

Inclusive Meeting Practices

- Use captions for virtual meetings. Turn on accurate live captions and provide a recording/transcript afterward when appropriate.
- Make one person speak at a time. Avoid side conversations and overlapping voices, which are especially difficult for interpreters and people lipreading.
- Identify yourself before speaking in larger or interpreted meetings, especially when people may not know who is talking.
- Face the person when speaking. Keep your face visible and well lit; don't talk while turned away or while covering your mouth.
- Don't shout or exaggerate your mouth movements. Speak normally and clearly.
- Include the Deaf participant in the conversation directly. Speak to them, not to the interpreter—for example, "What do you think?" rather than "Ask them what they think."
- Allow extra time for interpreted communication. The interpreter needs time to convey what was said and for the participant to respond.
- Don't interrupt the interpreter. Treat interpreted communication as part of the normal conversation.
- Avoid blocking the visual presentation and or interpreter while presenting.
- Make visual information accessible. Verbally describe important charts, slides, videos, or demonstrations rather than relying solely on audio.
- Share agendas and key documents beforehand and written decisions/action items afterward.
- Establish a visual way to signal turns. In virtual meetings, use the platform's raise-hand feature; in person, a clear visual cue can help.
- Check privately afterward. If an accommodation isn't working, ask the participant what would make the next meeting more accessible rather than guessing.
- For events, have reserved seating in front in case there is a request for reserved seating.

A useful principle is: accessibility is part of meeting design, not something the Deaf person has to manage during the meeting.