

Interpreting Services & Technologies - Worksheet

PROVIDER LANDSCAPE HANDOUT

Types of Interpreting Service Providers

Provider Type	How it Works	Pros	Cons	When to Use
Private Companies	Independent businesses with interpreter rosters	✓ Flexible scheduling ✓ Quick response ✓ Specialized services	✗ Higher costs ✗ Quality varies ✗ Not always available	One-off appointments, business meetings, private events
Care/Social Organizations	Part of disability support services	✓ Holistic support ✓ Often subsidized ✓ Ongoing relationship	✗ Limited availability ✗ Bureaucratic process ✗ Regional differences	Medical care, therapy, social services
Government Services	State-funded interpreting programs	✓ Free/low cost ✓ Standardized quality ✓ Legal backing	✗ Limited hours ✗ Long wait times ✗ Bureaucracy	Court proceedings, official meetings, public services

Communication Support	Beyond traditional interpreting (STTR, CSWs, tech)	✓ Customized approach ✓ Multiple options ✓ Innovative solutions	✗ May cost extra ✗ Not widely available ✗ Requires coordination	Education, complex meetings, specialized events
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Key Questions to Ask Any Provider:

- What are your interpreter qualifications?
- How do you handle last-minute cancellations?
- Do you offer video remote interpreting (VRI)?
- What is your feedback/complaint process?
- Can you provide interpreters for specialized topics?

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REFLECTION & ACTION SHEET

Key Learning Today

Most Valuable Insight:

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Biggest Surprise:

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My Action Plan

One Provider I Will Research:

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One Right I Will Exercise More:

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One Situation I Will Handle Differently:

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Resource Building

Contact I Will Add to My Phone:

- Name/Organization:

- Service:

- Phone/Email: -----

Person I Will Share This Information With:

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Question I Still Have:

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Self-Assessment

Rate your confidence (1=Low, 5=High):

- Choosing appropriate interpreting services: 1 2 3 4 5
- Exercising your user rights: 1 2 3 4 5

- Using VRI technology: 1 2 3 4 5
- Providing feedback to providers: 1 2 3 4 5
- Supporting other deaf people with interpreting: 1 2 3 4 5

Priority for improvement:

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SCENARIO DISCUSSION CARDS

SCENARIO 1: Medical Specialist Appointment

Situation: You have a complex medical condition and need to see a heart specialist. The appointment is crucial for treatment decisions.

Discussion Points:

- What type of interpreter provider would you choose? Why?
- What specialized knowledge should the interpreter have?
- How would you prepare the interpreter beforehand?
- What would you do if technical medical terms aren't interpreted clearly?

Accommodation Requests:

- Medical terminology familiarity
- Written summary of key points
- Extra time for questions
- Direct communication with doctor

SCENARIO 2: University Lecture Series

Situation: You're taking a graduate course with weekly 2-hour lectures on European history. The professor speaks quickly and uses academic language.

Discussion Points:

- Government services vs. private company vs. university provision?
- How do you handle interpreter fatigue in long sessions?
- What preparation can you do to support the interpreter?
- How do you balance cost, quality, and consistency?

Accommodation Requests:

- Two interpreters for long sessions
- Advance access to lecture materials
- Consistent interpreter for course terminology
- Recording permission for review

SCENARIO 3: Job Interview

Situation: You have a job interview for a position you really want. It's with a small company that has never hired a deaf person before.

Discussion Points:

- How do you educate the employer about interpreting?
- Private company vs. government-funded services?
- How do you position interpreter to maintain eye contact with interviewer?
- What if the employer has concerns about ongoing costs?

Accommodation Requests:

- Professional business-experienced interpreter
- Brief pre-meeting with interpreter about role/company
- Optimal seating arrangement discussion
- Information about ongoing workplace interpreting options

SCENARIO 4: Legal Consultation

Situation: You need legal advice about a housing dispute. The lawyer uses complex legal terminology and the case involves written contracts.

Discussion Points:

- Why might government services be most appropriate?
- How do certified interpreters differ from general interpreters?
- What additional support might you need beyond interpreting?
- How do you ensure complete understanding of legal implications?

Accommodation Requests:

- Legal specialty certified interpreter
- Documents provided in advance
- Written summary of key legal points
- Follow-up appointment to confirm understanding

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USER RIGHTS HANDOUT: Your Control Over Interpreting Situations

Your Rights as a Deaf Service User

✓ RIGHT TO CHOOSE

- Request specific interpreters you've worked well with
- Decline interpreters you've had problems with
- Ask for male/female interpreter if relevant
- Request interpreters with specialized knowledge

✓ RIGHT TO QUALITY

- Expect certified/qualified interpreters
- Request replacement if interpretation is poor
- Get clear sight lines and good positioning
- Have adequate lighting and minimal distractions

✓ RIGHT TO COMMUNICATION PREFERENCES

- Specify your preferred sign language variety
- Request your communication style (ISL, SSE, fingerspelling emphasis)
- Ask for cultural mediation when needed
- Get interpretation at your pace

✓ RIGHT TO CONFIDENTIALITY

- Expect complete professional confidentiality
- Know who has access to interpreted information
- Request interpreters sign additional confidentiality agreements
- Report any breaches of confidentiality

How to Exercise Your Rights

Before the Service:

1. Contact provider with specific requirements
2. Confirm interpreter qualifications and specialization
3. Share any relevant background information
4. Arrange optimal seating/lighting setup

During the Service:

1. Position interpreter for best visibility
2. Request breaks if needed (especially for long sessions)
3. Ask for clarification if something isn't clear
4. Speak directly to the person you're communicating with

After the Service:

1. Provide feedback (positive and constructive)
2. Report any issues immediately
3. Keep records of good/problematic interpreters
4. Share experiences with your deaf community

Sample Scripts for Self-Advocacy

Requesting Specific Interpreter:

"I've worked well with [Name] before and would like to request them for this appointment."

Declining Interpreter:

"I've had communication difficulties with this interpreter previously. Could you please arrange someone else?"

Quality Concerns:

"I'm having difficulty following the interpretation. Could we take a short break to discuss positioning/pace?"

Feedback:

"The interpretation went very well. [Interpreter] was professional and clear. I'd be happy to work with them again."

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VRI (VIDEO REMOTE INTERPRETING) QUICK GUIDE

Before Starting VRI Session

Technical Setup:

- Test internet connection (stable/fast enough?)
- Check camera position (shows both you and screen clearly)
- Ensure good lighting on your face
- Test audio if needed for other participants
- Have backup communication method ready

Environment:

- Choose quiet location with minimal distractions
- Sit at appropriate distance from camera
- Clear background or use virtual background
- Have pen/paper handy for notes

During VRI Session

Best Practices:

- Look at the interpreter on screen, not the camera
- Pause between speakers for interpretation

- Speak directly to other participants, not interpreter
- Use clear gestures within camera frame
- Be patient with slight delays

If Problems Arise:

- Poor video quality → Check connection/lighting
- Interpreter fatigue → Request break or replacement
- Technical issues → Switch to backup communication
- Can't see interpreter clearly → Adjust camera/lighting

When VRI Works Best

- ✓ Short meetings (under 1 hour)
- ✓ Planned conversations
- ✓ Good technical setup available
- ✓ Limited number of participants

When In-Person is Better

- ✓ Long sessions (over 1 hour)
- ✓ Complex/sensitive topics
- ✓ Group meetings with many speakers
- ✓ Poor internet connection available