

WOONSOCKET POLICE DEPARTMENT

THOMAS F. OATES, III
CHIEF OF POLICE



TYPE OF ORDER	NUMBER/SERIES	ISSUE DATE	EFFECTIVE DATE
General Order	320.20	10/13/2025	10/13/2025
SUBJECT		PREVIOUSLY ISSUED DATES	
Deaf & Hard of Hearing Persons		3/22/2017	
ACCREDITATION		RE-EVALUATION DATE	
CALEA Standards: RIPAC Standards: 14.1		1/22/2024	
INDEX		DISTRIBUTION	
Patrol Functions		All Personnel	

DEAF AND HARD-OF-HEARING PERSONS

I. PURPOSE

Federal and state law requires law enforcement entities to ensure that communication with applicants, participants, members of the public, and companions with disabilities is as effective as communication with others. It is the purpose of this policy to provide officers with guidance on effective communication during police contact with individuals who are deaf and people who are hard of hearing.

II. POLICY

Most officers will have encounters with persons who are deaf or affected by significant hearing loss—whether that is as victims, witnesses, or suspects. To ensure effective communication with persons who are deaf and hard of hearing, and to conform to provisions of federal and state law, officers shall follow the guidelines provided in this policy. The policy of this department is to ensure that when a member encounters a deaf or hard-of-hearing person in the course of their official duties, appropriate auxiliary aids and/or a qualified interpreter will be provided to ensure that effective communication takes place. Aids and services, including an interpreter, will be provided at no cost to the person with the disability.

III. DEFINITIONS

Auxiliary aids and services: Includes— (1) Qualified interpreters on-site or through video remote interpreting (VRI) services; notetakers; real-time computer-aided transcription services; written materials; exchange of written notes; telephone handset amplifiers; assistive listening devices; assistive listening systems; telephones compatible with hearing aids; closed caption decoders; open and closed captioning, including real-time captioning; voice, text, and video-based telecommunications products and systems, including text telephones (TTYs), videophones, and captioned telephones, or equally effective telecommunications devices; videotext displays; accessible electronic and information technology; or other effective methods of making aurally delivered information available to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing; (2) Qualified readers; taped texts; audio recordings; Braille materials and displays; screen reader software; magnification software; optical readers; secondary auditory programs (SAP); large print materials; accessible electronic and information technology; or other effective methods of making visually delivered materials available to individuals who are blind or have low vision.

Captioning (CART): Real-time or live event Captioning (CART), also known as Communication Access Real-time Translation, is a way to transcribe the spoken word into readable English text on a screen.

Companion: A family member, friend, or associate of an individual seeking access to a service, program, or activity of a public entity, who, along with such individual, is an appropriate person with whom the public entity should communicate.

Effective Communication: Communication with people with disabilities is as effective as communication with others. Effective communication is achieved by furnishing appropriate auxiliary aids and services where necessary to afford qualified individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in or benefit from the services, programs, or activities of a public entity.

Exigent Circumstances: This is the meaning used in Fourth Amendment law as interpreted by the courts and includes immediate threats to any person's life or safety, hot pursuit, and prevention of the destruction of evidence.

Qualified Interpreter: A person who has been certified by the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, and who, via a video remote interpreting (VRI) service or an on-site appearance, can interpret effectively, accurately, and impartially, both receptively and expressively, using any necessary specialized vocabulary. Qualified interpreters include, for example, sign language interpreters, oral transliterators, and cued-language transliterators.

- For a person who is deaf or hard of hearing and uses American Sign Language for communication, the term "qualified interpreter" means a certified interpreter skilled in communicating in American Sign Language.
- The term "qualified interpreter" encompasses relay interpreter teams, when such is necessary for effective communication.

Teletypewriter (TTY): An Electronic device for text communication via a telephone line that is used to communicate with deaf and hard-of-hearing people by typing and reading communications. Other names include telecommunications devices for the deaf (TDD) and text phones.

Videophone: A telephone with a camera and screen for visual, real-time communications.

