



Certified Deaf Interpreters

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A Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI) is an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing and has been certified by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) as an interpreter. A Deaf Interpreter (DI) is an individual who is in training to become a CDI. In New Mexico, both CDIs and DIs must be licensed by the New Mexico Regulation and Licensing Department. See the NMCDHH Fact Sheet regarding Interpreter Licensure for more information on that topic.

When is a CDI or DI needed?

When a deaf consumer uses a unique communication mode, a hearing interpreter may not be able to effectively provide communication access and a CDI or DI may be necessary to communicate effectively. Examples of unique communication modes may involve individuals:

- from other countries who use a foreign signed language.
- with minimal communication skills.
- who communicate with 'home-signs' rather than standard signed language.
- who are deaf-blind or have limited vision.

Why is a CDI or DI more effective?

Communication between two individuals who share the same native language and culture is generally more effective than between individuals working in their second or third language. Deaf interpreters also have specialized training in a variety of ways to effectively communicate with individuals using various non-standard modes of communication.

How does a CDI or DI work?

Most of the time, a deaf interpreter works as a team with a hearing interpreter to effectively facilitate communication between a deaf consumer and a hearing consumer. When the hearing consumer speaks, the hearing interpreter interprets the message to the deaf interpreter; then the deaf interpreter interprets the message to the deaf consumer. When the deaf consumer signs his or her response, the deaf interpreter interprets the message to the hearing interpreter, who voices it in English to the hearing consumer.

Deaf interpreters may also work with individuals who are deaf-blind, in conference settings on the platform during presentations, or independently.

For more detailed information, please see the Standard Practice Paper regarding Certified Deaf Interpreters at the RID website:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3DKvZMfIFLdbXFLVVFsbmRzTVU/view>