

## **BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 Facebook – Some Questions & Answers**

### **SHOPS (11 April)**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1470165406637765/permalink/1597424620578509/>

There is a shop in my area. Their staff can't sign. Can I use BSL (Scotland) Act to ask them for an interpreter?

Answer:

No, the Act does not cover private shops or supermarkets.

Other solutions:

Why not try and teach them some signs yourself? If it is a big store, ask them to have short, simple, BSL lessons for their staff. Tell them if their staff sign, maybe they will get more Deaf customers.

### **GYM (12 April)**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1470165406637765/permalink/1597854790535492/>

A Deaf man went to a local gym and asked for a personal trainer so that he could make full use of the machines available in the gym. The personal trainer was difficult to lipread and tried to demonstrate how to use the machines, etc. The Deaf man asked the trainer if the gym could arrange a BSL/English interpreter for the training sessions. The gym refused, saying that it was not their (the gym's) responsibility. The Deaf man disagreed and quoted the BSL (Scotland) Act. The gym had never heard of this Act. How can this be resolved?

Answer:

If the gym is run by a local council, the Deaf man can ask his council to make a BSL plan to make all gyms and other leisure services and their training programmes accessible.

If the gym is privately run, the gym is not legally bound to provide BSL/English interpreters for training and induction sessions.

## **BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 Facebook – Some Questions & Answers**

### **NIGHTCLUB (13 April)**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1470165406637765/permalink/1598459183808386/>

A group of deaf people were stopped from entering a popular bar or night club by a bouncer because they were signing. This is not fair. Can they use BSL (Scotland) Act to challenge them?

Answer:

No, the BSL (Scotland) Act is not about access to bars, night clubs and restaurants. The Act is primarily about promoting access to information and services via BSL. However, the leisure industry should be encouraged to invest in BSL awareness and classes for their staff. The more staff in the leisure industry who sign, the more business they will get.

### **WORK (14 April)**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1470165406637765/permalink/1598954057092232/>

My employer refused to provide an interpreter for meetings with my supervisor/line manager. Can I use the BSL (Scotland) Act to challenge the employer?

Answer:

No, employment is the responsibility of the UK Government (Department for Work & Pensions) and therefore is not covered by the BSL (Scotland) Act. However, you can use the Equality Act to remind the employer about your right to access meetings, training sessions, etc. at work.

Other solutions:

If you don't have Access to Work (AtW), apply for AtW funding to cover interpreter costs and make sure your employer is aware because the employer may be asked to contribute towards the interpreter costs.

## **BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 Facebook – Some Questions & Answers**

### **MUSEUMS (15 April)**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1470165406637765/permalink/1599589667028671/>

A group of deaf people visited a museum in their area and were disappointed that there was no BSL provision for them. They had already been to the Riverside Museum in Glasgow where all the information kiosks have a BSL option. Will the BSL (Scotland) Act require all museums and galleries to have their information translated into BSL?

Answer:

Yes and no.

Yes, museums and galleries that are run by local authorities are expected, under the Act, to provide BSL plans on how they will make information accessible for Deaf and Deafblind people. The National Museums of Scotland and National Galleries of Scotland are also covered by the BSL (Scotland) Act and will be covered by the BSL National Plan.

No, if the museums and galleries are run privately or by voluntary organisations. However, feedback from Deaf and Deafblind people can persuade these museums and galleries to consider investing in BSL translation services. More accessible museums and galleries will bring in greater number of Deaf and Deafblind visitors.

### **SCHOOL (16 April)**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1470165406637765/permalink/1600067256980912/>

A deaf couple have a hearing child aged 6 years old and asked their child's school for a BSL interpreter for parents' evenings, school plays, sports days, or other school events. The school refused saying that they had no budget to pay for an interpreter. Do deaf parents have rights under the BSL (Scotland) Act to demand the school provide interpreters?

Answer:

No, education is not covered by the Act. But education authorities are required to publish their BSL plans stating how they will ensure that Deaf and Deafblind parents have access to parents' meetings and other school events.

## **BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 Facebook – Some Questions & Answers**

### **HOSPITAL (17 April)**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1470165406637765/permalink/1600541683600136/>

There was no interpreter at my medical appointment (doctor, hospital, etc..). I already asked for this. I struggled to understand the doctor and had to write everything down. It was very stressful for me. Can I sue them under the BSL (Scotland) Act?

Answer:

Yes and no.

No, because the BSL (Scotland) Act is not something to use for 'suing' people. You need to contact your local health board and ask them to investigate what happened and why you had no interpreter.

Yes, you can quote the Act because we hope that under the BSL (Scotland) Act, public bodies like the NHS will have a BSL plan which includes providing interpreters. That means they should provide an interpreter if you have asked for one.

Other solutions:

Ask your health board about their Deaf Users' Forum (if they have one) and if you can join or give feedback. The NHS is one of the public authorities (public bodies) who are part of the BSL (Scotland) Act and they will have reviews of their services.

You can also contact PALS (Patients Advice and Liaison Services) at the hospital, or ask to see the manager at your doctor's surgery. Ask your Deaf Centre or CAB to contact the hospital, doctor, or NHS health board to report the problem and ask how they will avoid this happening again in future.

And, you can use an online sign language interpreting service to report the problem to help improve things and make sure it doesn't happen again in the future.

Finally, you can ask for the term 'British Sign Language user. Please book an interpreter' to be added to your medical records so that your surgery, the hospital or NHS health board has advance knowledge of your language need and can book BSL/English interpreter for your appointment.

## **BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 Facebook – Questions & Answers**

### **BSL (Scotland) Act can... (18 April)**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1470165406637765/permalink/1600873890233582/>

This admin team of this Facebook have created some examples of what the BSL (Scotland) Act can do, where it can be used, what powers it has, etc..

As we have explained, the NAG will work on the national plan. And, there will be local plans (which need to fit in with the national plan).

The national and local plans are for the 140+ public bodies and will set out things they will do to make their services accessible for Deaf and Deafblind people.

Some of the examples of 'Can the BSL (Scotland) Act ....' show what the Act can't be used for. Does that mean the Act is weak? No, it means we don't yet know what will be in the national or local BSL plans. It is important to understand the Act is about 'ACCESS' to public services. It is not about private services. It is not about discrimination. It is not about suing people or public bodies. The Act simply requires all the listed public bodies to publish their plans for access to BSL.

The national and local BSL plans will show how each of the public bodies will make their services accessible.

They may include things like:

- providing interpreters at meetings or appointments,

- websites and information in BSL,
- private meeting rooms for Deaf people and their interpreters,
- English material in 'Easy Read' or infographics format (or both),
- dedicated text phone number for Deaf users only,
- video service like direct webcam communication, or other VRI or VRS service,
- having a Deaf BSL advocate for Deaf children or any other vulnerable Deaf adult,
- setting up Deaf users forums for feedback and improvements,
- Deaf people employed as BSL buddies or PALS or other official position to give information, advice, support for Deaf BSL users.

There will be lots of ideas which you will have. That's why you have an important role to play with local consultations or meetings about local plans. It is not only the NAG who will have ideas but many other Deaf BSL users too.

Keep thinking about how YOU want the BSL (Scotland) Act to work for YOU so that you can get ACCESS to 140+ public bodies!