# Best Practices for Zoom with American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreters

## 1. Allowing only the speaker and interpreter to turn on their videos.

Zoom allows 49 participants to have visible video, which is great for large meetings but can make it easy to lose track of the main speaker and interpreter.

We recommend that **only** the main speaker and interpreter have their video turned on, and that all other participants turn theirs off.

This helps the deaf person focus on the interpreter *and* helps everyone else focus on what the speaker is saying. Turning other attendees’ videos off can improve bandwidth issues too.

**Remember:** To have better focus on the interpreter and speaker, the audience will need to go to the top-right corner of the video window and click ‘View’ then click ‘Hide Non-video participants’ to hide all participants without video.

## 2. Spotlighting the interpreter.

It’s essential that the interpreter is spotlighted within the call. This way if someone unmutes, turns on their video, or a screen is shared, the interpreter remains on the screen and can be seen by the deaf person throughout.

If you are using a team of interpreters, spotlight the active interpreter each time they switch. Or, make the interpreters co-hosts of the meeting, so they can look after this for you. The latter is recommended.

**Remember:** Sometimes you will not know who’ll be using the interpreter on the day of the event, so the interpreter will need to put the ‘ASL’ abbreviation in front of their names so they can remain on the top of the panel and be easy to find for the deaf person. This also goes for multiple interpreters who will need to switch with each other.

## 2b. Spotlighting multiple interpreters will not show all interpreters in the Cloud Recording.

If you plan to record the session, you will only see the active (verbalizing) speaker. This means that if the speaker and interpreter are both spotlit, then only the verbalizing speaker will be seen in the speaker view of the recording, not the silent ASL interpreter. Zoom is aware of this limitation and will work on it as a feature request.

Instead, do one of the following:

* If you have multiple people spotlit in the meeting, use the **gallery view of the recording**to see all spotlit people. Note you will also see all the other participants whose videos are on.
* If you spotlight only one person during the meeting, the one person does retain focus in the recording in the speaker view.

## 2c. Spotlighting a video will not show pinned individuals in the Cloud Recording.

If you want everyone to see the active speaker, you can spotlight up to nine people. Spotlighted speakers will be visible on cloud recordings. If you want to see one person from your view only, you can pin the person (host can pin up to nine). However, the pinned person will not be recorded on the cloud recording.

Note: Must have three or more participants to use this feature. Spotlight video puts up to nine participants as the primary active speakers for all participants, and participants will only see these speakers. Spotlighting can also be done during [screen sharing](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362153). This feature is often used to spotlight a keynote speaker.

1. At the top of your screen, hover over the video of the participant you want to spotlight and click ‘**...**’
2. Click ‘**Spotlight for Everyone**’.
3. (Optional) To spotlight additional participants (up to nine total), follow steps one and two again as needed, clicking on ‘**Add Spotlight**’ instead.

## 3. Allowing Participants to Multi-Pin.

By default, only the host or co-host can utilize the multi-pin feature but can allow individual participants to multi-pin on their video layout.

1. Click ‘**Participants**’ along the meeting toolbar.
2. Hover over the participant, click ‘**More**’, then ‘**Allow to Multi-pin**’.
3. (Optional) Repeat as needed for other participants.

## 3b. Pinning a Video for Host or Co-Host

The host or co-host can pin up to nine people at a time.

1. At the top of your meeting window, hover over the video of the participant you want to pin and click ‘**...**’
2. From the menu, click ‘**Pin**’.
3. **Optional**: If the host wants to pin additional videos (up to nine total), follow steps one and two again as needed.
4. **Optional**: If you have at least three participants in the meeting and dual monitor enabled, you will have the option to pin to your first screen or your second screen.

## 4. Sharing the screen.

Zoom has speaker view and gallery view functions to allow for different video callers to take priority. These are useful for spotlighting the speaker or interpreter unless a screen is being shared to show a presentation or website.

When a screen is shared, Zoom minimizes videos into very small boxes in the top right corner of the screen. This makes it extremely difficult for interpreters and deaf people to continue understanding the meeting.

To overcome this, Zoom lets you choose to view the spotlighted speaker only, and the audience can alter the size of the image by dragging the bottom corner.

You can change your settings to show the speaker and the shared screen side by side, to keep the interpreter at a comfortable size.

**Remember:** Zoom looks and acts differently depending on the type of device, app, or browser being used. Some settings or functions may be slightly different too. Try to check in regularly with participants to make sure everyone is able to see the videos and images being shared.

## 5. Using the chat.

Don’t forget to use the chat! As the host you can control who has the ability to send and receive messages. Why not ask attendees to message questions which you can read out, rather than having lots of people raise their hands or turn their video and audio on and off. This can be off-putting for the deaf person and interpreter, so it’s best avoided.

If attendees prefer to turn their video and audio on, it’s best practice to make sure they are spotlighted so the deaf person will know who is talking. If the deaf person turns on their video, it will benefit the interpreter to have the deaf person spotlighted as well to help them see what they are signing.

**Remember:** There is the processing time to keep in mind for the interpreter who needs time to process from English to ASL or ASL to English. Time is needed for the deaf person to see who is taking before the comments are interpreted. The speaker and other participants need to check and pause when the interpreter and deaf person stops signing or voicing. The interpreter may not voice right away when the deaf person signs.

## 6. Thanking the interpreters.

Please express your gratitude to the interpreters at the end of meeting or webinar because their expertise and professionalism helped ensure successful communication between all participants.

**Remember:** Their contribution to the meeting was invaluable because they helped maintain an inclusive and diverse work setting.