

## As a service provider, how can I ensure meetings are accessible to deaf people?

There are three main things to consider when planning a meeting involving deaf people:

Find out what communication support services will be required and book well in advance.

You might consider adding a question to your booking form, for example:

*Do you require communication support?  
If so please indicate your preference.*

<i>Sign Language Interpreter</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Electronic Notetaker</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Lipspeaker</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Deafblind communicator</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Because there are so few qualified Sign Language Interpreters, Notetakers, Lipspeakers and Deafblind communicators you should book communication support well in advance – we would recommend 6 – 8 weeks before your meeting is due to take place.

### The meeting room should be equipped with sound enhancement loop system

It is a requirement of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 that all public meeting rooms are fitted with an induction loop of infrared sound enhancement system for hearing aid users. It is usually best to check when booking your venue that the loop/infrared system is in working order and will be switched on before your meeting.

### All deaf people must have a clear view of everything that is going on.

The room should be well lit. Blinds/curtains may need to be closed as light from outside can spoil viewing. Sign Language Interpreters must be clearly visible and not placed in front of a window or bright light. The interpreters will know which is the best place for them to be seen – please ask them. Electronic notetakers will require a screen to project the notes on to. This may mean you will require two screens if speakers are also using power point.

During any Question and Answer sessions each speaker or signer should, if at all possible, come up to the stage to put their question. Never take the microphone to an audience member who cannot be seen by all.

The Chair of the meeting should take care that each speaker or signer has finished his/her last sentence before permitting the next question.

You should arrange to have copies of meeting papers sent to Interpreters, Notetakers, Lipspeakers and other Communication Support providers in advance of the meeting.

The RNID has produced a useful communication support booklet. This is available in to download: [www.rnid.org.uk/VirtualContent/84927/Communication\\_support\\_Dec\\_05.pdf](http://www.rnid.org.uk/VirtualContent/84927/Communication_support_Dec_05.pdf)