Sign Language Interpreter?

The National Registers of Communication Professionals working with Deaf and Deafblind People (NRCPD) is a registration system for interpreters with qualification requirements for admission to each registration category. See below:

A Registered Interpreter (Yellow badge):

- Has reached the National Occupational Standards in Interpreting
- Can work in **most** areas depending on their experience including as courts, police, conferences, mental health and medical.

A Trainee Interpreter (Purple badge):

- Has not yet completed their full interpreter training.
- Has the level 6 standard in British Sign Language
- Can work in **some** areas depending on their experience

What is a CSW/Communicator?

A Communication Support Worker (CSW) or Communicator is someone who has passed some qualifications in BSL but has had no interpreter training and cannot be registered as a Sign Language interpreter.

How do you know the interpreter is a registered interpreter?

All registered Interpreters have an ID card so **check the badge!** Remember to check the date.

Registered Interpreter (Yellow badge)



Trainee Interpreter (Purple badge)



- Has achieved or is working towards the National Occupational Standards.
- Has a police check (CRB Enhanced Disclosure)
- Has Professional Indemnity insurance
- Has agreed to follow a Code of Conduct (including behaving professionally, being impartial and maintaining confidentiality).
- Can be made subject to a complaints procedure (NRCPD)

What rights do Deaf people have to a registered interpreter?

The **Equality Act 2010** service providers must make “reasonable adjustments” to ensure they are fully accessible, including providing an interpreter.

NHS guidelines on the provision of interpreters within the Health Service, “Doubly Disabled Equality for Disabled people in the new NHS Access to Services”, NHS Executive (1999), clearly states that only registered Interpreters should be used.

Police, Courts & other Legal Agencies

Only registered interpreters should be used for legal bookings as per guidelines.

Access to Work

ASLI supports the National Access to Work Delivery Managers’ Policy Statement (2007) that the recommended minimum requirement for the engagement of an interpreter is a trainee or registered interpreter with the NRCPD.

The National Registers of Communication Professionals working with Deaf and Deaf-blind People (NRCPD) holds the register of interpreters. If you are using a registered interpreter and have a complaint, you can inform the NRCPD and they will investigate. You cannot complain about an interpreter who is not registered.

Further Information

www.asli.org.uk
www.nrcpd.org.uk
www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk
www.direct.gov.uk
www.cilt.org.uk
www.itl.org.uk

How do you find an Interpreter?

- ASLI’s free online directory.
- The NRCPD website (see further information) has a free online directory of registered and trainee interpreters.
- Through an agency
- Online/video interpreting service.

Booking an Interpreter?

Remember to book in advance and provide as much detail as possible such as:

- **When?** Dates and times are important.
- **Where?** The address of the office or place where you need the interpreter.
- **Why?** The purpose of the booking, e.g. meeting, training or supervision.
- **Who?** The name of the Deaf person and explain who else will be attending.
- **What?** Additional details will help you get the most suitable interpreter.

Interpreting is demanding. For health and safety reasons and the access needs of Deaf people two interpreters are recommended for intense bookings over an hour such as a meeting or training course.

Video/online interpreting services can be used for short meetings. It is not advisable to use them for bookings over 40 minutes.

Who pays for the interpreter?

Some funding is available such as Access to Work (DWP) or Disabled Students Allowance. Some services have a centralised booking service such as hospitals. In other instances it is the responsibility of the service provider under the Equality Act 2010.

What does ASLI do?

ASLI is the professional association and support network for British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters in the UK. Our membership includes those who work as interpreters and people who support our aims.

The aims of the Association are:

- To encourage good practice in sign language interpreting
- To represent the interests and views of sign language interpreters and the interpreting profession in the UK.

The aims are achieved by:

- National and regional meetings
- Developing and implementing policy, guides and statements
- Encouraging training and research
- Providing information to interpreters and users of interpreting services
- Providing support to interpreters
- Representing interpreters and liaising with other organisations involved in the fields of deafness and interpreting

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