Video Relay Service (VRS): A Telecommunications relay service that enables persons with hearing disabilities who use American Sign Language (ASL) to communicate with hearing people over Videophones in real-time, via a sign language interpreter. VRS is not an interpreting service for members to communicate with deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals (see the definition for VRI). VRS allows deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals to have access to the telephone system.

- **NOTE:** The Federal Communications Commission issued a Public Notice stating that VRS cannot be used as a substitute for “in-person” interpreting services or Video Remote Interpreting (VRI).

Video Remote Interpreting (VRI): An Interpreting service that uses video conference technology over dedicated lines or wireless technology, offering high-speed, wide-bandwidth video connection that delivers high-quality video images.

- **NOTE:** VRS and VRI are two (2) different services that use the same videophone technology. VRS is a means of giving deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals access to the telephone system and should not be used by members as an interpreting service.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Communications Center Personnel

1. The deaf and hard of hearing shall be provided with direct, equal access to all emergency services provided by this department by communication through the Rhode Island Relay (7-1-1) Service or alternative services that are equally effective.
[RI 14.1](#)
2. Emergency call takers place a high priority on responding to emergency calls for service from people who are deaf or who have hearing impairment.

B. NOTICE OF RIGHT TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION AND DETERMINATION AS TO EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNICATION

1. Except in those situations involving exigent circumstances as outlined in IV.B. below, any situation where a member, in the course of their official duties, has reason to believe that an individual with whom the member is communicating or attempting to communicate is deaf or hard-of-hearing, the member shall immediately take the following steps:
 - a. Ascertain, through the exchange of written notes or by other means, whether the individual is deaf or hard of hearing.
 - b. Notify the individual, by use of the ([Communications Needs Assessment Form](#)), and if necessary, through an additional exchange of written notes or other means, that the member will provide a free, qualified interpreter if the individual desires. Attachment B
 - c. Ascertain, through the exchange of written notes or otherwise, whether the individual believes that a qualified interpreter or other types of aid are necessary for effective communication. Document this assessment with the [Communications Needs Assessment Form](#)—attachment B.
 - d. If the individual requests a qualified interpreter, ascertain whether the individual uses American Sign Language or Signed English to communicate.
 2. If the individual requests or otherwise expresses a preference for the use of a qualified interpreter or appears to be unable to express a preference or otherwise communicate without a qualified language interpreter, the officer shall request a qualified interpreter through the procedures outlined in this directive.
 3. If the individual requests an aid other than a qualified interpreter, the officer shall notify the supervisor before initiating appropriate steps to secure the aid.
 4. If the individual is a suspect or a target of a criminal investigation, or a person from whom police are seeking consent to enter their residence or conduct a search, no other efforts at communication shall be made (except as provided in Part IV.C. below) until the member has determined whether the individual requires the use of a qualified interpreter for effective communication, and, if so, until the interpreter is made available or a VRI device is made available.
 5. If the individual expresses a preference for the use of written communication, the member shall provide a pad and pen/pencil or writing instrument and shall communicate with the individual in writing. Written communication shall not be used as a substitute where the individual has expressed a preference for a sign language interpreter.
- C. **EXCEPTIONS:** Exigent Circumstances; Arrests on Warrant or Probable Cause; Terry Patdowns; Terry Stops

The notice and determination procedures in Part IV.B need not be followed immediately in the following situations:

1. **Exigent Circumstances: In any situation involving exigent circumstances, members may communicate with the deaf or hard-of-hearing individual or take**

such other action as the exigent circumstances require.

- a. Nothing in this directive should prevent any member from any communication or immediate action that is required by exigent circumstances.
- b. The notice and determination procedures in Part IV.B should be followed, and a qualified interpreter should be made available, if necessary, as soon as the exigent circumstances permit (e.g., as soon as the threat to life or safety has abated).

