

## Police and legal professionals

# WHY SHOULD I BOOK AN AUSLAN INTERPRETER?

Accurate and accessible communication is not just considerate, it is an obligation of police and legal professionals as part of the administration of fair justice.

### Without an interpreter, you risk:

- Not obtaining accurate information in interviews with victims, alleged offenders or witnesses
- Placing the legal case against an alleged offender in jeopardy as the statement(s) obtained may be excluded from the State's case because an interpreter was not used

- Inaccurate testimony
- A wrongful conviction or acquittal
- Legal proceedings being inaccessible and not understood

### Deaf people communicate in a variety of ways, including:

- Australian Sign Language (Auslan)
- Another sign language or signed system
- A combination of lip reading, speech and signs
- Lip reading and speech

## Myths about communicating with deaf people:



### MYTH #1: LIP READING IS EASY

Lip reading actually requires a great deal of concentration, which can be compromised when someone is stressed, vulnerable or injured.



### MYTH #2: I CAN JUST WRITE TO THE PERSON.

For many Deaf people, their first language is not English but Auslan, a language with its own syntax, style and delivery. Written English carries with it a high risk of misunderstanding.



### MYTH #3: EVERYTHING CAN BE LIP READ

Only about 30% of English sounds occur on the lips. Other sounds occur, unseen, in the mouth and the back of the throat.



### MYTH #4: IF A DEAF PERSON SPEAKS AND/OR WEARS HEARING AIDS, THEN THEY CAN HEAR SPEECH.

Often hearing aids only provide limited access to environmental sounds such as a car or plane and only give limited access to speech. Just because a deaf person can vocalise, does not mean they can hear what you say.

You cannot be expected to be able to assess each deaf person's communication; you need a communication expert to do that... you need an interpreter.

### BOOK AN INTERPRETER

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