

**City of Norwich  
Effective Communication Guidelines  
for Persons with Disabilities**

The City of Norwich is committed to providing accessibility to people with disabilities as required under Title II of the ADA. Part of this obligation requires the City to communicate effectively with people who have visual, hearing and speech disabilities. The goal of effective communication is the same as the general goal of the ADA: **To provide equal opportunity.**

The effective communication obligation in Title II includes a provision called "primary consideration." This provision requires that a covered entity make a significant effort to provide the specific communication aid or service requested by an individual.

**GUIDELINES**

The following information will guide the City toward effective communication for persons with visual, hearing and speech disabilities. Requests to provide effective communication should be directed to **Brigid Marks, the City's ADA Coordinator at 860-823-3786 or [bmarks@cityofnorwich.org](mailto:bmarks@cityofnorwich.org).**

**Visual Disabilities**

**Material in alternative format:**

Upon request, generic written material that is regularly made available to the public will be produced in large print, Arial font, 16 point with sharp contrast. Written material of a less general nature will be produced in large print within a reasonable amount of time according to the print specifications of the individual making the request.

Requests for material in Braille will be fulfilled in a timely fashion.

Braille vendors are:

Eileen Akers, Norwich  
860-889-7860  
[e.g.akers@sbcglobal.net](mailto:e.g.akers@sbcglobal.net)

Connecticut Braille Association  
Micki McCabe, Computer Coordinator  
203-227-5243  
[Micki1@juno.com](mailto:Micki1@juno.com)

Upon request, the City will provide, in a timely fashion and when practicable, material in electronic format.

City personnel will honor reasonable requests for oral delivery of information.

## **Hearing Disabilities**

### **Sign language interpretation:**

Upon request, the City will make every effort to provide sign language interpretation for City-sponsored events as appropriate. Requests for sign language interpretation should be made at least 7 business days in advance of the event. The City will, however, attempt to fulfill requests made after that time window. Note that, under Connecticut State statute 46a-33a, only certified interpreters registered with the State Department of Rehabilitation Services are allowed to take payment for interpretation. Registered and certified sign language interpreters are available through:

Source Interpreting

<http://www.sourceinterpreting.com>

Life Bridge Community Services

<http://www.lifebridgect.org/program/deaf-outreach-interpreting-services/>

### **Relay system**

Some people who are Deaf or are hard of hearing communicate long-distance through relay. Relay is a telephone-based process that utilizes a third person for communication. The below website describes the Connecticut relay system:

<http://www.relayconnecticut.com>

Many Deaf people now use another telephone relay system that incorporates video. These calls are generally initiated by the Deaf person, but they can be returned and subsequently utilized by a hearing person.

### **Assistive listening system:**

The City Council chamber is equipped with an assistive listening system. Members of the public who wish to use this system may reserve a device by seeing the City Clerk up to 15 minutes before a Council meeting or by calling the City Clerk's Office Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at 860-823-3732.

### **Miscellaneous practices**

In situations where routine information is exchanged, people who are Deaf or hard of hearing may use lip-reading or request the use of pen and paper. City personnel should respond effectively and respectfully to such requests.

## **Speech Disabilities**

Although most effective communication policies address people with sensory disabilities, effective communication is also relevant to people with speech disabilities. Effective communication with a person who has a speech disability may include use of relay; electronic communication; or person-to-person contact.

### **Statement**

As part of its effective communication obligation, the City will post an appropriate variation of the following statement on the City website, department bulletin boards and on public bulletin boards in City Hall:

**Requests for written material in alternative format or sign language interpretation should be directed to the City's ADA Coordinator Brigid Marks at 860-823-3786 or [bmarks@cityofnorwich.org](mailto:bmarks@cityofnorwich.org). Sign language interpreter requests should be submitted no less than 7 business days in advance of the event. Requests made with less notice will be considered, but fulfillment is less certain. All requests depend upon interpreter availability. For use of the assistive listening system in Council chambers, please reserve a device by seeing the City Clerk up to 15 minutes before a Council meeting or by calling the City Clerk's Office Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at 860-823-3732.**

**March 2018**