D. PRIMARY CONSIDERATIONS

1. In every circumstance where an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing and a member needs to communicate, the member shall provide an opportunity for effective communication with that individual, following this order.
2. A person who is deaf or hard of hearing may wear a hearing aid or cochlear implant. These personal devices should remain with the person. For a period of detention, the department is required to provide necessary hearing aids or cochlear implant batteries upon request.
3. If a deaf person relies on ASL and/or has poor English skills, it will likely be necessary to provide a qualified interpreter for Miranda Warnings, witness statements, and any kind of extensive conversation.
4. The assessment of the need for aids or interpreters will be documented in the [Communications Needs Assessment Form](#).
5. The type of auxiliary aids and or services necessary to ensure effective communication will vary following the method of communication used by the individual, the nature, length, and complexity of the interaction, and the context in which the interaction is taking place; and when determining what aid or service is needed, the entity will give primary consideration to the aid or service requested by the person with the disability. Officers should defer to those expressed choices unless:
 - a. There is another equally effective way of communicating, given the circumstances, length, complexity, and importance of communication, as well as the communication skills of the person who is deaf or hard of hearing; or
 - b. Doing so would fundamentally alter the nature of the law enforcement activity in question or would cause an undue administrative or financial burden; only the Chief of Police, or their designee, may make this determination.

E. USE OF A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC OR MINOR CHILDREN TO FACILITATE COMMUNICATIONS

1. Officers shall not require an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing to bring another member of the public to interpret for them. The Department will not rely

on an adult accompanying an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing to interpret or facilitate communication except:

- a. In an emergency involving an imminent threat to the safety or welfare of an individual or the public where there is no interpreter available or;
 - b. Where the individual who is deaf or hard of hearing specifically requests that the accompanying adult interpret or facilitate communication, the accompanying adult agrees to provide such assistance, and reliance on that adult for such assistance is appropriate under the circumstances.
2. The department shall not rely on a minor child to interpret or facilitate communication, except in an emergency involving an imminent threat to the safety or welfare of an individual or the public, where there is no interpreter available.
 3. An officer should never use a member of the public to assist with interpretation if there is a possibility that two parties are on opposite sides of the same offense. Example: a domestic violence incident with an alleged abuser who is hearing and an alleged victim who is deaf.
 4. ***Imminent threat/exigent circumstances***: When there is an emergency involving an imminent threat to the safety or welfare of an individual (including Department personnel or members of the public) and there is insufficient time to make available appropriate auxiliary aids and services, officers will use whatever auxiliary aids and services are most effective under the circumstances to communicate with persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, consistent with an appropriate law enforcement response to the imminent threat. This may include, for example, exchanging written notes or using the services of a person who knows sign language but who is not a qualified interpreter, for an interim period during the period of an ongoing imminent threat, even if the person who is deaf or hard-of-hearing would prefer a qualified sign language interpreter or another appropriate auxiliary aid or service. When there is no longer an imminent threat, officers will follow procedures to provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services.
 5. Interviewing Witnesses at the Scene: If there are both hearing people and deaf people involved in an incident, secure the auxiliary aid that the deaf or hard-of-hearing person needs before conducting interviews. When officers interview hearing people by speaking but rely on written notes from a deaf person who is most comfortable in American Sign Language (ASL), it places the deaf person at a disadvantage in explaining what happened.

F. INTERPRETIVE SERVICES

The need for the use of a sign language interpreter is governed generally by the length, importance, and complexity of communication.

