



Providing Interpreters for

PEOPLE WHO ARE DEAFBLIND

What is Deafblindness?

Deafblindness is the unique sensory disability of a combined loss of hearing and vision that significantly affects communication, socialisation, mobility and daily living. People with deafblindness can have varying degrees of hearing and vision loss combined.

Deafblind Communication

There are a number of diverse and adapted forms of Auslan and fingerspelling used to communicate by individuals who are deafblind. The most commonly used forms are:



VISUAL FRAME (BOX SIGNING)

Signs are made within a more confined space or box, at upper chest level and between interpreter's shoulders; distance from customer depends upon customer's individual preference.

SHORT-CUT SIGNS

Key signs that can be signed onto palm of customer's hand are used as a supplement to tactile fingerspelling; generally used in English word order.

CLOSE VISION

Same as above, but with interpreter directly in front of customer, within very close proximity.

PRINT ON PALM

Block capital letters drawn with your index finger on a person's palm for someone who has difficulty hearing speech or seeing print. Also a way for deafblind people to communicate with people who do not know sign language.

TRACKING

Customer holds wrist(s) of interpreter to keep signs within field of vision and to gain information from interpreter's movements.

When meeting with an individual who is deafblind it is important to:

TACTILE SIGNING (HAND OVER HAND)

Customer places hands over hands of interpreter to read signs through touch and movement.

- Know which communication form they use to communicate and ensure appropriate interpreters have been booked.
- Ensure there is proper lighting, comfortable seating with back support and a table for both the deafblind person and the interpreters.
- Ensure there are regular breaks taken as it is mentally and physically tiring for both the deafblind person and the interpreters.

TACTILE FINGERSPELLING (DEAFBLIND ALPHABET)

The two-hand manual alphabet is adapted to fingerspell letters onto palm of customer's hand.

BOOK A DEAFBLIND INTERPRETER WITH DEAF CONNECT

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