

FAQs

| QUESTION | ANSWER |
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| What is an ASL-English interpreter? | A professional interpreter who knows both American Sign Language and English, the cultural norms of Deaf Canadians and non-deaf Canadian majority culture. Interpreters facilitate communication between those who do not share the same language. |
| Should I talk slower for the interpreter(s)? | No. Speak at your normal pace; the interpreter(s) will make sure everything you say is interpreted. The interpreters do not transliterate (a word for word representation from one language to another), rather interprets the intent of the concepts in the source language into a different grammatical structure of the target language. This process takes a brief processing time while simultaneously interpreting the conversation. You may initially notice a slight pause in between speakers. |
| Who do I look at; the Deaf person or interpreter? | Look at the Deaf person directly as you would with anyone you are speaking with; try not to look at the interpreter. The Deaf person will look at the interpreter and speaker to see the interpretation as well as gauging the speaker's demeanor. |
| Why is there a delay during the conversation? | The grammar of ASL and English are very different. Sometimes what is said last in English is the first thing we would express in ASL for the concept to make sense. To make the interpretation grammatically correct and fluent, the interpreter needs time to process the information being said before s/he can interpret it. It is best to speak as you would normally. For listening and discourse flow it can feel awkward at first, but you will get used to it as time goes on |
| Do the interpreters participate in the event, meetings, conversation, etc.? | No. The interpreter(s) are there to facilitate communication only. Please do not directly engage the interpreter(s) while they are working. If you have comments, questions, or feedback for the interpreter(s) please wait until the event is finished and then bring it to their attention. |
| While the interpreter(s) are working, can I ask him / her a direct question? | Please don't. The interpreter(s) are working very hard and it is not appropriate to break out of the role of interpreting while working. The Deaf person might be able to answer certain questions, or you can approach the interpreter(s) after the event / meeting is finished. |

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| Why am I being asked for preparation materials? | These materials offer context for the interpreters to prepare to interpret more effectively and accurately, rather than figuring out the context in the moment. |
| So the interpreter(s) can't interpret without preparation materials? | No, the interpreter(s) can still properly interpret without preparation materials. The interpreter(s) will prepare in general terms for the event / meeting. Having specific themes to focus the preparation on will allow for more effective and accurate interpretations. |
| Where will the interpreter stand / sit? | The interpreter will position themselves close to the main speaker (presenter, meeting chair, etc.) so the Deaf person can see both the interpreter and main speaker easily. It will vary depending on the situation. |
| What if presentation is in ASL, where will the interpreter stand / sit? | In this case, the interpreter will position themselves near the back of the room to allow their voice to carry throughout and be heard easier. Or a microphone will be used. It will vary depending on the situation. |
| Why is there more than one interpreter? | Depending on the length, number of participants, importance of the event / meeting more than one interpreter is scheduled. This allows the interpreters to team and support each other to provide the most effective interpretation. |