1. In simple enforcement situations, such as traffic stops, driver's license checks, or consensual police-public encounters, a notepad and pencil may provide effective communication.
2. When you are interviewing a witness or a suspect or engaging in any complex conversation with a person whose primary language is sign language, a qualified interpreter is usually needed to ensure effective communication. In some situations, a qualified interpreter with legal certification may be required.
3. A sign language interpreter need not be available for an officer to arrest a subject where probable cause is established, independent of interrogating the deaf or hard-of-hearing suspect. A sign language interpreter may be called to be available later at booking.
4. If probable cause to make an arrest must be established through questioning or interrogation of a person who is deaf or hard of hearing, a sign language interpreter will be made available as soon as possible.
5. The ADA does not prohibit officers from taking actions necessary to protect officers or public safety. An officer should not jeopardize their safety or that of others to accommodate a person with a disability.
6. Until an interpreter arrives, write messages in simple language explaining what is transpiring or will transpire. In writing, notify the deaf person that an interpreter has been called and whether the interpreter is on the way to the requested location.
7. Once an interpreter has arrived, use them to facilitate communication. Do not ask for the advice of the interpreter or say things you do not want to be communicated to the deaf person. When using an interpreter:
 - a. Look at and speak directly to the deaf person, not the interpreter,
 - b. Talk at your normal rate, or slightly slower if you normally speak very fast,
 - c. Only one person should speak at a time, and
 - d. Use short sentences and simple words.
8. Although a "qualified" interpreter may be certified, a certified interpreter is not necessarily "qualified" if they are not a good communication match for the deaf person (e.g., Signed English vs. American Sign Language) or for the current situation.
9. Interpreters After-hours/Emergencies (other than 9-1-1 calls): The Department shall maintain contact information for sign language interpreters who could be available to interpret for emergencies and/or after-hours situations such as when a person who speaks American Sign Language is detained during non-business hours.
10. Non-emergency: Call the Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing interpreter service at (401) 222-5300 (voice) or (401) 222-5301 (TTY) between 0830-1600 hrs., Monday-Friday. Interpreters are available for a variety of settings that require communication access, such as public events, employment, training/workshops, doctor visits, mental health services, healthcare facilities, and many more.

G. TELECOMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

Law enforcement entities must provide telecommunication systems to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing that are equally effective as those provided to individuals without disabilities. Department reliance upon TTY/TTD alone is inadequate to meet this requirement. In situations when a non-disabled person would have access to a telephone or be permitted a telephone call, officers must provide persons who are deaf or hard of hearing the opportunity to place calls with the same degree of privacy and independence that would be provided to a similarly situated person absent a hearing disability. The department will provide technologies such as video phones and captioned telephones for this purpose. For video relay services, a Sorenson VRS videophone is in the Station Officer's office.

H. ARREST SITUATIONS

1. Reasonable Modification of Cuffing Policies: When department personnel deem it necessary to handcuff a person who is deaf or hard of hearing, personnel will, safety permitting, reasonably modify standard operating procedure and handcuff the deaf person in front to enable the person to communicate using sign language or writing. If circumstances warrant cuffing in the back, essential communication with the suspect should be completed before applying the handcuffs.
2. Some people who are deaf or hard of hearing have limited written language skills, particularly involving difficult matters such as legal warnings and admonitions. Therefore, officers shall not assume the effectiveness of this form of communication and should gain confirmation of a person's understanding whenever possible.
3. Officers shall ensure that deaf and hard-of-hearing people who are arrested and transported to a booking site have their devices, such as hearing aids or cochlear implants, with them. Personal communication devices, such as videophones or cell phones, shall be kept and maintained by booking authorities in good working order. In certain situations, eyeglasses are necessary to assist a deaf or hard-of-hearing person with communication. If it is safe to do so, the deaf or hard-of-hearing person should be allowed to retain their eyeglasses.
4. If a deaf or hard-of-hearing person is taken into custody, their right to communicate with their family or attorney cannot be denied because of deafness. Officers shall allow the deaf or hard of hearing person to place calls using department technologies or to utilize any personally owned telecommunication device for that purpose, including but not limited to a cell phone with text capacity or video phone.
5. As soon as any necessary auxiliary aids or services have been obtained, including, if necessary, the arrival of a qualified interpreter, the nature of the charges and all other information generally provided to arrestees under similar circumstances shall be communicated effectively and promptly to the arrestee who is deaf or hard of hearing. This information includes, but is not limited to, the notice of the

right to counsel, the right to a telephone call, and the procedure for posting bond or collateral if that information is required to be or is generally provided to arrestees in similar circumstances. On any summons and complaint issued to a deaf person, the face of the form shall contain a note in bold lettering stating, “Deaf person –Accommodations required.” This alerts the court officials to summon an interpreter for the court proceedings, minimizing delays and postponements.

