



## Working with Deaf Consumers in Mental Health and Substance Abuse Settings

While best practice is for face to face interaction with the provider, interpreter, and consumer in the same room, there can be mitigating circumstances when this may not be feasible such as availability, location, or sometimes preferences, which results in consumers who use interpreters working with a provider.

When interpreters are used, face to face interaction with the provider, interpreter, and consumer in the same room is best practice. There are mitigating circumstances when this may not be feasible. Providers must keep in mind that just because they do not speak the same language as their consumer they are not released from a moral and ethical obligation to address all communication directly to that consumer unless otherwise provided by law. It is never appropriate to ask friends or family members to speak for a deaf or LEP consumer.

Remote interpreting is an option that allows providers to continue serving their consumers when an in-person option is unavailable.

- Interpreting, whether in person or remotely, requires coordination ahead of time. In emergency situations, on-demand services may be an option. The Regional Interpreter Coordinator assigned to your area can help you find a solution that works for you and your consumer. Remote interpreting requires the use of video communication platforms such as Zoom, GotoMeeting, Microsoft Teams, Facetime, Videophone, etc.
  - This may be accomplished via a computer, tablet, smartphone, or center owned videoconferencing equipment.
  - Each device or platform will have a slightly different set up process. ODS staff is comfortable using various technologies and can give you guidance.
  - ODS primarily utilizes Zoom and can set up the video meeting for the center upon request, but any HIPAA compliant platform that your center prefers to utilize is an option for remote interpreting.
- DeafBlind consumers will require onsite interpreting services.

### REMOTE PLATFORMS

- A test call is recommended if the provider does not already have experience with the particular platform being utilized. Consider scheduling an extra 10-15 minutes prior to appointment to allow for technical setup, until comfortable.
  - Technical requirements for provider **to see consumer on video**:
    - A laptop/desktop computer or tablet with high speed internet
    - Ability to connect to high speed internet, WIFI signal may not be sufficient.
    - A camera attached to the device for video capabilities.
    - Microphone should be turned on
    - Speakers, volume may need to be adjusted
  - Consumer must also have a device to access any video platform and internet.
    - The camera should have the consumer in frame and in focus; at mid chest level and above; approximately two-three feet away from the consumer.
- Technical requirements for provider **through audio only**:
  - Provider can choose to utilize the audio only option of a video appointment (the interpreter and deaf consumer will need to be able to see each other).
  - Dial into the video platform session by phone with meeting number/password.