

## **Legal Interpreting Skill Development Activity: IMPROVING COMPREHENSION OF ASL LEGAL TEXTS**

### **Activities:**

One of the most effective ways to enhance your ASL receptive skills is through regular and productive association within the Deaf Community. Learning to NEGOTIATE for understanding is critical. It is easy to get frustrated and just give-up. But there are effective ways to get at the information you missed. Merely asking to have information repeated is not enough. Try some of these strategies:

- If you do not catch a fingerspelled word, ask if it is the name of a person, place, or thing. This information, along with the context in which the word was spelled, will often help you to understand the word much quicker than having it respelled several times.
- When there is a portion of a message you miss, paraphrase for the deaf person what you have understood up to that point. This demonstrates that you are not totally lost, but just looking for a certain piece of information.
- Another strategy is to ask questions about what you do understand. For example, if you miss a part of a message relating to a person's work, ask if the part you missed was about their job or something that happened at their place of employment. Often by asking questions, you will more readily get the context and details you missed. This also indicates to the deaf person that you share in the responsibility for negotiating understanding.
- Ask questions about what you missed, based on the context you have understood so far. Ask whom, what, when, where, why and how questions as a starting place. Also, try to predict possible relationships between pieces of information and suggest them to the deaf person. They will guide you into the right answers when they see you are committed to helping yourself UNDERSTAND.

Another way to improve comprehension is to view and analyze ASL LEGAL texts from a variety of speakers. View a text and map what you understand. View again in an effort to use the mapping from your first viewing and expand your understanding of missing pieces. Keep building your comprehension of the text until you understand it all. If you find you are missing the same kind of information each time — such as information that is fingerspelled or numbers or pronouns (who is speaking or who is the agent and receiver of action) or transitions between topics, then work on those pieces by engaging in activities described in other skill development activity sheets from the GENERAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT folder.

### **Resource Materials:**

#### **ASL Texts with legal context**

1. <https://www.northeastern.edu/cali/annotated-bibliography/>

CALI annotated bibliography

2. <https://youtu.be/TC5Oq9UQ8VM>

Tips for lawyers working with deaf or deafblind clients in ASL [about 7 minutes in length, sound included and needs to be turned off]

3. <https://youtu.be/dKBYwkPX5d8>

ASL discussion about working with your lawyer, female signer [about 8 minutes in length]

4. <https://youtu.be/699ionfzzVM>

Deaf Interpreters at Work, Mock Trial — model interpretations of D-H team [about 45 minutes]

5. <https://youtu.be/dKBYwkPX5d8>

ASL explanation of issues with family law by a Deaf advocate [about 8 minutes in length, turn off sound]

6. <https://youtu.be/l00YfmnsHVo>

Deaf POC discussing in ASL how to file an ADA complaint [about 6 minutes in length, sound included and needs to be turned off]

7. [https://youtu.be/\\_-7u6u3aKM4](https://youtu.be/_-7u6u3aKM4)

Deaf POC man discussing his problems with using VRI interpreting in hospital setting [10.5 minutes in length]

8. <https://youtu.be/rAoaE-URJwY>

Street Leverage Video on Legal ramifications of Federal Court Decision on interpreters presented in ASL [about 25 minutes]

9. [https://youtu.be/RM\\_tBDKuK0o](https://youtu.be/RM_tBDKuK0o)

Disability law podcast in ASL with English voice over that can be turned off [7 minutes in length]

10. [https://youtu.be/iDyHagGt\\_ns](https://youtu.be/iDyHagGt_ns)

ASL discussion of voter restrictions in Wisconsin [5 minutes in length]

11. [https://youtu.be/AaU\\_9RITvFs](https://youtu.be/AaU_9RITvFs)

ASL video on marriage and divorce from Canada [not current in terms of same-sex marriage] [6 minutes in length]

12. <https://youtu.be/VPUqxyk6k4U>

ASL video on Fair Housing [15 minutes in length]

13. <https://youtu.be/ikl5vhv3lcY>

Alternative Dispute Resolution and Family Law in ASL [9.5 minutes in length]

14. <https://youtu.be/zPCngfGI9WA>

Criminal and Family Law in ASL [13.5 minutes in length]

15. <https://youtu.be/4LBjjS9ABnA>

Deaf woman explaining her interpreting problems at hospital [9.5 minutes in length]

16. <https://youtu.be/MWZ7XWqyTTg>

End of life directives, female ASL signer [7 minutes in length]