I. INTERVIEW OR INTERROGATIONS OF A SUSPECT WHO IS DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

1. The notice and determination procedures outlined in Part IV.B shall be followed in every circumstance where a member seeks to interview a suspect who is deaf or hard of hearing to determine if there is probable cause to make an arrest, or where a member seeks to interrogate an arrestee who is deaf or hard of hearing.
2. Where a member seeks to interview or interrogate a suspect who is deaf or hard of hearing, the notice and communication assessment procedures outlined above must include notice to the suspect that the department shall defer the interrogation or interview pending the appearance of a qualified interpreter.
3. If it is determined, through the process outlined above, that a qualified interpreter is necessary to communicate effectively, members shall not interrogate, and shall not Mirandize, the suspect until a qualified interpreter has arrived. When the qualified interpreter arrives, the Miranda warning shall be administered through the qualified interpreter.

J. INTERVIEWING A VICTIM, COMPLAINANT, OR WITNESS WHO IS DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

1. The notice and determination procedures outlined in Part IV.B shall be followed in every circumstance where a member seeks to interview a victim, complainant, or witness who is deaf or hard of hearing. If it is determined that a qualified interpreter is necessary to communicate effectively with a victim, complainant, or witness, then the investigating officer must provide the victim, complainant, or witness with a qualified interpreter.
2. If the investigating officer cannot wait until a qualified interpreter arrives because the officer must respond to another call, then the investigating officer shall contact their supervisor and advise the supervisor of the case before leaving the scene if circumstances permit.
 - a. The supervisor shall then request that a qualified interpreter be dispatched to the location of the victim, complainant, or witness, and request that the dispatcher re-contact the officer when the interpreter arrives. At that time, the investigating officer shall return to the scene or;
 - b. The officer shall request that the victim, complainant, or witness come voluntarily to headquarters when a qualified interpreter is available. At that

time, the investigating officer shall return to headquarters to complete the investigation.

3. This section does not prohibit attempts at communication with a victim, complainant, or witness while awaiting the arrival of a qualified interpreter, once a qualified interpreter has been summoned, in cases where exigent circumstances require immediate communication. This section also does not prohibit *Terry Stops* or patdowns, if reasonable suspicion exists to justify the stop or patdown without communicating with the deaf or hard-of-hearing individual, under this order.

V. TRAINING

All affected department personnel shall receive initial training in communication with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, including the use of all agency devices designed to assist with communication with the deaf and hard of hearing. Refresher training will be provided at a minimum of once every three years.

VI. ATTACHMENTS

Officers shall review and have a working knowledge of the attached DOJ publication, communicating with People Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (*Attachment A*). This document reviews how officers should communicate effectively in the types of situations officers will encounter.

The [Communications Needs Assessment Form](#) (*Attachment B*) will be completed to determine the appropriate method of communication involving a deaf or hard-of-hearing person.

Per order,
Thomas F. Oates, III
Chief of Police

Written directives published within PowerDMS are in full force and effect on the referenced dates and have been approved by the Chief of Police



Communicating with People Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

ADA Guide for Law Enforcement Officers

As a law enforcement officer, you can expect to come into contact with people who are deaf or hard of hearing. It is estimated that up to nine percent of the population has some degree of hearing loss, and this percentage will increase as the population ages.

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), people who are deaf or hard of hearing are entitled to the same services law enforcement provides to anyone else. They may not be excluded or segregated from services, be denied services, or otherwise be treated differently than other people. Law enforcement agencies must make efforts to ensure that their personnel communicate effectively with people whose disability affects hearing. This applies to both sworn and civilian personnel.



A driver who is deaf writes on a pad of paper to communicate with an officer.

Your agency has adopted a specific policy regarding communicating with people who are deaf or hard of hearing. It is important to become familiar with this policy.

Requirements for Effective Communication

The ADA requires that . . .

