



Information and Resources for VRI

Benefits of VRI

- Communication access is provided faster and easier
- Access to quality interpreting services
- Cost-effective

Appropriate Use of VRI

Effective use of VRI requires the use of qualified, highly skilled, linguistically competent interpreters who adhere to the professional code of conduct and professional interpreting standards, and who are experienced in the setting they are working in whether it is medical, educational, legal, or mental health. Even when using a highly qualified interpreter, it is important for all parties to understand that VRI has benefits as well as limitations.

Interpreters can be provided with little notice, even on demand as the need for an interpreter arises. The most highly qualified interpreters in a region can be utilized for assignments regardless of physical location of deaf consumer, providing access to highest quality interpreting services even when such interpreters do not live on the same island. VRI is also a means of reducing interpreting costs eliminating two-hour minimums, mileage costs, and airfare for hiring agencies on neighbor islands.

However, VRI has its limitations that should always be taken into consideration. VRI may not be appropriate for the following types of situations:

- Large unstructured meetings with multiple participants that require a great deal of interaction
- Complex philosophical discussions containing unclear intentions or multiple meanings
- Topics that are sensitive in nature
- Settings that involve persons with secondary disabilities like low vision as this may limit their ability to use the technology

It is highly recommended that VRI include the use of certified deaf interpreters (CDIs) when interpreting for young children, persons from outside the United States, persons with limited language proficiency, and persons with idiosyncratic language patterns.

An interpreter working remotely will experience fatigue quicker than when working on site. Therefore, video remote interpreting sessions should alternate interpreters over shorter length of time in order to provide sufficient rest breaks. Teaming is commonly used to ensure that does not affect the quality of video remote interpretation. At times the team interpreter may need to be a deaf interpreter especially when the deaf consumer has limited language abilities.

The appropriate use of VRI should be determined by the scheduler, meeting organizers, and the hearing and deaf participants by considering the topic, environmental setting, and the technical/technological aspect.

Topic Considerations

It is important for all parties involved in the VRI session to have shared knowledge on the topic to be discussed including the interpreter. The interpreter should be experienced in working in this type of situation and familiar with the content. If the requester can provide the interpreter with information prior to the assignment, s/he will be better prepared to interpret for the topic and the session is likely to be more effective.

Environmental Setting Considerations

Setting factors that need to be taken into consideration include:

- Lighting
- Seating arrangements
- Line of sight of both deaf, hard of hearing participants to the video screen and the interpreters line of sight to the consumer via the video camera
- Location of cameras
- Mobility of cameras
- Location of consumers in relation to one another
- Location of consumers in relation to the camera
- Use of microphone
- Use of speakers
- Background movement and noise
- Clothing colors and pattern
- Interpreter or deaf consumer's idiosyncrasies

Technical/Technological Considerations

VRI requires the following:

- An Internet connection either wired or wireless
- Equipment for accessing VRI
- Staff familiar with video conferencing technology
- Access to tech-support or staff able to troubleshoot technical issues as they arise
- Time to arrange technology and logistics—testing equipment and connections

Additional Resources on VRI

For more information regarding VRI and the use of VRI in educational, medical, legal, mental health settings is available:

RID standard practice paper on Video Remote Interpreting http://www.rid.org/UserFiles/File/pdfs/Standard_Practice_Papers/VRI_SPP.pdf

National Association of the Deaf's position statement on VRI Services in Hospitals <http://nad.org/issues/technology/vri/position-statement-hospitals>

National Association of the Deaf's advocacy statement on the Use of VRI in Medical Settings

<http://nad.org/issues/technology/vri/advocacy-statement-medical-setting>

An ADA Title II Fact Sheet of the Department of Justice regulations on the recent changes to the ADA that include Video Remote Interpreting as a form of effective communication effective March 15, 2011.

https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/factsheets/title2_factsheet.html