

Relay Intralingual Interpreters

Relay Intralingual Interpreters (commonly referred to as Deaf Relays) are Deaf language professionals who support effective communication for d/Deaf individuals. They are NRCPD registered or equivalent professionals. A BSL interpreter must also be booked or must also attend the booking, to ensure information is not only translated, but fully understood.

What do they do?

A Relay Intralingual Interpreter adapts information that has been interpreted into British Sign Language (BSL) into a form that is accessible to the Deaf person they are supporting.

They may:

- Use more visual or simplified signs
- Adapt language to suit the Deaf persons communication style
- Adjust the pace of communication
- Check and confirm understanding
- Support the Deaf person to express themselves clearly.

Their role is to bridge any gaps between standard BSL and the Deaf persons own language or communication needs.

When are they used?

Relay Intralingual Interpreters are used when working with Deaf individuals who may:

- Have minimal language skills
- Use highly personalised communication
- Have additional communication needs
- Have learning disabilities or mental health conditions.

They are often required in settings where clear understanding is essential, including healthcare, mental health services, social care, education, and the criminal justice sector.

How do they work with BSL/English Interpreters?

Relay Intralingual Interpreters work as part of a team with a BSL/English Interpreter. The process typically works as follows:

- The hearing person speaks
- The BSL/English Interpreter translates into BSL to the Relay Intralingual Interpreter
- The Relay Intralingual Interpreter adapts this into an accessible form for the Deaf person.
- The Deaf person responds.
- The Relay Intralingual Interpreters translates this into BSL to the BSL/English Interpreter
- The BSL/English Interpreter translates this into spoken English to the hearing person

Why are they important?

Not all Deaf people use standard BSL. Relay Intralingual Interpreters provide an additional layer of support to ensure communication is clear, accurate, and meaningful.

They help reduce misunderstandings, support informed decision-making, and ensure the Deaf person's voice is fully heard.

