



John L. Moore
CEO/Executive Director
Deaf Services Center, Inc.

IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION ACCESS TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DEAFNESS/HEARING LOSS IN EMERGENCY RESPONSE SITUATIONS



TIPS IN WORKING WITH A PERSON WHO IS DEAF OR HAS HEARING LOSS

- ✘ Maintain eye contact.
- ✘ Treat them as you would with any other individual. Do not leave them out of the loop, and communicate to them what is going on as you do with others.
- ✘ In some situations, facial expressions by deaf people can be perceived as a threat. Keep that in mind.



SUGGESTIONS FOR EOC'S

- ✘ Have a list of local sign language interpreting agencies and speech to text service providers available at EOC.
- ✘ Work with local deaf service agencies on getting appropriate services and training of EOC and first responder personnel.



KITS FOR FIRST RESPONDERS – TO ASSIST WITH ENGAGING DEAF PERSONS

- ✘ White board with dry erase markers in vehicle
- ✘ Note pad with pen
- ✘ Tablet for typing back and forth
- ✘ Tablet with Wi-Fi – enables video conferencing and hookup with a sign language interpreter via a local video remote interpreting agency.
- ✘ Utilize cell phone to type back and forth.
- ✘ A well-prepared EOC certainly helps



RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✘ Periodic trainings on working with deaf people or individuals with hearing loss for EOC staff.
- ✘ Training is provided by some police departments – can be modified to address the needs of the EOC and first responders.
- ✘ Communication Access is typically the only barrier between a deaf person and a first responder.
- ✘ When a first responder is trained and knows how to communicate and work with a deaf person, equal access occurs – This needs to be our goal.



CONTACT INFORMATION

John L. Moore
CEO/Executive Director
Deaf Services Center, Inc.
5830 N. High Street
Worthington, OH 43085
614-841-1991
johnmoore@dsc.org
www.dsc.org