

Working With a NYCPS Sign Language Interpreter

NYCPS sign language interpreters are employees of the New York City Public Schools and are part of the Office of Sign Language Interpreting Services (OSLIS). They are highly skilled professionals who not only excel in interpreting but also understand the unique language, culture, and operations of the NYCPS system. As members of the NYCPS team, they are also well-connected to local resources available to the deaf and hard-of-hearing community throughout New York City.

What is the role of a Sign Language Interpreter?

- Our role is to provide access to communication by bridging the gap between those who use spoken language and deaf adults who use sign language within the NYCPS system.
- They translate spoken words into sign language, and vice versa, ensuring everyone can understand and participate in the interaction.
- Communication facilitation requires at least two participants who do not share a language and can happen in various settings. Interpreters are aware of the cultural nuances within both hearing and deaf communities, ensuring that communications are not only linguistically accurate but also culturally appropriate.
- Interpreters remain neutral and impartial, ensuring that their interpretation does not influence the content or flow of communication.
- Interpreters adhere to strict standards of confidentiality, protecting sensitive information shared during interactions.
- Interpreters continually develop their skills and knowledge through ongoing training and education, staying abreast of advancements in interpreting techniques and technologies.

What is your role working with a Sign Language Interpreter?

- To effectively work with a sign language interpreter, establish clear communication by speaking directly to the deaf or hard of hearing person, not the interpreter. Refrain from saying “tell him/tell her/tell them”
 - This helps establish a natural flow of communication and avoids confusion.
- Maintain a natural speaking pace and tone and be patient as the interpreter facilitates the conversation. The interpreter is trained to keep up with standard speech patterns. If you need to slow down or clarify anything, the interpreter will ask.
- If you have specific questions or concerns about the interpretation, address the interpreter directly. However, avoid direct questions to the interpreter that are not relevant to the deaf person or personal in nature.
- Respect the interpreter’s expertise and their role in facilitating communication and know they are trained to interpret effectively and accurately.

By working collaboratively with interpreters, we ensure equitable access to communication for all members of the NYCPS community.