

## Guide: Accessibility Interpreter Services

It is strongly encouraged that all university-sponsored programs offer the service of a sign language interpreter or live captioning when requested in advance of a program<sup>1</sup>. Programs that are open to the public and do not have a registration requirement should plan to have a sign language interpreter by default whenever possible.

### Definitions:

- **ADA-AA**- Americans with Disability Act as Amended (2008). Federal Law that prevents the discrimination of individuals with disabilities from access.
- **Sign Language Interpreter** - Professional who can interpret in sign language effectively, accurately and impartially, both receptively and expressively, using any necessary specialized vocabulary.
- **Live Captioning** - a real-time transcription or translation of spoken language in live streaming or other live video content, displayed as a text overlay on the lower part of the screen.
- **CART**- a service where trained captioners translate the spoken word into captions that appear in real time for participants at an event, meeting, or any other type of social setting.
- **Closed Captioning** - a textual representation of the audio within a media file.
- **Transcription** - a written or printed representation of something.

**ADA Statement:** All programs should have an ADA Statement visible on multiple media formats when advertising the event. An example of an ADA Statement is, “For questions about accommodations or the accessibility of this event, please contact (program coordinator<sup>2</sup>) by (email) or (phone number).”

It is important to provide the contact information of the program coordinator on any advertisement and not the ADA Office/Director, Student Accessibility Services Office/Assistant or Associate Director, or the Human Resources Office/Director. These offices and positions can help provide guidance and troubleshooting with the program coordinator(s) should they need help securing interpreting services, but they are not the contact person for the program. The aforementioned offices/positions are not responsible for ensuring an interpreter for university events.

### What to gather before getting started:

Requesting an interpreter is generally a straightforward task. The agencies do most of the coordination as part of their service. You will need some information to share with the agency you are working with.

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<sup>1</sup> Examples of programs include but are not limited to commencement, public speakers, training, webinars...

<sup>2</sup> A program coordinator is the person who is hosting the program or the person to whom questions about the program should be addressed.

- Date and time of the event.
- Date and time of when you would want the interpreter to arrive.
- Expected end time of the event.
  - **Note:** events that last longer than 20-30 minutes may require more than one interpreter to be present. The timing of breaks will be determined by the interpreter based on the intensity of the service they are providing.
- Provide information on whether you are making a general request for an interpreter or have a specific request from an attendee.
  - A General Request typically means no additional needs outside of basic interpretations.
  - Some attendees will provide specific instructions for you to relay to the interpreters when appropriate. This information should be communicated to the interpreter as far in advance as possible.
- Instructions on where/how the interpreter should park and navigate to the program space.
  - Navigation of the program includes items such as where the interpreter is expected to stand, where the closest restrooms are located, what entrances and exits to use, etc.

**What to gather before the day of the event:**

- Provide programs and scripts to the interpreter as soon as possible once scheduled. These documents help the interpreter stay on track and ensure they stay accurate with their interpretations.
- Plan on where the interpreter will sit.
  - Sign language interpreters will need to be visible to the entire audience.
    - When visibility of the interpreter is not possible, designate a seating area with a clear view of the interpreter and hold it for those with a disability-related need or provide a projector or TV screen where those who need the interpreter can see them.
    - Be prepared to have seating for two interpreters for programs longer than 20 minutes. Work with the interpreter(s) to make it easy for them to switch out with each other without disrupting the program.
  - If the services are live captioning, the interpreters will need a space to set up their equipment, typically at the back or side of the room. Hearing what is being said during the program, either by being close enough to hear clearly or through a mic/speaker option, is essential to the interpreter.
- If the interpreter will be recorded or streamed, connect with Technology Access and Support to determine how best to show them on screen and keep them in the camera's view.
  - Contact Information for TAS is: 931-598-1369 or helpdesk@sewanee.edu

**Day of the event:**

- Have a primary contact person for the day of the event should the interpreter get lost or need to make a last-minute change. This could be the program coordinator or someone different from the program coordinator.
- Be prepared to help guests who requested the service meet the interpreter before the event begins.
  - It helps to let those guests know where to meet the interpreter and how early they should arrive at the event to have their needs met.
- Check-in with the interpreter to inquire if they have any needs before the event begins.

#### **After the event:**

- Follow up with the agencies to ensure all charges have been settled within 30 calendar days.
- Inquire with the agency if they have any feedback on ways we can improve our process. Provide this feedback to the ADA Director at [ada@sewanee.edu](mailto:ada@sewanee.edu) when appropriate.
  - Here is a feedback form if you prefer to use the ADA Office form [\[CLICK HERE\]](#)

#### **Helpful Notes:**

- The program's coordinator will be responsible for the cost of an interpreter. Whenever the cost of an interpreter is more than the sponsor's available budget, they can request additional funding prior to the request for the interpreter. A request for funding is not a guarantee. Program Coordinators may still be responsible for acquiring their needed funding where requests are denied;
  - Student Organizations - Student Involvement by emailing [student-involvement@sewanee.edu](mailto:student-involvement@sewanee.edu)
  - Staff/Faculty - The ADA Office by emailing [ada@sewanee.edu](mailto:ada@sewanee.edu)

#### **Agencies to consider for Sign Language Services:**

- Chattanooga Interpreting - <https://noogaterp.com/>
- The Partnership - <https://www.partnershipdhh.com/www>
- Bridges for Deaf and Heard of Hearing - <https://www.bridgesfordeafandhh.org/interpreting-services>
- Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf - <https://myaccount.rid.org/Public/Search/Member.aspx>

#### **Agencies to consider for live captioning or CART Services:**

- AI Media - <https://www.ai-media.tv/>
- A La CARTe Connection - <https://alccart.com/>
- Zoom AI-Generated Captions- [https://support.zoom.com/hc/en/article?id=zm\\_kb&sysparm\\_article=KB0062813](https://support.zoom.com/hc/en/article?id=zm_kb&sysparm_article=KB0062813)