



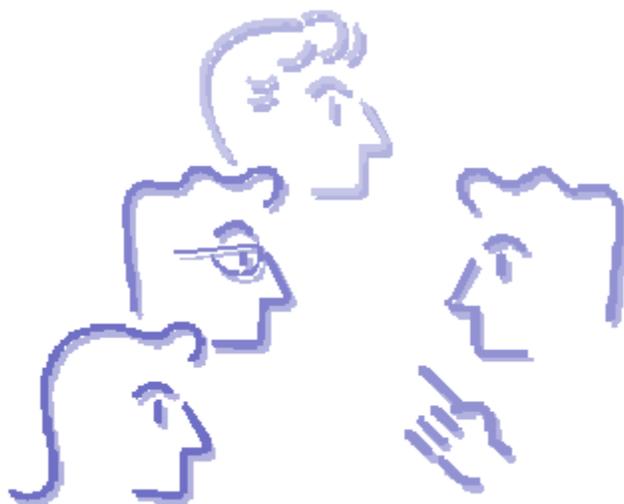
# Interpreting Services

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## User Manual

August 2013

Office of Research Services | Division of Amenities and Transportation Services



# Introduction

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Title 5 USC, Section 3102 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, authorizes Federal agencies to employ or assign others to provide interpreting services for employees who qualify under the law for reasonable accommodations. Sign language (or oral) interpreters are considered to be one type of reasonable accommodation.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH), an agency of the Department of Health and Human Services, provides interpreting services to its employees, patients, and visitors who are Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing (D/HH), through a centrally funded performance-based contract using sign language interpreters and Computer Aided Real Time Transcribing Services (CART), to facilitate communication for events sponsored or hosted by NIH.

The Office of Research Services (ORS), Division of Amenities and Transportation Services (DATS) manages this performance-based contract and has developed the *“Interpreting Services User Manual”* to inform consumers of these services. This manual contains procedures for interpreting services, instructions on how to request services, tips for speakers and meeting organizers, and a glossary of terms.

Please contact the DATS Interpreting Services team with questions or comments at 301-402-8180 (v), 301-435-1908 (TTY), email us at [interpretingservice@mail.nih.gov](mailto:interpretingservice@mail.nih.gov) or visit us online at <http://www.ors.od.nih.gov/pes/dats/interpret/Pages/index.aspx>.

We hope you find this manual useful and we look forward to working with you.

*Joy Postell Gaines*  
*Program Manager*

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# NIH Interpreting Services Policy

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## What is NIH's responsibility to the D/HH community?

In accordance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, and the NIH Manual Issuance 2204, NIH is responsible for providing reasonable accommodations for D/HH employees, applicants, visitors, and patients, unless doing so would cause undue hardship. The NIH provides reasonable accommodations to its employees, visitors and applicants to ensure that individuals with disabilities enjoy equal access to all employment opportunities.

Specifically:

- When an applicant with a disability needs an accommodation to have an equal opportunity to compete for a job;
- When an employee with a disability needs an accommodation to perform the essential functions of the job, or to gain access to the workplace; and
- When an employee with a disability needs an accommodation to enjoy equal access, benefits and privileges of employment (e.g., details, training, office sponsored events).

## Who pays for these services and how are they billed?

Interpreting Services are centrally funded by NIH, meaning each IC contributes to the management fund to pay for these services. There is no direct cost to the consumer.

## Who provides interpreting and CART services for the NIH?

Sign Language Interpreting services are provided under contract by Access Interpreting Inc. (AI). AI subcontracts CART services. The contract is managed by the Division of Amenities and Transportation Services under the Office of Research Services, (ORS).

## What types of service does the contract provide?

Services include, but are not limited to, American Sign Language, Oral, Tactile, Cued Speech, Pidgin Signed English (PSE), and Signed English. Computer Aided Real Time captioning or CART services provides a word-for-word transcription of what is being said. NOTE: CART is not intended to, nor should it ever be used for note taking.

