

DEAF INTAKE GUIDE

Case code for (sub area) : Various

Incident Field: (description)

Case Selection/Financial Criteria: screen as usual for non-Deaf clients

Conflict check – as indicated for specific area of law intake

STANDARD INTAKE QUESTIONS:

See specific area of law intake. However, questions are kept to a minimum as client is to be booked an I/O with an interpreter to get details. This intake section specifically deals with how to accommodate Deaf clients when doing intake. Accommodation is a human rights issue, and this section sets out how we will meet our obligation to meet the special needs of the Deaf.

HANDLING SPECIAL CLIENT GROUPS – HOW TO COMMUNICATE

The Deaf/Deafened/Hard of Hearing

Each staff member is expected to provide culturally sensitive services to Deaf clients and to accommodate their language needs. Review of these linked materials periodically is necessary to maintain and improve the quality of intake services we provide:

[Language options](#) (CHS, *A Guide For Service Providers and Businesses*, pg 3)

[Communication Tips](#) (CHS, *A Guide For Service Providers and Businesses*, pg 5)

[Basic ASL signs to welcome and greet client, and thank them](#)

[One-to-One communication with a Deaf Person](#)

[Accessibility: Deaf People and Interpreting Services](#) (CHS/OASLI)

[ARCH Reference Materials on Providing Service To People with Disabilities](#)

[CHS: Get Connected to Deaf, Deafened and Hard of Hearing People: A Guide for Service Providers and Businesses](#)

Clients may be [Deaf, Deafened or hard of hearing](#). How to communicate most effectively depends on both their language and their preference.

Handling Intake

We have special [intake guidelines for callers who are Deaf](#) (see our website).

Clients may first:

1. contact us by **email or text message**
2. call us by **telephone**
3. **Drop in** – most likely to our Belleville office.

1. Email

We may receive intake through email (our CALC General 3 account, calcgen3@lao.on.ca). The calcgen3 emails are auto-forwarded to all intake workers. Whoever is on intake when the forwarded email arrives in their inbox will be the one to respond to that email. It is preferred to respond to messages via the calcgen3 account, which means the intake worker will have to log on (in a separate session) as Gen3_calc and send a reply from there.

Text Messaging

Another method of reaching us is via text messaging. Deaf or hard of hearing clients may text us at calgen3@lao.on.ca from their cell phone. When we hit reply to this email, our response is sent back to their cell phone.

2. Telephone: First contact will likely be through:

- [Bell Relay Services](#) – an operator assisted message relay service (TTY 711, Voice 1-800-855-0511) or
- Clinic's dedicated [TTY](#) line (613/877) -966-8714.
- regular telephone where the client is using an amplification device and a regular telephone.

It is difficult to advise Deaf contacts adequately through Bell Relay Service. It is preferred to use our TTY equipment ([see OPPM section 2.3.7](#)) which is connected to a dedicated special line. See our OPPM Section 2.3.7, [appendix 1 \(TTY language\)](#) and [appendix 2 \(TTY abbreviations\)](#) for more information. More info on [TTY etiquette and abbreviations](#) can be found on the CHS website.

Instructions for using Bell Relay Service effectively

If you have to use the Bell Relay Service (BRS), please note the following:

- you speak to the relay operator as if s/he is the client
- the operator will relay the information both to the client and to you as if you are speaking directly to each other
- turns are taken speaking by saying "Go Ahead" or typing GA
- speak slowly so the operator can type what you are saying

How a BRS Call Works

- Type in the area code and phone number you would like to call, followed by GA (Go Ahead). (Note: Even if it is not a requirement to give the operator your name or the

name of the person you are trying to reach, doing so will make the call smoother when the operator connects with the other user).

