

# **The Deaf Community & the Denver Police**

**Office of Sign Language Services**  
**Human Rights & Community Relations**





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# Working with an Interpreter

- ▶ Logistics
- ▶ Speaking pace
- ▶ Process of using an interpreter



# Overview

- ▶ Working with a Sign Language Interpreter
- ▶ Terminology
- ▶ Deaf Community Composition & Cultural Information
- ▶ Communication Options
- ▶ When/How to Obtain a Sign Language Interpreter
- ▶ Basic signs & ABCs



# TERMINOLOGY



# Deaf:

- ▶ Moderate–profound hearing loss
- ▶ Associates with Deaf culture
- ▶ Generally communicates using American Sign Language
- ▶ Outdated terms: Deaf–mute, Deaf & Dumb, hearing impaired





# Hard of Hearing:



- ▶ Mild to moderate hearing loss
- ▶ Does not necessarily associate with the Deaf culture
- ▶ With use of a hearing aid, may be able to function fairly comfortably in a hearing world

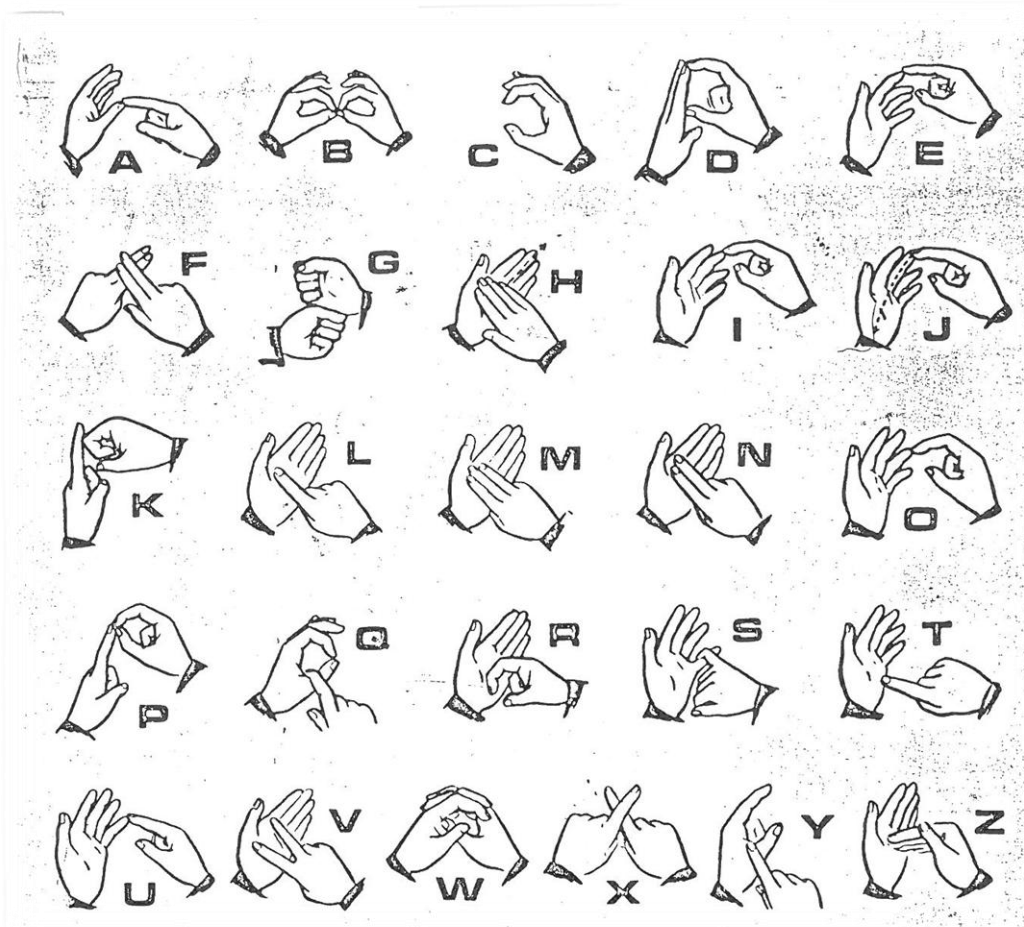


# American Sign Language (ASL):

- ▶ Native language for majority of Deaf people in the United States
- ▶ Visual/spatial language with structural & grammatical rules that differ from the English
  - Has dialects
  - Not universal
- ▶ Recognized in CO as a foreign language



