



Tips on Working with Interpreters

What is an interpreter?

An interpreter is an intermediary who facilitates communication between two parties. Interpreters may specialize in sign language, oral, or another communication method. Interpreters must hold specialist certificates for certain settings such as legal settings.

Where can I find an interpreter?

Freelance interpreters and interpreting agencies are listed in the Communication Accessibility Directory, published by the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing.

Before the Job

Giving notice

Give a week's notice for interpreter requests if possible; the less notice you give, the less likely your request will be filled to your satisfaction.

Giving less than 24 hours' notice for an interpreter request means paying far above regular interpreter fees.

Giving information

Give as much details as possible:

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



It is recommended that interpreter requests are made through email, by fax, or in writing.

Contacting them

It is advised that only one person handles all interpreter arrangements, including receiving confirmations and filing complaints.

If working with an agency on an interpreter request, always contact them directly. Catching a staff or freelance interpreter while on another appointment is not proper.

During the Job

How should the interpreter act?

If interpreters socialize with you, that does NOT excuse unprofessional behavior such as lateness for appointments, improper dress, or ethical violations.

How should you act?

Remember, some people see the interpreter as a reflection of YOU. Expect and hold the interpreter to the same professional standards that you hold for yourself.

After the Job

Giving feedback

It is completely fine to discuss interpreting concerns with the interpreter if done in a non-confrontational manner. A professional interpreter would always welcome feedback.

If the interpreter was hired by another agency or organization, you should direct any concerns to the person responsible for the scheduling so that they are aware of the situation.

Importantly, let the interpreter know when you are satisfied! Interpreters love to hear from their contractor on how well they did and such positive comments will motivate them to maintain their professionalism.

Following up

If you run into the interpreter in a public place, do not bring up work. The interpreter is off-duty and is a private individual like you.

If the interpreter works with someone, you cannot demand a report even if you are paying for the services. The interpreter is ethically bound to keep confidentiality.

Where can I learn more about interpreting?

The following websites can provide you with information:

www.acdhh.org – Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing

www.azrid.org – Arizona Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf

www.rid.org – Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf

www.nad.org – National Association of the Deaf



YOU'RE WELCOME TO CONTACT US!

Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing: 1400 W. Washington #126, Phoenix 85007 • www.acdhh.org
602-542-3323 V/TTY • 602-364-0990 TTY • 602-542-3383 V • 800-352-8161 V/TTY • 602-542-3380 FAX • info@acdhh.state.az.us