Guide to Auxiliary Aids and Services

National Association of the Deaf

FHJC Fair Housing Justice Center

Access to Live Information

In-person interpreting services: On-site interpreting services provided by a qualified interpreter. Most commonly Deaf and hard of hearing persons use American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation but, depending on how he or she communicates, includes a variety of interpreting services such as Sign Language, Oral, and Cued Speech Transliteration.

Video Remote Interpreting (VRI): Uses videoconferencing technology, equipment, and a high speed Internet connection to provide the services of a qualified interpreter, usually located at a call center, to people at a different location.

Real-time Computer Aided Transcription Services (CART): The instant translation of the spoken word into English text using a stenotype machine or notebook computer and real-time software. Typist can be on-site or remote. Text can be displayed on a computer monitor, projected onto a screen, combined with a video presentation to appear as captions, or otherwise made available using other transmission and display systems.

Assisted listening devices and systems: Amplifiers that bring sound directly into the ear. Includes FM, Inductive Loop, Infrared Systems, and telephone amplifiers.

> ### WHAT MAKES AN INTERPRETER QUALIFIED?
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> - An interpreter is able to interpret effectively, accurately, and impartially, both receptively and expressively, using any necessary specialized vocabulary.
>
> - Best practices recommend using a professional interpreter through a reputable agency.

Telephone Aids

Videophones: Stand-alone device or a software installed on a computer, tablet, or smartphone with a camera and internet connection. Stand-alone device or software/app available through Video Relay Service (VRS) providers at no cost for Deaf consumers.

Teletypewriter (TTY): A telecommunications device that allows Deaf and hard of hearing individuals to make and receive text-based telecommunication calls over telephone lines. Also known as a TDD or TT.

Captioned Telephones: Telephone with a built-in screen to display in text everything the other person on the call says.

Telephones compatible with hearing aids: Telephones specifically designed to work with a special hearing aid setting ("T") which allows the hearing aid to filter out background noises.

Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS): Operator service that allows people who are Deaf, hard of hearing, Deafblind, or have a speech disability to place and receive calls with a hearing person through TRS operators, called communications assistants (CAs). TRS is a free, federally regulated service that ensures the confidentiality of all calls, including the calls discussing protected health information. TRS cannot replace on-site or VRI interpreting services in situations when qualified interpreter services are required.

There are six types of relay services that Deaf and hard of hearing persons can use to place and receive phone calls. These include:

- Video Relay Services (VRS)
- Text-to-Voice TTY
- Voice Carry Over
- Speech-to Speech
- Captioned Telephone Service
- Internet Protocol

Deaf persons can use whichever technology they are most comfortable with. If it is a hearing person on the other end of the line, they will receive the call just as they normally would; there is no specialized technology needed.

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Additional Auxiliary Aids and Services

Open and closed captioning: Display text for viewing television and film. Open captions cannot be turned off and are viewed by all. Closed captions can be turned on and off, or in the context of movie theaters, are viewed on an individual device.

Alert Devices: An auditory, visual, or vibrotactile assistive alerting technology that informs a Deaf or hard of hearing person of occurrences such as a visitor at the door, phone calls, wake up alarms, smoke, fire, and carbon monoxide alarms or of emergency situations.

Visual information, such as LED screens for announcements and individual communication boards.

And, of course, there are written materials such as a dry-erase board, pen and paper, texting and emails.

> ### WHEN WORKING WITH AN INTERPRETER:
>
> - Keep line of sight free for information and visuals
> - Look directly at the person you are communicating with, not the interpreter
> - Use "I" and "you" and avoid third-party phrases such as "Ask her" or "Tell him"
> - No need to speak louder or shout
> - Speak at a reasonable pace, allow time for everyone to receive and absorb all information

How to Choose?

Primary consideration should be given to the Deaf individual's choice, unless you can show that the alternative provided achieves equally effective communication in that situation.

Best practices are to consider the individual's preference as well as the nature, length, complexity, and context of the communication. Here are some general guidelines to consider when determining which auxiliary aid and service may best facilitate effective communication:

Interactions Involving New or Complex Information
(Intake, assessment, doctor appointments, change in services/care plan)

- Qualified interpreters on-site or through video remote interpreting (VRI) services
- Assistive listening devices and systems
- Real-time computer-aided transcription services (CART)

Routine Interactions (Established routines, medication, meals, checking-in, notifications)

- Qualified interpreters on-site or through video remote interpreting (VRI) services
- Real-time computer-aided transcription services (CART)
- Visual information (e.g. LED screen for P.A. messages)
- Visual alerts for things like the doorbell, telephone, fire alarms
- Developing an alternative system to call for nurses
- Written materials, such as white boards and exchange of written notes

Events (Programming, movies, activities)

- Qualified interpreters on-site or through video remote interpreting (VRI) services
- Real time computer aided transcription services (CART)
- Assisted listening devices and systems
- Open and closed captioning, included real-time captioning

Resident's Personal Use (Phone calls, socializing, visitors, independent activities)

- Relay services
- Assisted listening devices and systems
- Telephones compatible with hearing aids
- Open and closed captioning
- Voice, text, and video-based telecommunications products and systems including: teletypewriters (TTY), videophones (VP), captioned telephones, or other equally effective devices