# British Sign Language (BSL) Alphabet



# Dialects: 22 Ways to Sign “Birthday”



1 Alabama



2 Arkansas



3 California

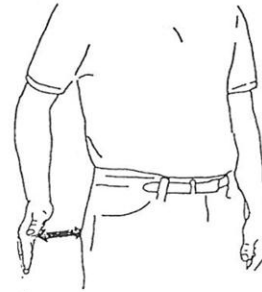


4 Colorado, Ohio

## birthday



5 Florida



6 Hawaii



7 Illinois (1 of 2)



8 Illinois (2 of 2), Louisiana



9 Kentucky



10 Maine, Massachusetts (1 of 2),  
Pennsylvania (1 of 2)

## birthday



11 Massachusetts (2 of 2)



12 Michigan, North Dakota



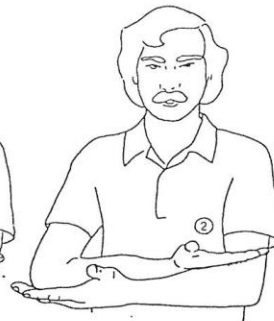
13 Missouri (1 of 2), North Carolina



14 Missouri (2 of 2)



15 New Mexico, Texas



## birthday



16 New York



17 Pennsylvania (2 of 2)



18 South Carolina



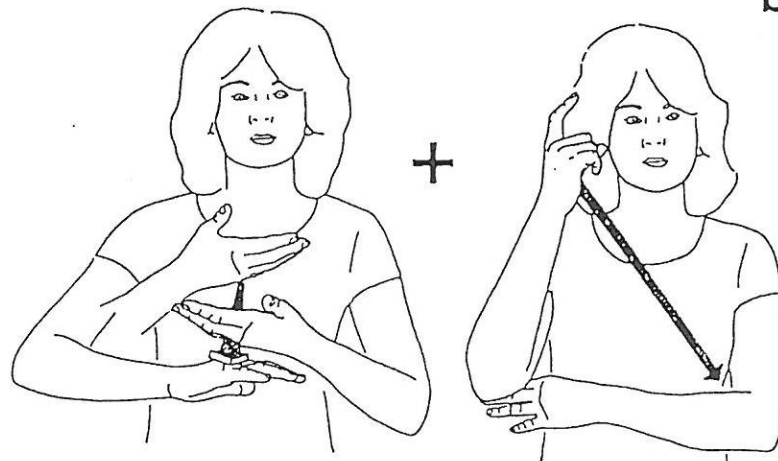
19 Utah



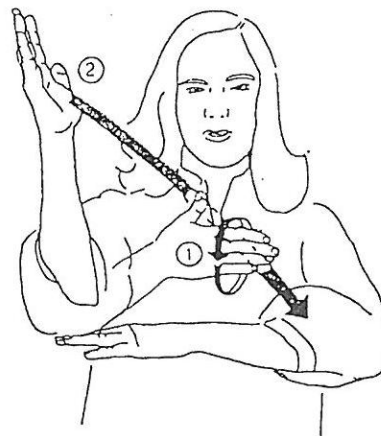
20 Virginia



birthday



21 Washington



22 Wisconsin



## **Sign Language Interpreter:**

- ▶ Uses manual communication to relay information between hearing and deaf parties
- ▶ Colorado Statutes



## **Certified Deaf Interpreter:**

- ▶ A Deaf person working as an intermediary interpreter
- ▶ Has extensive knowledge & expertise in Deaf- Culture and dialects

# DEAF COMMUNITY COMPOSITION & CULTURAL INFORMATION



# Deaf/Hard of Hearing Community

- ▶ @ 34,000 Deaf people in Colorado
- ▶ @19,000 in Denver metro area
- ▶ Protected class of people
- ▶ Legislation for their protection (ADA)
- ▶ Required access to all programs and services--unlike foreign language speakers

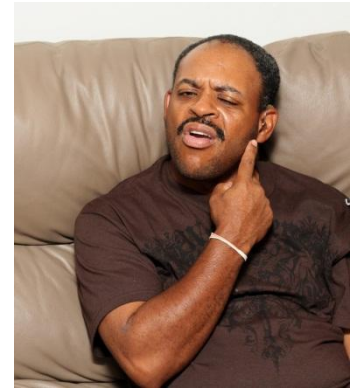


- ▶ **Linguistic/cultural genre of Deaf community: monolingual, bilingual, oral, manual**



- ▶ Not all are same: age of onset of deafness, degree of hearing loss
- ▶ Educational background: school for the deaf vs. mainstreamed school
- ▶ Experience in dealing with people who can hear

# Recognizing Deafness



- ▶ Person shakes head & points to ears
- ▶ Person gestures indicating he needs written notes
- ▶ Moves hands in a repeated pattern, trying to communicate in sign language
- ▶ Appears very alert, watches faces intently but does not respond to sounds or language
- ▶ Reacts to environmental noises (siren, alarm, loud noise) but does not understand speech

# Attention Getting Strategies

- ▶ Walk around in front
- ▶ Wave your hand, or tap on hand, arm or shoulder  
Do *not* tap him on his/her back
- ▶ Flash headlights, flashlight, or an overhead light in front of the deaf person



# COMMUNICATION OPTIONS



# Written Communication

- ▶ English is a second language for most deaf people
- ▶ The average deaf person reads & writes English at a 4<sup>th</sup> grade level
- ▶ Don't assume that writing back & forth is "good enough"