## What types of events would be appropriate to request an interpreter?

- Staff and one-on-one meetings
- Grand Rounds
- Presentations
- Conferences
- Advisory Board Meetings
- Clinical Trials
- Patient Needs
- Lectures
- Training
- Detail Assignments

## Procedures for Requesting Services

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### How do I request a sign language interpreter or CART services?

Go online to the *Access Interpreting Portal* - <http://www.portal.ainterpreting.com/> - to create a secure user profile or access your existing account. You can also make changes to your initial request or cancel it online. For technical support, contact [support@ainterpreting.com](mailto:support@ainterpreting.com). For customer support please contact DATS at 301-402-8180.

### Why do I have to provide so much information?

The information collected is necessary for the contractor (AI) to match the appropriate services to the specific needs of the requestor. In addition, the information helps the interpreter prepare for the assignment.

### How far in advance should I request services?

To ensure deliver of the service, requests should be made no later than five (5) days before the service is required. Requests made fewer than five (5) days cannot be guaranteed. When making last minute requests, it may become necessary to reschedule the meeting in order to ensure an interpreter is available.

### When will I receive notification and status of my request?

AI usually sends a confirmation email within one (1) business day. The email also contains the name of the interpreter and Tracking Number (TERP). Reference this number when making

changes or cancellations. NOTE: In some cases, interpreters may change due to last minute rescheduling.

### How can I change/modify or cancel a request?

You can make changes to your initial request online using your TERP number, or cancel your request **within 48 hours** of the scheduled event. **NOTE:** Cancellations made less than 48 hours from the event will be billed in full to NIH. These instances are recorded and may result in a charge-back to your IC after three (3) late cancellations.

### How can I make a recurring request?

Recurring requests are made online in the same manner as one-time requests. The requestor must also leave instructions in the “notes section” to indicate the frequency, time, and location.

### Can I make a same-day request?

We will do our best to provide interpreters on short notice for impromptu meetings occurring during normal business hours between supervisors and employees or patients and doctors, however, these services cannot be guaranteed.

### What if I need an emergency interpreter?

During normal work hours, the contract provides for two (2) on-call interpreters to be dispatched in emergency situations. Emergency situations are defined as urgent or critical issues between supervisors and employees, or doctors and patients, or police.

For afterhours only, call 1-571-730-4330 to reach AI’s Emergency Coordinator. A certified interpreter will be dispatched within 40 minutes.

### What does my Interpreter need from me?

Your interpreter will need copies of the meeting agenda, handouts, slides or other meeting related materials. These items should be sent to AI as soon as possible, but at least three (3) business days prior to the event to give the interpreter time to review the material.

### What if I have a complaint about my interpreter or the services provided?

Please address all questions, comments, and complaints to DATS interpreting team. Your feedback is vital to the quality assurance of this contract. Comments may be sent by email to [interpretingservices@ors.od.nih.gov](mailto:interpretingservices@ors.od.nih.gov), [gainesj@mail.nih.gov](mailto:gainesj@mail.nih.gov) or call 301-402-8180.

## May I use other interpreting service providers for NIH hosted events?

No. Interpreting Services are centrally funded by the NIH. All Sign Language Interpreting Services for NIH must come through the NIH-wide Interpreting Services contract to ensure consistent provision of services and for data collection and quality control.

## How Sign Language Interpreters Work

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Interpreters under the NIH Interpreting Services contract are trained professionals who have been certified by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) or the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) to facilitate the communication of people who do not share a common language and/or communication mode.

Sign Language interpreting involves the visual or tactile presentation of spoken English in American Sign Language, or one of the manual codes for English. Interpreters are equally able to convey a signed message into spoken English.

Some Interpreters are also skilled in the variety of communication modes used to interpret for persons with both vision and hearing loss. If one of the participants is DeafBlind, even if they have some residual hearing or vision, they may require their own one-on-one interpreter.

