

## Communication Options for Deaf/Hard of Hearing Individuals

### Interpreter\*

Transmits spoken English into American Sign Language\*\* and/or gestures for communication between deaf and hearing people.

\*\* American Sign Language (ASL) is the language used by culturally Deaf individuals in the United States. There are many different sign languages throughout the world.

### Transliterater\*

Transmits spoken English into one of several English-oriented varieties of manual communications between deaf and hearing people.

- **Signed Exact English** — a form of communication/ instruction in which signs are used in exact English word order, with some additional signs representing conventions such as the, “ing” word ending.
- **Cued Speech** — a sound-based visual communication system, which uses eight hand shapes in four different locations, in combination with the natural mouth movements of speech, to make the sounds of spoken language look different

\*According to the Americans with Disabilities Act, a qualified interpreter is “an interpreter who is able to interpret effectively, accurately and impartially both receptively and expressively, using any necessary specialized vocabulary”.

### CART

Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) writers type into a stenographic machine, which is connected to a computer. The computer translates the stenotype shorthand into English which is simultaneously displayed on a computer monitor or projected onto a screen. CART enables communication access for deaf persons who are literate, but cannot/do not sign.

### Other Options

- **Lipreading/Speechreading** — A technique of understanding speech by visually interpreting movements of the tongue, lips and face with information provided by context, language and residual hearing. Unless a deaf individual expresses comfort with lip-reading, do not assume he/she can communicate in this way. Only 30% -- 40% of sounds are distinguishable from sight alone.
- **Writing Notes** — A technique of communicating with deaf individuals by writing messages back and forth. Unless a deaf individual expresses comfort with writing notes, do not assume he/she can communicate in this way. Keep in mind that the grammar, syntax and form of American Sign Language are completely different from English.
- **Speech** — Some deaf (especially late-deafened or mainstream educated) and hard of hearing people can and do voice for themselves. If you have difficulty understanding an individual’s speech, politely ask him/her to repeat himself/herself or suggest an alternate method of communication.