

Guidance for Making NIH Events Accessible

Interpreting Services

The Office of Research Services partners with Access Interpreting to provide no cost [interpreting services](#) to the NIH Deaf and Hard of Hearing community, including staff, patients and visitors. NIH policy seeks to expand employment opportunities and remove barriers to accessibility, per the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. All services are **centrally funded** and available upon request to participate in any work-related event or activity. **NIH Policy:** 2206 - Sign Language Interpreter Policy 2204 - NIH Reasonable Accommodation Policy (Section J)

Services Include:

- **ASL interpreters** - available onsite and remotely via Virtual + during normal business hoursⁱ
- **CART (real-time transcription)** - available onsite and remotely. Professional CART writers securely transcribe speech to text on any screen i.e., mobile device, laptop, or big screen. Transcription files available upon request.
- **Virtual +** is a video conferencing solution recently integrated into [uSked](#) that allows D/HH employees to remotely connect with their interpreters so they can work from home.

How to Request Service: All service requests must be entered in the Access Portal - [uSked](#) - secured behind the NIH firewall with 2FA and accessible to all NIH email account holders.

- **First time users** follow the prompts to create a user profile with username and password. For technical support or request a login ID, email nih@ainterpreting.com.
- When entering a request on behalf of someone else (including a patient), enter the **name of the person requiring services, short description of event** and **media link** to connect to event. Also include agenda, slides and any other information beneficial to our service providers.
- **Questions** should be sent to nih@ainterpreting.com. Send **feedback** to kieferli@mail.nih.gov
- Request services **3-5 days in advance**, when possible, to ensure availability
- Cancel services **within 2 business days** of event, when possible, to avoid billable charges
- Per [NIH Policy 2206](#), remember to include in announcements the following language:

Sign language interpreting services are available upon request. Individuals who need interpreting services and/or other reasonable accommodations to participate in this event should contact NAMEXXX, PHONEXXXX. Requests should be made five days in advance of the event. For Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) call 711.

Cost: Centrally funded

Service Provider: Access Interpreting Services

POC: Linda Kiefer @ 301-827-3252 or email kieferli@od.nih.gov

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Video Captioning, Transcription and Other Multimedia Services

Live captioning services are part of [Multimedia/Video Production Services](#) available to the NIH community, per Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, that requires Federal agencies utilize electronic and information technology fully accessible to people with disabilities.

Services Available for Purchase:

- Live Video Captioning - available onsite and remotely during normal business hours
- Post-production Captioning and Transcription
- Verbatim Transcription
- Audio Description (for the blind)
- Live Captioning and Transcription from English to Other Languages

Request a quote for your event to include captioning other multimedia services by emailing nihvideo-l@mail.nih.gov or NCC scheduling at realtime@nccsite.com

Service Provider: National Capitol Contracts

POC: Linda Kiefer @ 301-827-3252 or email kieferli@od.nih.gov

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Tips for Virtual Meeting Planning

- Consider using a virtual platform that allows interpreters to share the screen with speakers and is secure and easy for your team to use.
- When sharing the screen with an interpreter, ensure the interpreter's screen the same size as the presenters and large enough for viewers to easily see the hand signs.
- Common platforms used at NIH
 - Zoom Webinar
 - WebEx
 - MS Teams
 - Adobe Connect
- **Virtual +** the video conferencing platform built into [uSked](#) that connects D/HH employees with their interpreter or CART writer
 - Features screen sharing, chat, speech to text, room locking, and more...
 - Can be used with other virtual platforms

Helpful Information to Include When Requesting Service

- Talking points, agenda (draft is fine)
- Presenter slides (draft is fine)
- Number of D/HH participants (if known)
- Number of speakers
- Estimated number of viewers expected

Best Practices

- CART captioning is often preferred by hard of hearing viewers who may not sign or anyone having trouble understanding speakers with heavy accents or that speak too fast
- Remind presenters to speak clearly and at a reasonable pace; avoid using acronyms and non-verbal cues or hand gestures; stay on message as much as possible and within allotted time
- Consider hosting a practice session when doing something for the first time
- Consider soliciting feedback from viewers to learn what works and what needs work

ⁱ **Patients receive priority scheduling 24/7.** Clinical Center staff, may use the secure [Access Portal](#) to request ASL interpreting or CART services for patients and families during normal business hours. For **URGENT patient** requests or service after hours, weekends and holidays call 571-730-4330 or email nih@ainterpreting.com. **NOTE:** Contact the [Social Work Department](#) at 301-496-2792 to request Spoken language interpreters for patients and families with limited English proficiency.