

Wright Patterson AFB

Sign Language Interpreter Service Guidelines

This guideline provides guidance regarding reasonable accommodation (interpreter services) for qualified Wright Patterson AFB personnel who are covered under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

- 1. Purpose and Responsibility.** The purpose of this guideline is to provide directions regarding sign language interpreter services for people with disabilities (hearing impaired or deaf employees). Upon request deaf/hearing impaired individuals attending **official** meetings, seminars, required training sessions, etc may request sign language interpreters. WP's responsibility is to ensure that accommodations/special needs are met without causing undue hardship to the organization. A reasonable accommodation will be effective if it allows individuals with disabilities equal opportunity to take advantage of the benefits and/or privileges of participation in meetings, seminars, training, etc.
- 2. Request.** The individual(s), or someone representing the individual (s), can initiate the request on their behalf to DEIA, Disability Program Office at 88ABW.DE.DisabilityProgram@us.af.mil. Request must be received by individual(s) at least **three days prior** to the date the service is required. We strive to fulfill every request, but failure to submit timely requests may cause a delay in scheduling interpreter services or unavailable services.
- 3.** The request form (WPAFB 1412) for services must be completed in its entirety. Generally it is the responsibility of the individual with a disability to notify the Diversity & Inclusion Office of the need for an interpreter(s) for official meetings/events, etc. Interpreter request must be sign/approved by the employee's supervisor.

Sign Language Interpreter Procedures

- a) Failure to schedule interpreting services well in advance may result in the necessity to reschedule meetings until interpreter(s) is/are available.
- b) If, after the interpreter has been scheduled, and the services are no longer needed, the requestor must notify the interpreter company immediately, and the initial request must be cancelled in writing or by e-mail at least **24 hours** in advance prior to the scheduled event. *If you are requesting interpreter services for classified information you will need to cancel at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled event.* If cancellation is not made in a timely manner, the individual's organization will be responsible for all cost associated with that request.
- c) If the duration of the event is longer than one hour, such as stage interpreting or half or full day training sessions, more than one interpreter will be needed. Having additional interpreters will increase the cost of services. If interpreter services cost is over \$1,500 the organization will be responsible to cover all fees.
- d) Once interpreter services have been finalized, POC (or supervisor) must sign interpreter form stating they provided service and return it to the vendor company for invoice.

4. Alternatives to Sign language Interpreter Services

- When qualified sign language interpreter(s) is/are not necessary, such as for relatively short, routine matters, communication with another person(s) may be accomplished by exchanging handwritten notes or by typing back and forth on a computer keyboard or TTY (teletypewriter).

5. Explanation of Key Terms.

- What Is Reasonable Accommodations? A reasonable accommodation/special needs is a change or modifications to be made, or items to be provided, to an individual with a disability.
- Undue Hardship. Undue hardship is significant difficulty or expense of the particular organization in relationship to the cost or ability to provide a specific accommodation.
- Interpreters. Persons who interprets for meetings/events, etc. must possess a license and be certified in the field. The interpreter should be competent, accurate, impartial, and both receptive and expressive, while using specialized terminology necessary for effective communication in a public setting.
- Additional Training Request. If an employee needs interpreter for additional training e.g. computer training or training that will enhance performance of the employees job, the organization will be responsible for covering the cost of the interpreter (s) **not the Affirmative Employment Office.** Organizations should incorporate sign language interpreter services into their yearly budget to cover additional professional training.
- Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program (CAP). This program provides assistive technology and services to people with disabilities throughout the federal government **free of charge**. All you have to do is submit a request! The Computer/Electronic Accommodation Program (CAP) will be able to assist in providing interpreters for computer training. **In the event of extended computer training, you must submit a request online to the CAP office. The CAP office will provide the decision for approval.** Further information can be found at <http://www.cap/mil/>.

Additional questions contact Ms. Sarah Dallis at (937) 904-0978