- Law enforcement agencies must provide the communication aids and services needed to communicate effectively with people who are deaf or hard of hearing, except when a particular aid or service would result in an undue burden or a fundamental change in the nature of the law enforcement services being provided.
- Agencies must give primary consideration to providing the aid or service requested by the person with the hearing disability.
- Agencies cannot charge the person for the communication aids or services provided.
- Agencies do *not* have to provide personally prescribed devices such as hearing aids.
- When interpreters are needed, agencies must provide interpreters who can interpret effectively, accurately, and impartially.

- Only the head of the agency or his or her designee can make the determination that a particular aid or service would cause an undue burden or a fundamental change in the nature of the law enforcement services being provided.

Your agency's policy explains how to obtain interpreters or other communication aids and services when needed.

Communicating with People Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Officers may find a variety of communication aids and services useful in different situations.

- Speech supplemented by gestures and visual aids can be used in some cases.
- A pad and pencil, a word processor, or a typewriter can be used to exchange written notes.
- A teletypewriter (TTY, also known as a TDD) can be used to exchange written messages over the telephone.
- An assistive listening system or device to amplify sound can be used when speaking with a person who is hard of hearing.
- A sign language interpreter can be used when speaking with a person who knows sign language.
- An oral interpreter can be used when speaking with a person who has been trained to speech read (read lips). **Note:** Do not assume that speech reading will be effective in most situations. On average, only about one third of spoken words can be understood by speech reading.

The type of situation, as well as the individual's abilities, will determine which aid or service is needed to communicate effectively.

Practical Suggestions for Communicating Effectively

- Before speaking, get the person's attention with a wave of the hand or a gentle tap on the shoulder.
- Face the person and do not turn away while speaking.
- Try to converse in a well-lit area.
- Do not cover your mouth or chew gum.
- If a person is wearing a hearing aid, do not assume the individual can hear you.
- Minimize background noise and other distractions whenever possible.
- When you are communicating orally, speak slowly and distinctly. Use gestures and facial expressions to reinforce what you are saying.
- Use visual aids when possible, such as pointing to printed information on a citation or other document.
- Remember that only about one third of spoken words can be understood by speech reading.
- When communicating by writing notes, keep in mind that some individuals who use sign language may lack good English reading and writing skills.
- If someone with a hearing disability cannot understand you, write a note to ask him or her what communication aid or service is needed.
- If a sign language interpreter is requested, be sure to ask *which* language the person uses. American Sign Language (ASL) and Signed English are the most common.

- When you are interviewing a witness or a suspect or engaging in any complex conversation with a person whose primary language is sign language, a qualified interpreter is usually needed to ensure effective communication.
- When using an interpreter, look at and speak directly to the deaf person, not to the interpreter.
- Talk at your normal rate, or slightly slower if you normally speak very fast.
- Only one person should speak at a time.
- Use short sentences and simple words.
- Do not use family members or children as interpreters. They may lack the vocabulary or the impartiality needed to interpret effectively.

What Situations *Require* an Interpreter?

Generally, interpreter services are not required for simple transactions – such as checking a license or giving directions to a location – or for urgent situations – such as responding to a violent crime in progress.

Example: An officer clocks a car on the highway going 15 miles per hour above the speed limit. The driver, who is deaf, is pulled over and is issued a noncriminal citation. The individual is able to understand the reason for the citation because the officer points out relevant information printed on the citation or written by the officer.

Example: An officer responds to an aggravated battery call and upon arriving at the scene observes a bleeding victim and an individual holding a weapon. Eyewitnesses observed the individual strike the victim. The individual with the weapon is deaf. Because the officer has probable cause to make a felony arrest without an interrogation, an interpreter is not necessary to carry out the arrest.

However, an interpreter may be needed in lengthy or complex transactions – such as interviewing a victim, witness, suspect, or arrestee – if the person being interviewed normally relies on sign language or speech reading to understand what others are saying.

Example: An officer responds to the scene of a domestic disturbance. The husband says the wife has been beating their children and he has been trying to restrain her. The wife is deaf. The officer begins questioning her by writing notes, but her response indicates a lack of comprehension. She requests a sign language interpreter. In this situation an interpreter should be called. If the woman's behavior is threatening, the officer can make an arrest and call for an interpreter to be available later at the booking station.

