**Interpreter Guidelines for Meetings, Workshops and Events**

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**Zoom Event Interpreter Tips**

1. **PowerPoint or Google Slides**- Share your PowerPoint as a virtual background. Use side-by-side option with the interpreter and you showing up in front of the PowerPoint. You will appear in front of the PowerPoint and can move your picture. Directions are here: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/360046912351-Sharing-slides-as-a-Virtual-Background?mobile_site=true>

2. **Co-host—**Make the interpreter co-host. The attendee can “pin” the interpreter if needed.

3. **Transcription feature**—Turn on as both the deaf attendee and interpreter find this helpful. If appropriate, record the session for those unable to attend or for review.

4 **Pre-event preparation.** Providing printed and audio materials, outlines, and notes prior to the event enables the interpreter to anticipate and clearly convey your message.  Clarify unique vocabulary, technical terms, acronyms, and jargon. We also ask that if you have any questions about working with an interpreter, please speak to the interpreter before the event begins to discuss any questions you may have.

5. **Speak Naturally**. Speak at your normal or slightly slower pace. Interpreters will ask you to slow down or repeat if necessary. Interpreters listen for concepts and ideas, not just words, to render an accurate interpretation. Do not cover your mouth.

**6. Process time.** The interpreter finishes communicating in sign language a few seconds after the speaker. Deaf people, therefore, cannot respond immediately after a speaker has finished. In discussion situations, it is important to allow for this "lag" time so that deaf people can fully participate in the discussion.

**7. One message at a time.** The interpreter can convey one message at a time after indicating the speaker. It is important, therefore, that only one person be speaking/signing at a time.  
If you are facilitating a group discussion, be aware that the interpreter will be several seconds behind. Pause before recognizing the next speaker to allow the interpreter to finish with the current speaker.

**8. Allow for breaks.** Interpreting can be very tiring, both to do and to watch. Several factors including pace, density of material and type of activity will influence the need and timing of breaks. Consult with your interpreter in advance regarding the timing, length, and frequency of breaks. In general, every 5-7 minutes, pause.

**9. Talk Directly to the DHH Person**  
Maintain eye contact with the DHH person.  
Avoid directing comments to the interpreter (i.e. "Tell him..." or "Ask her..."), respond directly to the DHH person. Talk through the interpreter.  
If you do not understand the DHH person, ask the interpreter to voice what the deaf person said.

**10. Avoid Private Conversations**  
Whatever the interpreter hears will be interpreted.  
Do not ask the interpreter to censor any portion of the conversation.  
Ask the DHH person directly if they are following the conversation.

**11. Asking the Interpreter for Opinions or Comments Regarding the Content of the Meeting**  
Interpreters follow a code of ethics which requires impartiality and confidentiality with all assignment related information.  
Do not assume the interpreter has prior knowledge of the deaf person or will be interpreting future appointments.

**Role and Function of the Interpreter**

**Role of the Interpreter**  
Makes communication possible between persons using different language modes  
Acts as a communication link  
Like a phone, doesn’t add information  
Does not alter the message  
Bound by Code of Ethics  
Must interpret everything that is said or signed  
Includes phone calls and comments made in deaf person’s presence  
Do not ask the interpreter to keep anything private from the deaf person

**Function of the Interpreter**  
Allows for more direct communication.   
Improves communication accuracy to avoid misunderstandings.   
Decreases frustrations.   
Raises the "comfort level" of those interacting.   
Facilitates more complete communication, so that both individuals feel free to ask questions and offer more in-depth explanations. Saves time.