- The operator will then dial the phone number you wish to reach. After a brief pause, the operator may tell you (either verbally or in writing): "I'm just explaining the Bell Canada Relay Service, please hold..."
- The BRS operator will let you know as soon as someone answers the call, i.e. "John is on the line, GA" (if you provided a name). (Optional - The TTY user may request Voice Carryover (VCO) or Hearing Carryover (HCO).
- One person speaks at a time. Turns are taken by saying "Go Ahead" or typing GA (Go Ahead).
- The TTY user types his/her message to the BRS operator who then voices (relays) it to the hearing person.
- When the hearing person speaks, the BRS operator types what is said to the TTY user. Speak slowly so the operator can type everything that you say. There will be brief silences as the operator waits for the typed response.
- Talk directly to the person you are calling, i.e. "I'm glad you called. You're welcome to join us." Don't use sentences directed to the operator, such as "Tell him that I am glad he called. Tell him that he can join us."
- All calls are kept strictly confidential. Only billing information is kept. No other record of the call is saved. Our operators are professionally trained and observe a very strict code of ethics
- Bell Relay [abbreviations](#) to use to communicate more easily with clients

3. Drop In Clients – Two options here to make Deaf Clients feel comfortable

(a) Staff are asked to use the basic ASL signs they have been taught to welcome the client if the client is fluent in sign. In emergency situations - using a large card with questions ([see end of this section](#)): Are you Deaf? Do you use sign language? Do you want an interpreter? Can you speak? Do you read lips? Can we write back and forth?

(b) View the tip sheet on communication "[One-to-One communication with a Deaf Person](#)" (pdf).

WHAT TO DO NEXT / NEXT STEPS FOR CALLER:

SCHEDULING APPOINTMENTS

Callers requiring extensive legal information where comprehension might be an issue, or complicated legal advice is necessary – should be booked for an in office appointment with an ASL or other interpreter. The intake worker should make an assessment of this and also consult with the Deaf client to see if this would be preferred. This is even if our intake guidelines indicate we would normally serve a hearing client over the telephone rather than by providing an in office appointment. If there is a wait for in office appointments, a telephone advice slot could be used for an

in-office consultation to ensure equal access to clinic services compared to a hearing contact.

In appropriate circumstances, these callers may need to be dealt with as Priority Service Matters (PSM). The Deaf client should not be leaving the clinic unless we are sure that we have understood why he/she has come to see us, and we have made arrangements for next steps.

BOOKING INTERPRETERS

It is our responsibility to book and pay for interpreters. We only use certified interpreters. In most cases, the client will require an ASL interpreter. In some cases, the client may also need a Deaf interpreter, depending on his/her level of communication skill.

To arrange for an interpreter contact the Ontario Interpreter Service (OIS) which is locally sponsored by the Canadian Hearing Society (CHS) at 613-966-8995 or email Jesina Smith, the booking coordinator directly at jsmith@belleville.chs.ca. The [Belleville CHS](#) is located at 470 Dundas Street East, Unit 51, and covers all of Hastings, Prince Edward, Lennox & Addington Counties.

If it is an **emergency during business hours**, you should call/email the local [Canadian Hearing Society](#) to make special arrangements.

For appointments, contact the CHS 2-4 weeks beforehand. (In 2007, the wait has been 4-5 weeks as there is always a booking delay due to the local interpreter crisis. CHS advises that on average the wait is regularly 2-3 weeks.) Ensure enough time is scheduled for the legal worker to deal with the client's issues, allowing for the extra time that an interpreter requires. A minimum charge of two hours now applies.

You will need to provide the following information:

- the name and telephone number of the client (check whether this is current – do we need email addresses also)
- date, time and location of the appointment
- the purpose of the appointment
- the number of people who will be present
- the urgency of the matter, i.e. illegal lockouts, hydro cut offs, etc.

Any assignment that is longer than two hours or is complex requires two sign language interpreters. The hourly fee is \$100.00 for up to two hours of service, billed to legal disbursements. Any time over the two hours is billed at \$50.00 for every hour or part thereof. **If we decide that we do not need the interpreter we must cancel at least 48 hours in advance or we have to pay the hourly rate.**

If a local interpreter is not available CHS also charges for the time to travel to and from the interpreters residence at 50% of the hourly interpreting rate minus the two hours of service (provided attendance is required for longer than two hours) and we have to pay the mileage per km rate

If CHS cannot provide an interpreter – there is also a private ASL certified interpreter available, Liz Rundle Interpreting Services. Her phone number is (613) 545-1156. Her email address is erundle@bellnet.ca.

