



WORKING WITH ASL INTERPRETERS: A QUICK GUIDE

*A compassionate, common-sense
resource for professionals who want to
do it right.*



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WORKING WITH ASL INTERPRETERS

If you're reading this, you care about communication access, and that matters. Whether you're a medical provider, educator, event organizer, or public servant, working with ASL interpreters means you're helping ensure that **Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and DeafBlind individuals are fully included** in your space.

At A2Z Interpreting, we believe communication is more than compliance, it's connection. And it starts with preparation, presence, and people-first practices.

This guide will walk you through the essentials of working with ASL interpreters with confidence, clarity, and care.

Why Use a Qualified Interpreter?

American Sign Language (ASL) is a complete, visual language with its own grammar and syntax. Interpreting between American Sign Language (ASL) and English requires **extensive training**, cultural fluency, and the ability to make real-time decisions.

A **qualified interpreter** is someone who can interpret accurately, effectively, and impartially, with the skill to match both content and context.

Hiring a certified professional ensures:

- ✓ Clear, respectful communication for everyone
- ✓ Legal compliance with ADA and civil rights laws
- ✓ Less risk of miscommunication, liability, or harm





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Your Role in Creating a Great Experience

You don't need to be an interpreting expert to create a welcoming and successful environment.

Here's what you *can* do:

1. Provide Details Early

The more we know, the better we can match the right interpreter.

Share:

- Type of assignment (e.g., medical visit, meeting, performance)
- Communication preferences of the Deaf consumer (ASL, PSE, SEE, Tactile)
- Any prep materials (e.g., agendas, scripts, forms, terminology)

2. Speak Directly to the Deaf Person

Even if the interpreter is voicing for them, maintain eye contact, body language, and connection with the Deaf individual, not the interpreter.

3. Allow for Interpretation Time

ASL and English are different languages. Expect a slight delay as the interpreter relays information back and forth.

4. Create the Right Environment

Ensure good lighting, minimal background noise, and appropriate seating so that visual communication can happen without barriers.





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What If You're New to This?

You're not alone, and we're here to help.

At A2Z, we guide our clients step by step, so you feel confident providing interpreting that's not just legally required, but also **ethically aligned** with inclusive values.

Common Missteps to Avoid

- ✗ Asking family, friends, or bilingual staff to interpret
- ✗ Assuming one interpreter fits all settings
- ✗ Forgetting to plan for breaks in long appointments or events
- ✗ Treating interpreters as extras instead of collaborators
- ✗ Assuming all Deaf individuals communicate the same way

Bonus Tip: Prep = Success

If you're hosting a group event, training, or sensitive appointment with an interpreter can make a huge difference. At A2Z, we proactively guide the process to ensure the interpreter is prepared.

Respect + Communication = Inclusion

Working with an ASL interpreter isn't just about providing access—it's about affirming dignity.

By choosing to do it well, you're helping create a world where everyone is truly heard.

Need an Interpreter You Can Trust?

A2Z specializes in **curated matches**, compassionate service, and professional interpreting for healthcare, education, government, and community settings.

Request an interpreter [here](#).

Have any questions? [Reach out!](#)

