

Arizona Broadcasting Accessibility Guidelines

Deaf populations have historically struggled to gain access to information in their daily lives, a struggle which is exacerbated during disasters and emergencies. Approximately 25,000 Arizona residents are culturally Deaf and their primary language is American Sign Language (ASL). Arizona has taken steps to ensure that these individuals receive critical information in an accessible and timely manner.

Accessible communication legislation

Effective August 3, 2018, government entities at the municipal, county and state level are required, per A.R.S. § 9-500.41, A.R.S. § 11-269.20, and A.R.S. § 41-5202, to ensure that communications with persons with disabilities, including online communications and emergency communications, are *equally as effective* as communications with persons without disabilities pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

What to expect

There will be times, particularly in urgent/emergency situations, when the Governor, Emergency Managers, the local Sheriff's office or other similar officials will make public announcements with the presence of an American Sign Language interpreter. The following accessibility specifications are strongly recommended for public broadcasts. Following these recommendations is essential to ensure that Deaf residents receive urgent/emergency information in American Sign Language. Failure to deliver this information in an accessible manner can lead to loss of life or property.

Accessibility recommendations:

- Include the Official and the interpreter in the camera frame at all times. The interpreter must be visible on-camera during live broadcasts next to the Official.
- If there is a height difference, the camera level should be in the middle of both the Official's and the interpreter's eye levels to ensure that the audience can focus on both individuals.
- The camera frame should include at least a foot of space beyond the interpreter's outside shoulder. This will ensure that the interpreter's hand movements are fully visible and no portion of any sign is performed off-camera.
- The presentation of the interpreter on the intended display screen should be of sufficient size and resolution to show all movements of the full upper trunk together with arms, hands and fingers, shoulder, neck and all relevant facial movements and expressions.
- The people behind the camera must continually check the frame to ensure all the vital aspects are included and clear for the viewers: the Official and the interpreter should be in the middle of the frame with space available in the lower section of the frame for captioning.
- If any visual aids are utilized (maps, b-roll, etc), they must be shown simultaneously with the Official, the interpreter and captioning.

The above recommendations have been adapted from an official policy issued by the Governor of the State of Maryland. The original policy can be found at

https://odhh.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2016/01/Broadcasting_Memo_ODHH.pdf