



Policies and Procedures for Notetakers

Requesting Notetakers

Effective as of January 2009

1. Introduction

The Deaf Society of NSW provides a wide range of services and programs to people who use Auslan (Australian Sign Language) as their primary means of communication.

The goal of this organisation is "to work within the community to ensure Deaf people achieve their full rights and fulfil their responsibilities as Australian citizens".

The Deaf Society provides notetakers in any situation where Deaf, hard of hearing or Hearing people wish to have all meetings or classes recorded. The Society responds to requests from either party. Notetakers are often booked for meetings, student lectures or tutorials.

Further information can be obtained from an Interpreting Service Officer or Manager, Interpreting and Advocacy at the Deaf Society of NSW.

2. Role of notetakers

The Deaf Society has a small number of notetakers who are available to assist if you are having difficulty making your own notes. A notetaker can be provided to take notes in plain English. They can also explain the notes to you on completion of the work provided.

The notes will be saved on a USB drive supplied by the Deaf Society of NSW. This information will then be saved on the DSNSW computer by the Interpreting Service Officer. The notes will be emailed to you the following day.

3. Selection of notetakers

Sourcing of notetakers and allocation of assignments are at the discretion of the Interpreting Service Officers.

Notetakers are accountable to the Manager, Interpreting and Advocacy, in the fulfilment of their duties.

The Society maintains a register of notetakers that includes skills and previous work experience, contact information, availability and preferred areas of work.

4. Qualifications/selection process for note takers

There are no formal qualifications for note taking however the following is required

- Past experience in notetaking
- Excellent written skills and an ability to organise information in a logical sequence
- A good command of spoken English
- Knowledge and procedures of meeting and classroom situations
- Good memory
- Proofreading skills
- Time management and organisation skills
- Reliability.

5. Requirements

It is important that you discuss your support needs with the Interpreting Service Officer, before you make a booking. A suitable notetaker will be sourced to meet your needs.

Where a notetaker is working independently, she or he will require a **10-minute break**

during every working hour. When planning a program for which a notetaker is required, scheduled breaks need to be incorporated into that program. The notetaker will not work through any scheduled breaks.

Where an assignment is longer than two hours in duration or is particularly demanding, two notetakers may be required. In these instances, notetakers will alternate every twenty to thirty minutes. This is necessary to:

- Ensure continual flow of accurate information
- Reduce notetaker fatigue
- Reduce the likelihood of Occupational Overuse Syndrome

To assist the notetaker to prepare adequately for the assignment, the person requesting service should provide the notetaker, in advance, and via an Interpreting Services Officer, with any relevant material, such as:

- Paperwork - agenda of the meeting, minutes of meetings (preceding and current), subject matter to be discussed, names of those attending meeting/interview/conference etc, copies of speeches/papers to be given and scripts of videos to be used (if the video/s is not subtitled)
- Terminology/specific language, jargon or acronyms commonly used
- Relevant information regarding the appointment – for example, specialisation of doctor; whether a male or female notetaker is required.

The notetaker will aim to arrive 15 minutes before the booking in order to:

- Meet the client(s) and establish the appropriate level of communication to be used
- Be briefed by service providers about the content of the assignment
- If necessary, conduct pre-interviews with both Hearing and Deaf and/or hard of hearing clients to brief them about the notetaker's role
- Negotiate work conditions specific to the assignment

Notetakers will wait for a minimum of 30 minutes for the client(s) to arrive. Should the client(s) fail to appear, the notetaker may leave after having consulted with the employer or their representative and contacted the Deaf Society. In this situation, the Society will claim for the time for which the notetaker was booked.

Notetakers are required to ensure all information is kept confidential.

6. How to make a booking

Bookings for notetakers will go through the online booking system.

First time users:

1. Open Internet Explorer as your browser
2. Open <http://interpreting.deafsocietynsw.org.au>
3. Click on register
4. Complete all relevant fields on the screen including setting your username and password
5. Click Save (top right hand corner of the screen)
6. Enter your username and password and click on Log In
7. You should now view a menu on the left side of the screen
8. Click on New Request
9. View our terms and conditions by clicking on the link provided and if you are satisfied with these click the checkbox and then Proceed
10. Enter the details of the notetaker request and once completed click on Submit in the top right hand part of the screen
11. Log out

Existing users:

1. Enter your username and password and click on Log In
2. Select one of the options from the menu displayed on the left side of the screen
 - a. Home
 - b. New request
 - c. All bookings
 - d. My details
 - e. Log out

If you have any technical difficulties please contact one of our Interpreting Service Officers

Phone: 02 8833 3611

TTY: 02 9893 8858

Fax: 02 8212 5836

Email/MSN: interpreting@deafsociety.com

If a notetaker is not available you will be advised at least two full working days prior to the assignment.

7. Fees

The cost of notetaking is \$44.00 per hour for a minimum of 2 hours.

Cancellation charges will apply if less than five working days notice is provided.

If a booking is cancelled by a client, the following fees are applicable:

- more than 5 full working days nil
- 2-5 full working days before 25% of fee
- 1-2 full working days before 50% of fee
- 1 full working day or less 100% of fee

Travel expenses:

- For assignments within the Sydney metropolitan area, fees charged are inclusive of travelling expenses.
- For notetakers travelling outside the Sydney metropolitan area, a charge of \$0.57 per kilometre plus a further payment of half the hourly fee is payable where the notetaker must travel a distance of greater than 100km for the round journey.
- Preference is given to notetakers who live in the region of a job, and a travel allowance will be paid only if the Interpreting Service Officer is unable to fill a job with an appropriate local notetaker.

This policy is a living document and is subject to change. The latest version is available on the Deaf Society of NSW website.