It is inappropriate to ask a family member or companion to interpret in a situation like this because emotional ties may interfere with the ability to interpret impartially.

Example: An officer responds to the scene of a car accident where a man has been seriously injured. The man is conscious, but is unable to comprehend the officer's questions because he is deaf. A family member who is present begins interpreting what the officer is saying.

A family member or companion *may* be used to interpret in a case like this, where the parties are willing, the need for information is urgent, and the questions are basic and uncomplicated. However, in general, do not expect or demand that a deaf person provide his or her own interpreter. As a rule, when interpreter service is needed, it must be provided by the agency.

List your agency's contact information for obtaining an interpreter, an assistive listening device, or other communication aid or service here.

Emergencies (other than 9-1-1 calls): The Rhode Island Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing operates an emergency hotline available on Monday through Friday after 1600 hrs. until the next day at 0830 hrs. It is available 24 hours on weekends and holidays. Police Officers are asked to call (401) 586-6100 to access this service when the circumstances outlined in section IV.B of this policy arise. A certified interpreter will respond to headquarters or a secure crime scene. During the week between 0830-1600 hrs., Police Officers are asked to call (401) 222-5300.

Non-emergency: Rhode Island Relay Referral Service. Call interpreter service at (401) 222-5300 (voice) or (401) 222-5301 (TTY) between 0830-1600 hrs., Monday-Friday. Interpreters are available for a variety of settings that require communication access such as public events, employment, trainings/workshops, doctor visits, mental health services, healthcare facilities and many more.

For further information on the Americans with Disabilities Act contact:

ADA Website

www.ada.gov

ADA Information Line

800-514-0301 (voice)

800-514-0383 (TTY)

This pamphlet was developed by the U.S. Department of Justice for law enforcement personnel.

Reproduction is encouraged.

January 2006

ATTACHMENT B

Woonsocket Police Department

Communications Needs Assessment Form
for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing People

You have identified yourself as, or have been identified as, deaf or hard of hearing. By law, you have the right to request communication services and/or assistive technology to help you communicate with Woonsocket Police Department, Police officers, and staff.

You can request a sign language interpreter, captioning services, and/or any other assistive technology to help you communicate with Woonsocket Police Department personnel more effectively. Please be aware that your first choice of communication service may not be available immediately. The Woonsocket will take steps to make sure an appropriate communication service is provided to you.

Thank you for your cooperation and patience.

Person Information

Name of Arrestee, Victim, Witness, or Companion: _____
(PLEASE PRINT)

Please identify yourself as (circle one):

Deaf Deaf-Blind Hard of Hearing Late Deafened Oral Deaf

Service Request

I prefer to communicate with Woonsocket, Police Officers, and staff using (check all that apply)

- CART** (Communication Access Real-time Translation)
- ON-SITE SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER**
Type of Sign Language (please circle): ASL CDI Signed English Oral Tactile
- VIDEO REMOTE INTERPRETING (VRI)**
- TEXT** (Typing back and forth using computer, smartphone, or tablet)
- WRITTEN** (Writing back and forth using paper and pen)
- OTHER:** _____

Device Request

If you need to contact your family member or friend by telephone, which telephone device do you need? (circle all that apply)

- CAPTIONED TELEPHONE** (CapTel)
- AMPLIFIED PHONE** (Hearing aid compatible telephone)
- TTY/TDD** (Text Telephone)
- VIDEOPHONE** (VRS)
- I USE MY SMARTPHONE OR TABLET** (iPhone, LG, Samsung, etc.)

Completed by Person: _____
(print your name)

Signature: _____
(sign your name)

Date: _____

Time: _____

Note:

1. If you wish to change your answers to the questions, please ask.
2. If you have any questions or need further assistance, please feel free to ask.

Officer's Name _____ Badge # _____

Officer's Signature _____ Date _____