While persons with a wide range of conversational skills in sign language may be available, the utilization of qualified interpreters through the NIH-wide contract is required to comply with the ADA's definition of a Qualified Interpreter as *"one who is able to interpret effectively, accurately, and impartially both receptively and expressively, using any necessary specialized vocabulary."*

Additionally, certified interpreters and anyone else who is a member of the RID and NAD must follow the Professional Code of Ethics established by these two bodies. Briefly, the RID and NAD Code of Ethics guarantees strict confidentiality, discretion in accepting assignments, faithful rendering of the message, complete objectivity, and nonintervention before, during, or after all assignments. While the RID and NAD code governs the professional behavior of interpreters it is recommended that all consumers - hearing, deaf, and hard-of-hearing - understand these points before seeking, hiring, and using interpreters.

# Things to Consider Before Requesting Interpreting Services

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Communication flows easiest when there is a level of rapport and trust between the interpreter and the consumer. The D/HH consumer should also be asked which method of interpreting they prefer, i.e. American Sign Language, Oral, Computer Assisted Real-Time Transcription, etc.,) before entering a request for services.

Consider whether an interpreter is the most appropriate accommodation. There is more than one way to accommodate someone with hearing impairment than providing an interpreter. Contact the Office of Equal Opportunity for more information.

At any event where a D/HH person is expected to participate, the use of an interpreter is at the discretion of the participants. Program managers arranging meetings should accept the responsibility of asking what each individual prefers and allow sufficient time for scheduling/planning.

## Tips for Speakers Using Interpreting Services

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A sign language interpreter should be available at all public events whether or not D/HH persons are known to be attending. At the time of the event if no D/HH persons are thought to be present then the interpreters shall remain available to interpret. Whether the event is interpreted or not should be negotiated between the interpreter and the onsite contact person.

Provide the interpreter with a copy of the agenda, slides, and any handouts to be at least three (3) days prior to start of event. Discuss any changes in the agenda with the interpreter prior to the meeting. In addition, provide lists of names, acronyms, technical terminology, etc.

Consider where the D/HH persons may be seated in the room. Check the lighting to ensure that the interpreter is not in a shadow and can be easily seen by the D/HH participants. Arrange for an additional light source if the room will be darkened for any reason. While no one can dictate where they sit, seating should be provided to the interpreter.

Remember the interpreter's role is to facilitate communication, not to participate in the meeting. The person(s) who are not D/HH should speak directly to and look directly at the D/HH person, not the interpreter. Avoid conversing with the interpreter while he/she is working. Keep in mind that interpreters interpret everything that is heard and seen within the assignment. Therefore, if you don't want something interpreted don't say or sign it.

Speak in a conversational tone and pace using everyday speech patterns. Avoid over enunciating or over simplifying words. Avoid phrases like "tell her" or "ask him." These are indicative of speaking about not to the D/HH person. Look at and address the D/HH person directly. Pause at the end of a main idea. Allow time for team interpreters to trade places. Pause for questions and check to be sure that the D/HH person understands the message. Allow time for the D/HH person to review handouts or visual aids before explaining them to the group.

In small group meetings, only one person should speak at a time. Interruptions or engaging in side conversations should be avoided as it causes confusion for the interpreter. The meeting chairperson can manage the group by asking everyone to take turns. This will reduce confusion and enable the interpreter to accurately facilitate communication.

## Appendix 1: Glossary of Interpreting Terminology

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**American Sign Language (ASL):** A visual language relying on spatial relationships to identify subjects, objects, and verbs, while using body and facial expressions to identify adjectives, adverbs, and other information, similar to how voice inflection is used in spoken languages. Many people assume that ASL is simply a manual form of English. However, ASL has its own grammatical structure, syntax, idioms, and usage which are quite different and distinct from English. Another misconception of Sign Language is that it is universal. ASL is the predominant language of D/HH people in the United States and Canada, except Quebec. However, signed languages, like spoken languages, are native and unique to any community of people.

