

## Tip Sheet

# Serving Individuals Who Are Deaf, Hard of Hearing or Deaf-Blind and Do Not Use American Sign Language

## Guidelines

1. Develop program guidelines to comply with the stipulations of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
2. Utilize national and or local resources to educate agency staff.
3. Identify who serves deaf and hard of hearing victims in your area.
4. Determine the language interpretation needs of victims who are deaf, deaf-blind or hard of hearing.
  - a. Do not assume they understand or use American Sign Language (ASL).
  - b. Identify what communication methods they use, including if they use ASL, a foreign sign language, home signing, tactile signing, and/or Computer Assisted Realtime Transcription. Lip reading and passing notes are not acceptable communication methods.
  - c. Do not assume a high or low level of English fluency.
  - d. Do not assume a high or low level of literacy in their native language and/or English.
5. Establish procedures to obtain relay interpretation if needed – a sign language interpreter and a spoken language interpreter.
6. Develop procedures to obtain other assistive technologies, such as Computer Assisted Realtime Transcription (CART) for the deaf, deaf-blind and/or hard of hearing individual.
7. Learn to work with sign and spoken language interpreters, and how relay interpretation and assistive technologies work.

## Resources

1. **Abused Deaf Women's Advocacy Services:** Training, technical assistance and publications on safety protocols and interpretation in ASL. [www.adwas.org](http://www.adwas.org)
2. **American Bar Association's Commission on Domestic Violence:** Materials on sign language interpretation in civil representation [www.americanbar.org/groups/domestic\\_violence/Trainings/Past-webinars/interpreter\\_webinar\\_series/](http://www.americanbar.org/groups/domestic_violence/Trainings/Past-webinars/interpreter_webinar_series/)
3. **National Resource Center on Domestic Violence:** Violence in the Lives of Persons who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. Materials include directory of organizations (listed by state) providing services to Deaf victims/survivors. [www.vawnet.org/special-collections/Deaf.php](http://www.vawnet.org/special-collections/Deaf.php)
4. **Ohio State Supreme Court: Model Language Access Plan:** [www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/JCS/interpreterSvcs/LSResources/LAP.pdf](http://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/JCS/interpreterSvcs/LSResources/LAP.pdf)
5. **Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc.** [www.rid.org](http://www.rid.org)
6. **Deaf Hope:** [www.deaf-hope.org](http://www.deaf-hope.org)