

§ 8B-2. Appointment of interpreters in certain judicial, legislative, and administrative proceedings; removal.

(a) When a deaf person is a party to or a witness in any civil or criminal proceeding in any superior or district court of the State, including juvenile proceedings, special proceedings, and proceedings before the magistrate, the court shall appoint a qualified interpreter to interpret the proceedings to the deaf person and to interpret the deaf person's testimony, if any.

(b) When a deaf person is a witness before any legislative committee or subcommittee or legislative research or study committee or subcommittee or commission authorized by the General Assembly, the appointing authority conducting the proceeding shall appoint a qualified interpreter to interpret the proceedings to the deaf person and to interpret the deaf person's testimony.

(c) When a deaf person is a party to or a witness in an administrative proceeding before any department, board, commission, agency or licensing authority of the State, or of any county or city of the State, the appointing authority conducting the proceeding shall appoint a qualified interpreter to interpret the proceedings to the deaf person and to interpret the deaf person's testimony, if any.

(d) If a deaf person is arrested for an alleged violation of criminal law of the State, including a local ordinance, the arresting officer shall immediately procure a qualified interpreter from the appropriate court for any interrogation, warning, notification of rights, arraignment, bail hearing or other preliminary proceeding, but no arrestee otherwise eligible for release on bail under Article 26 of Chapter 15A of the General Statutes shall be held in custody pending the arrival of an interpreter. No answer, statement or admission taken from the deaf person without a qualified interpreter present and functioning is admissible in court for any purpose.

(e) Whenever a juvenile whose parent or parents are deaf is brought before a court for any reason whatsoever, the court shall appoint a qualified interpreter to interpret the proceedings and testimony for the deaf parent or parents, and to interpret any statements or testimony the deaf parent or parents may be called upon to give to the court.

(f) A qualified interpreter shall not be appointed until the appointing authority makes a preliminary determination that the interpreter is able to communicate effectively with and to interpret accurately for the deaf person. If no qualified interpreter can be found who can successfully communicate with this person, he may select his own interpreter without regard to whether the interpreter is "qualified" within the meaning set forth under this statute.

(g) The appointing authority may, on its own motion or on the request of the deaf person, remove an interpreter for inability to communicate or because his services have been waived. (1981, c. 937, s. 1.)