Video conferencing options – CHS Belleville advises that video conferencing is done through CHS in Sudbury. The Belleville office is not aware of the costs involved or how it all works, we will have to contact Sudbury for more information at 705-522-1020.

Emergencies after business hours: There is an [After Hours Emergency Sign Language Interpreter Service](#) available through Ontario Interpreter Services and The Ontario Association of the Deaf (OAD). However, this service is **only for health and mental health emergencies**, and the service is only available from 5 pm to 9 am weeknights and 24 hours a day on weekends and holidays. Also, view the [latest OIS Update - December 2006](#) (PDF, 4 pgs). The after hours emergency interpreter can be booked by [email](#) at OIS@answerplus.ca. The call centre checks emails at one minute intervals. You will need to provide your name, kind of emergency, city you are in and where you want the interpreter to meet you. You can also reach them via TTY at 1-866-831-4657 or phone 1-866-256-5142.

LEGAL DISBURSEMENTS FOR INTERPRETER COSTS

Special disbursement procedures apply. These charges are never billed to the client.

The [disbursement section of the OPPM](#) reads: When an interpreter is scheduled for a Deaf client, the staff person booking the appointment will complete a cheque requisition and put it in the appointment “bring forwards” file. The cheque requisition will be given to the legal worker on the date of the appointment. The legal worker will sign the requisition, note the length of the appointment and return to the support staff responsible for disbursements.

USING INTERPRETER SERVICES

Interpreters are professionally bound by confidentiality requirements. A confidentiality statement is not required.

Best practices for working with interpreters are found on the [OASLI website](#) (Ontario Association of Sign Language Interpreters). Specifically, their “*Working with Interpreters*” section which includes the following pages: [Communicating Through an Interpreter](#), [Communicating with Deaf People](#), [Negotiating Terms](#), [Maintaining Quality Service](#), and [Interpreter Well-Being](#). You can also visit the Association of Visual Language Interpreters of Canada (AVLIC) site to view the [AVLIC Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Professional Conduct](#) (or download [PDF](#)). Members of the OASLI are expected to uphold these guidelines.

Meeting with an interpreter for 15 minutes ahead of the client meeting time is often helpful if there are complicated documents or matters to be discussed – copies should be provided to the interpreter in advance.

WORKING WITH DEAF CLIENTS

Usually an interpreter will be booked for client appointments, unless a client has advised s/he does not wish an interpreter.

Also, for ongoing client contact it may not always be necessary to use an interpreter. You must be absolutely certain that electronic communications are acceptable as an alternate with the client. If in doubt, use an interpreter. Depending on the client's level of literacy, and access to computer or other information technology like a Blackberry, it may be possible to communicate using email.

Although we usually do not engage in physical contact with clients, it is ok to tap on a client's shoulder to get their attention, if waving at them doesn't work.

There are special rules for swearing Affidavits for Deaf clients where they have limited proficiency in written English or French. [Rule 4.06\(8\)](#) requires the lawyer to certify that the affidavit was interpreted to the client by an interpreter who swore or affirmed to interpret the contents correctly.

REFERRALS

Where the clinic normally would not give summary advice:

Accessing the local Legal Aid Area Offices - If Deaf clients need to access the local Area Office of Legal Aid Ontario, they must either use the Bell Relay service or call the regular number or access services by calling a provincial toll-free TTY service at 1-866-641-8867.

For more information on **Deaf Sensitivity Orientation** (working with Deaf clients in groups or public meetings with interpreters present), see [Section 6.0, Appendix 1](#) of the OPPM.

QUESTIONS ON INITIAL CONTACT:

Are you Deaf?

Do you use sign language?

Do you want an interpreter?

Can you speak?

Do you read lips?

Can we write back and forth on paper?