

## Providing Interpreting Services

### How do I provide signed-spoken language interpreting services?

Including interpreting services in an event or meeting should be part of the checklist and not an afterthought. Do not wait for a service request to be made; go ahead and start planning. It is not up to the Deaf person to 'bring their own interpreter' or coordinate services for the event. To begin the booking process, consider the following logistics.

### What is first?

- Once an event is scheduled, ensure the following details are available.
  - Date along with start & end time
  - Location (building and room number, or virtual platform including login information)
  - Event purpose; for example: department meeting, MSc. committee meeting, public lecture, etc.
  - Names of key participants such as department members; MSc. candidate, supervisor, and committee members; guest lecturer, etc.
  - Will the event be recorded for media, be live streamed, or only live?
- This information is used to determine which interpreters are best suited to the assignment.

### Who do I contact to book interpreters?

- Ashley Campbell, Manager Interpreting Services at [ashley.n.campbell@smu.ca](mailto:ashley.n.campbell@smu.ca)

### How do I work with interpreters?

- The interpreters may not be subject matter experts in the topics being discussed. For them to prepare, it is the organizers' responsibility to provide them with information in advance of the event. This information will depend on the type of event and could include items such as meeting documentation packages, lecture slides and notes, research proposal summaries, etc.

- ASL is a 3D visual modality language and will require unobstructed sightlines throughout the spaces where being used. Lighting is also important, both natural and artificial, to reduce eye fatigue. Collaborate with the interpreters, and Deaf consumer(s) if possible before the event starts to determine optimal placing and lighting.
- If during the interpretations the English does not sound quite right, or something is “off” you can interrupt the interpretation process and ask for clarification. The ASL user can do the same. Additionally, if the interpreter needs clarification, they should ask for it during their work. Asking for clarification is not a reflection of the participants' comprehension. Keep in mind that the interpreters may not be subject matter experts in the topic being discussed.

### **Additional Notes**

- The interpreting team is working with everyone, not just the sign language users. We provide access to English and American Sign Language in both interpreted directions.
- If there are video materials being used be prepared to turn on professional captions / subtitles. Do not rely on auto generated captions. If you plan to incorporate music, be sure to inform the interpreting team in advance. Audio and visual materials require specific preparation methods for the team.
- Interpreters often work in teams of two but can work alone in some situations. It is also possible a student interpreter may be observing the team as HRM has one of only five training programs in Canada.
- While the interpreters are actively working, they are not participants in the conversation and event. However, please feel free to approach the team with questions and ideas for improvement beforehand or afterwards.

**More information can be found on this SMU webpage**

**[www.smu.ca/science-ASL](http://www.smu.ca/science-ASL)**