SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER REQUEST PROTOCOL
CITY & COUNTY OF DENVER AGENCIES

Under Federal Law deaf people are a protected class, per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Therefore, they are entitled to effective communication and equal access to all government programs, services, and events (ADA Title II). Effective communication includes the provision of a credentialed/certified sign language interpreter who abides by a Professional Code of Conduct which includes neutrality and confidentiality.

Family members and friends are not to be utilized as interpreters, per Colorado Consumer Protection Act, 6-1-707.

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<th>DATE &amp; TIME</th>
<th>CONTACT</th>
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<tr>
<td>Monday-Friday</td>
<td>Denver Office of Sign Language Services</td>
<td>Mobile: 303.880.3208</td>
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<td>8:00 AM-6:00 PM</td>
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<td>Desk: 720.913.8487</td>
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<td>Email: <a href="mailto:SignLanguageServices@denvergov.org">SignLanguageServices@denvergov.org</a></td>
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** Please give us at least a three (3) business-day notice for scheduling or cancelling a request **
Last minute requests are accepted, however they could result in a lack of interpreter availability

- **After-Hours Interpreter Call-Out**: To request a copy of the 24/7 Interpreter Call-Out for after-hours emergencies, please contact the Denver Office of Sign Language Services (SLS).

- **Interpreter for Court-Ordered Treatment**: the Denver Office of Sign Language Services (SLS) can assist with scheduling and covering the cost of interpreters for court-ordered treatment/ classes. Contact us for details.

- **Scheduling/Billing**: SLS schedules and pays for interpreter services for Denver government programs, services, & events.

- **Additional Services**: SLS also provides Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs) for sound amplification, and open captioning via Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) for people with a hearing loss who are accessing City services, but may not use sign language as their primary mode of communication.

- **More Information/ Additional Resources**: or if you have any difficulty obtaining the above mentioned services, please contact the Denver Office of Sign Language Services.
Roles and Responsibilities of an Interpreter

Sign language interpreters must faithfully and accurately interpret everything that is being said or signed, interpreting from English into sign language and from sign language into English.

Interpreters must abide by a strict Code of Professional Conduct as established by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf and the National Association of the Deaf. Interpreters working in the legal setting must also adhere to the Colorado Judicial Department Code of Professional Responsibility for Court Interpreters. Both Codes require interpreters to keep all interpreting-related information confidential, and will not allow them to give legal advice, offer an opinion, or advocate on behalf of any of the parties involved.

The interpreter will inform the parties involved if s/he is unable to effectively interpret for an individual.

Deaf Interpreter/Hearing Interpreter, What’s the Difference

What is a Deaf Interpreter?
A Deaf Interpreter is an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing and, in addition to having general interpreter training, may also have specialized training and/or experience in foreign sign languages and dialects, use of gesture, mime, props, drawings, and other tools to enhance communication.

The Deaf Interpreter has an extensive knowledge and understanding of deafness, the deaf community, and the Deaf culture. These skills combined with excellent communication skills bring added expertise into both routine and uniquely difficult interpreting situations.

When is a Deaf/Hearing interpreting team used?
A Deaf Interpreter works as a team member with a certified sign language interpreter who can hear. In some situations, a Deaf/hearing interpreter team can communicate more effectively than a hearing interpreter alone. You will see the City of Denver use this team when interpreting for:

- Deaf youth
- a developmentally disabled Deaf person
- someone using non-standard American Sign Language (ASL), or gestures commonly referred to as “home signs”
- someone using a unique dialect of ASL that is relative to a particular region, ethnic or age group
- a Deaf person who uses a foreign sign language
- a Deaf person overwhelmed by the pace of the general interpreting process, or
- someone demonstrating characteristics reflective of the Deaf culture but not familiar to the hearing sign interpreter.

How does the team interpreting process work?
Using a consecutive interpreting process, the hearing interpreter will relay the message from the hearing consumer to the Deaf interpreter. The Deaf interpreter/Communication Specialist will interpret the message linguistically and culturally to the Deaf consumer in the language most readily understood by the Deaf consumer.

In even more challenging situations, the Deaf and hearing interpreters may work together to understand a Deaf individual’s message, confer with each other to arrive at their best interpretation, then convey that interpretation to the hearing party.

Understandably, this process will require a little more time than simultaneous interpreting or working with one interpreter.

What are the benefits of using a Deaf/Hearing interpreting team?
- Optimal understanding by all parties
- Efficient use of time and resources
In legal settings, utmost accuracy for the record

Note: Information taken in part from "Preparation Strategies for Court Interpreters," Carla Mathers, CSC, SC:L (2000); and Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, "Use of a Certified Deaf Interpreter."