***Hello Sara,***

***Are you surprised me wrote to you message huh!? I wish see you before I leave here for x-mas vacation. I not want to forget to tell you about your sister. I want to know your sister address so I can write to her that's why.***

***I see you next year. Have a nice Merry Christmas and also Happy New Year.***

***Pete***



*Dear Ms. Miller,*



*Letter sent your got me hello me. Me hello  
letter sent you for fair. You take dinner me.  
Saturday OK? Me time 8 p.m. Go house your pick  
up OK? Quick sent letter me tell no, other time  
me got Saturday morning, OK? If no get pick up  
your house time 8 address my:*

*625 Greenwood Drive*

*zipper for fly fast 91403*

*Phone no. my Aunt 784-1940*

*Up Thumb  
Beverly*

## -- Your Rights--

- ☐ *You don't have to say anything about this case. Anything you say can be used against you. You have the right to testify if there is a trial but you do not have to testify. If you **remain silent**, your silence can't be used against you*
- ☐ You have the right to a lawyer at every step of
- ☐ *If you can't afford to hire your own lawyer and if there is a possibility that you might receive a jail sentence, then you have the right to ask the court to **appoint** a lawyer for you.*
- ☐ You have the right to a **speedy and public trial**.
- ☐ You have the right to have a trial to a judge or to a jury.
- ☐ If you want a jury trial, you must ask for one in writing and pay a \$25.00 jury fee within ten (10) days after you **plead** not guilty. If you can't afford to pay the jury fee, you may ask the court to **waive** the fee within ten (10) days after you plead not guilty.

- ❑ You have the right to bail. *You also have the right to ask the court to **reduce** your bail if you are unable to pay for or **obtain** it.*
- ❑ You are **presumed** innocent of the charges and you have the right to demand at trial that the **prosecution** prove each and every **element** of the charges **beyond a reasonable doubt**.
- ❑ You have the right at trial to confront the witnesses against you and to cross-examine these persons. You also have the right to **present evidence** in your own **defense** **subpoena witnesses** to testify without expense to you.
- ❑ You have the right to appeal **decisions** this court to a higher court.
- ❑ If you decide to plead guilty or no contest to any charge or charges, you stated that:
  - a. You are making a **plea knowingly** and **voluntarily**. No one has **threatened, coerced** or **unduly influenced** you to make you **plea**.

b. You are not under the **influence of any drugs, intoxicants, or medication which would interfere** with your ability to understand your rights as **explained in this pamphlet.**

c. You understand that:

(i) The sentence is up to the judge or **referee** who is not bound by any **representations** made to you by anyone concerning the sentence to be **imposed.**

(ii) *There is a **factual basis** for your **pleas** since you agree you could have been found guilty had this case gone to trial, OR you give up your right to a **factual basis** as a **result of a plea bargain agreement with the prosecutor.***

(iii) You give up your rights relating to having a trial, mentioned in this **pamphlet.** You also give up your right to an attorney if you don't already have one.

# Lip-Reading

- ▶ Don't assume a Deaf person can lip-read, or speak
- ▶ Approximately 90% do not lip-read proficiently
- ▶ Only 25–35% of speech is visible on the lips





# Gestures

- ▶ There are natural gestures you can use to communicate with a deaf person:
  - Wait
  - Come here
  - Over there
  - Calm down
  - Read this
  - Fill this out



# Auxiliary Devices

- ▶ Telephone Device for Deaf
- ▶ VCO phone/Captioned Phones
- ▶ Text pagers
- ▶ Relay Colorado/ Internet Relay



# Auxiliary Devices

- ▶ Video Phone
- ▶ Video Relay



# Visual Alarms



Strobe Light/  
Phone Ring Alert



Door Bell Alert



Smoke Detector

# **SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS & » COLORADO STATUTES**

# Interpreters & Denver Police

- ▶ Qualifications are much more stringent than for spoken language interpreters
  - Federal & State Legislation
  - Legal Setting vs. Non-Legal Setting
- ▶ Currently no statute regulating spoken language interpreters



# **Colorado Statute**

## **CRS 13-90-201 through 13-90-209**

- ▶ **Certified by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID)**
- ▶ **Complete at least 100 hours of specialized legal training**
- ▶ **Abide by a Code of Professional Conduct requiring neutrality and confidentiality**





# Colorado Title Protection Act

- ▶ Cannot use the titles...
  - Sign language interpreter
  - Deaf interpreter...
- ▶ ...Unless you hold RID certification
- ▶ Those not holding RID certification are strongly discouraged from acting as an interpreter for law enforcement personnel

# When/How to Obtain an Interpreter

- ▶ Length, complexity, and deaf person's communication abilities
- ▶ According to Title II of the ADA, police officers are responsible for calling/providing the interpreter
- ▶ Call dispatch
- ▶ Billing already approved by Chief White



# Wrap-Up

- ▶ Questions/comments
- ▶ Teach ABCs
- ▶ Teach basic signs

