**Complaint letter**

**BSL interpreter or other communication support was not provided – provision of services**

To: [Name of the company which provides a service]

Address

Also by email

From: your name

Your address:

Your phone:

Email

Date:

Dear [Company’s name]

**Re: Complaint about disability discrimination – the Equality Act 2010**

I am writing this letter of complaint because you failed to provide communication support to enable me to access your service. I would like you to make your service more accessible to me and other Deaf people. I believe I was discriminated against and you are in breach of the Equality Act 2010. This letter explains what went wrong and what I want you to do to make things right.

**I am a Disabled person under the Equality Act 2010**

I am a Disabled person within the meaning of Section 6 of the Equality Act 2010.

[Describe your impairment and the impact it has on you), for example: I am Deaf, I use British Sign Language to communicate.]

[Give more details about the communication support you needed.

For example: British Sign Language (BSL) is the preferred language of over 87,000 Deaf people in the UK for whom English may be a second or third language. You can find out more about BSL here  <https://bda.org.uk/help-resources/#BSL>

BSL interpreting is provided by qualified interpreters, who must be registered. See this website for the list <https://www.nrcpd.org.uk/>]

**The issue I am complaining about**

[Give details of what happened, and how you tried to use the service, with date, time, place. For example: I made an appointment to speak to the bank adviser on the X date at X time in X branch]

[Describe what exactly went wrong, for example: when I arrived I was shocked to find out that the interpreter was not booked for me. Your staff wrote this on a paper. I then was asked if I knew someone who could interpret for me.

Or

I wanted to book a session with a fitness instructor and asked if you could book a BSL interpreter for me. The manager said it was not possible.]

[Describe the impact this had on you, including being unable to access a service, not understanding what is going on, feeling humiliated, any financial impact, were your choices restricted.

For example: I felt humiliated and angry. I could not access your service at all. It felt like I was made feeling guilty for being Deaf. I felt like a second class citizen.]

[Describe whether this situation happens regularly.]

**How you breached the Equality Act 2010**

You are a service provider under Section 29 of the Equality Act 2010. Section 15 of the Equality Act says you must not discriminate against Disabled people because of something arising as a consequence of their Disability.

Section 20 of the Equality Act 2010 requires you to take such steps as it is reasonable to ensure Deaf and Disabled people like me can access your services like everybody else. Those steps should include: changing policies or the way you provide your service, altering a physical feature or providing an auxiliary aid or service. Communication support, such as BSL interpreter is an auxiliary service.

I made it clear to you that in order to access your service I need BSL interpreter. This has not been provided and as a result I could not access your service at all.

I believe it is reasonable for you to provide an interpreter and therefore you failed to comply with your duties under the Equality Act 2010.

**Obtaining information**

Please provide me with the following information about the incident that I am complaining about

* Any letters or emails relating to the incident;
* Details of any policies you have in respect of provision of communication support, including BSL interpreters.

**What I would like to achieve by this complaint**

1. A written apology;
2. A commitment from you to change the way you provide your service ensuring Deaf people who need to communicate via a BSL interpreter are able to do so;
3. A commitment from you to train your staff in Disability Equality and their duties under the Equality Act.
4. A compensation for the discrimination and injury to feelings that I experienced.

**Next Actions**

I very much hope we can resolve this matter amicably. I look forward to hearing from you within the next 21 days. If you believe you have not breached the Equality Act 2010, please give your reasons.

I am happy to discuss with you other ways to resolve this dispute, however, if I do not hear from you, or if you deny that you are in breach of the Equality Act then I will consider taking legal action against you.

Yours sincerely