**Close-vision Interpreting:** This would require an interpreter (D/HH or hearing) to reduce the size and space of their signs for the DeafBlind person, who still has some vision but within a narrow tunnel-like range peripherally.

**Computer Assisted Real-Time Captioning (CART):** Real time captioning provides a word-for-word transcription of what is being said. May be read on a laptop computer or projected onto a large screen television or, for a large audience, onto a full-size screen. Real-time

captioning service is exactly that: a concurrent display put into a textual format of what is being said in the immediate environment.

**Consecutive Interpreting:** The interpreter repeats the message in the other language following the utterance of the original speaker. The interpreter listens to a large chunk of information before beginning the production of the message in the target language.

**Cued Speech:** A visual communication system which, in English, uses eight handshapes in four locations ("cues") in combination with the natural mouth movements of speech to make all the sounds of spoken language look different. Shapes of one hand identify consonant sounds; locations near the mouth identify vowel sounds.

**Deaf Interpreting:** A Deaf Interpreter may be needed when the communication mode of a deaf consumer is so unique that it cannot be adequately accessed by interpreters who are hearing. Some such situations may involve individuals who:

**DeafBlind Interpreting:** Interpreting for a person who is D/HH and blind or visually impaired through any number of specific approaches or techniques.

**First Person Interpreting:** The interpreter uses the first person when interpreting. For example, if the speaker says "Do you have these symptoms often?" the interpreter repeats verbatim.

**Interpret Sign to Voice:** Interpreting from a signed language (e.g., ASL) to a spoken language (e.g., English). Colloquially referred to as Voice Interpreting; historically referred to as Receptive Interpreting.

**Interpret Voice to Sign:** Interpreting from a spoken language (e.g., English) to a signed language (e.g., ASL). Colloquially referred to as Sign Interpreting; historically referred to as Expressive Interpreting.

**Interpretation:** The process of changing messages produced in one language immediately into another language. The languages in question may be spoken or signed, but the defining characteristics are the live and immediate transmission.

**Oral Interpreting:** The ability to transliterate a spoken message from a person who hears to a person who is D/HH and the ability to understand and repeat the message and intent of the speech and mouth movements of the person who is D/HH.

**Pidgin Sign English (PSE):** The term PSE is clearly a misnomer. Pidgins are a class of languages with certain characteristics, among them a limited vocabulary, few inflectional endings, and a relatively small set of sounds. The language erroneously known as PSE has none of these characteristics. Rather, it is a contact language which combines some features of English with some features of (ASL).

**Sight Translation:** Whereby a written document relevant (for example, a doctor/patient interview) to the situation is passed to the interpreter for immediate oral translation. Saying aloud or signing in one language a text which is written in another language.

**Simultaneous Interpreting** (often confused with "simultaneous translation"): Describes the most familiar case in which the interpretation is delivered nearly instantaneously after the original message.

**Tactile Interpreting:** Tactile signing or interpreting is used by D/HH persons who are also blind or vision impaired. The signs are produced in a less than full size/range and the DeafBlind person tracks by placing their hand on the other person's hands and track the movement and shape of the signs.

**Team Interpreting:** More than just relieving each other every 20-30 minutes, the two (or more) interpreters work in parallel or synch. The second interpreter provides monitoring of the interpreter's product, predicts and provides alternate interpretation, recognizes errors omissions, and feeds them to the "hot seat" interpreter as appropriate.

**Third Person Interpreting:** The interpreter uses a different person from the speaker, e.g., speaker says "Do you have these symptoms often?" and the interpreter says in the other language, "The doctor wants to know if you have these symptoms often."

**Translation:** The process of changing a written message from one language to another.

**Whispered Interpretation** (also referred to as "escort interpreting"): The interpreter whispers the message to the person, or small group of people, who do not speak the language the larger group is using.