Auslan

Auslan (Australian Sign Language) is the language of the Australian Deaf Community. It is the preferred language of the majority of Deaf Australians. It is a highly visual language using signs, enhanced facial expressions and body language to communicate.

Working with Auslan Interpreters

Auslan interpreters convey meaning from spoken English into Auslan and vice versa, and may be either simultaneous or consecutive. The following factors are important to keep in mind when requesting an Auslan interpreter:

Qualification level of the Interpreter:

NAATI (the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters) provides the certification for Auslan interpreters.

- Certified Provisional interpreters are suitable for Centrelink and medical appointments, education, general workplace meetings etc.
- As well as being suitable for the settings mentioned above Certified Interpreters should be engaged for all Court or legal assignments, police work, mental health and conferences.

Occupational Health and Safety Requirements

Two interpreters are typically required for sessions over one hour. They work together in tandem to prevent mental and physical fatigue, and to comply with Occupational Health and Safety standards. By having interpreters work in tandem it ensures smooth uninterrupted and quality communication between all parties.

Deafblind/Tactile Interpreting

This form of interpreting is used by people who are both Deaf and have a vision impairment. The Deafblind individual places their hands over the interpreter’s and reads the signs through touch and movement. This can be exhausting for both the interpreter and the Deafblind client.

Breaks are even more important than with regular interpreting, and should be taken more often.

Correct seating can also reduce the risk of strain or injury; both parties should be comfortable and at an equal height. Specially designed cushioned tables for tactile signing is available.

Deaf Interpreters

A Deaf interpreter is a person who is themselves Deaf, and like an Auslan interpreter is highly skilled translating from one language to another. They transfer meaning between Auslan and an alternate form of communication that can be understood by individuals who are not using standard Auslan.

Deaf interpreters work together with an Auslan interpreter who will first interpret English to Auslan for the Deaf interpreter.
Why are Deaf interpreters necessary?
Deaf interpreters are often used in situations where clients may:
> Use a foreign sign language;
> Have minimal or limited communication skills.
> Use nonstandard signs or gestures that may be unique to their community or background.
> Be Deafblind or Deaf with a visual impairment.

Tips for successful interpreting sessions:
> Ensure lighting and seating arrangements allow for clear communication to take place.
> Interpreting between two different languages may take more or less time, depending on the differences between languages.
> The Deaf person will look at the interpreter and also at the person speaking when appropriate. The speaker should look at the Deaf person, not the interpreter.
> Allow time for the Deaf person to read any materials before continuing. Deaf people are unable to watch the interpreter and read at the same time. It is important to remember this if overheads or presentations are being used or notes need to be taken.
> In accordance with Occupational Health and Safety issues, regular breaks should be negotiated prior to commencement.
> Sometimes it is necessary to have two or more interpreters working in tandem. This usually occurs if the appointment is longer than one hour. The need for tandem interpreting can be clarified with the booking office.

Other services
Notetaking
Notetakers are used for Deaf or hard of hearing people. They provide accurate, legible notes to assist communication and between parties and for records. Notetakers must abide by professional ethical standards at all times.

Live Captioning
The instantaneous verbatim transcription of spoken English into text. Live captioning is available through Auslan Connections, using qualified stenographers, who can work onsite or remotely via a telephone or audio link. This is fast and accurate compared to notetaking. Captions are displayed through a projector or can be viewed through supported devices such as laptops, tablets or smartphones.

Video Remote Interpreting
Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) allows interpreting over the internet, enabling interpreting services to be delivered remotely.

About Expression Australia and Auslan Connections
Expression Australia is proudly a Deaf organisation, established in 1884. Their support extends to championing Deaf culture and Australian Sign Language (Auslan), as well as working to ensure that people who are Deaf, hard of hearing, LGBTIQA+ or experience barriers to inclusion have equal access to opportunities.

Auslan Connections is a specialist in the field of Auslan language services, providing the culturally sensitive and experienced Auslan; tactile and Deaf interpreters, as well as notetaking and live captioning services. They are proudly not-for-profit.