

# Providing Access to Effective Communication

## *Guide for Medical Settings*

### How to Find an ASL Interpreter

Medical and behavioral health providers can contact interpreters or interpreter referral agencies directly regarding their services. Please see below for links to a few resources.

- [VDDHH Directory of Certified Interpreters](#), [RID Directory of Certified Interpreters](#)
- [VDDHH Directory of Qualified Interpreters](#) (Level III recommended for medical settings)
- [VDDHH Directory of Services Publication](#) (contains information for interpreter referral agencies)

Please note that VDDHH can only coordinate interpreter services for Virginia state courts, state/local government, and state agencies.

### What to Know About the ADA

According to the Department of Justice, the [Americans with Disabilities Act](#) requires Title III entities (businesses and nonprofit organizations that serve the public) to provide access to effective communication for people who are Deaf or hard of hearing, which may involve sign language interpreter services, captioning, assistive technology, etc. Those entities may include hospitals, doctors' offices, dentist offices, behavioral health facilities, treatment centers, and various other clinical settings and providers. Accommodations should be provided at no cost to the patient. Family members or friends should not serve as interpreters except under rare and specific circumstances. Patients cannot be turned away on account of their accommodation needs. Please review the resources below.

- [ADA Brief: Effective Communication](#) (Department of Justice)
- [ADA Business BRIEF: Communicating with People Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing in Hospital Settings](#) (Department of Justice)
- [Dear Colleague Letter Press Release](#) (Department of Justice)
- [Guidelines for Hospitals Regarding ADA Compliance](#) (Virginia Department of Health)
- [Tax Incentives for Improving Accessibility](#) (Adaptive Environments Center)
- [Undue Hardship](#) (ADA National Network)
- [VRI in Healthcare Settings](#) (National Association of the Deaf)
- [Interpreting Resources](#) (Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf)
- You may also contact the [disAbility Law Center of Virginia](#) or the [ADA National Network](#) Hotline for more guidance resources.

Questions?  
Please contact us at [isp@vddhh.virginia.gov](mailto:isp@vddhh.virginia.gov).



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Virginia Department for the  
Deaf and Hard of Hearing