

Livestreaming of Emergency Briefings

It is critical for persons with disabilities to have access to information in real time during emergencies. Government agencies, including federal, state, local or tribal, providing public information must ensure that persons with disabilities can access and understand information in a timely manner.

Steps and Resources to Ensure Communication to Persons with Disabilities

To ensure effective communication access, government agencies broadcasting press briefings should take steps to provide qualified sign language interpreters, captions and audio descriptions, if appropriate so that persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind, blind or have low-vision receive the same information at the same time as those without disabilities. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) provides guidance and rules on [Accessibility to Emergency Information on Television](#). The National Association of the Deaf (NAD) has also issued a [Position Statement on Accessible Emergency Management for Deaf and Hard of Hearing People](#) to provide best practices for communication access during emergency broadcasts.

Interpreters During Emergency Broadcasts

For all televised press conferences and briefings, it is important to have sign language interpreters using American Sign Language (ASL) in full view of the camera to provide information for those who need it. Qualified sign language interpreters must be able to interpret American Sign Language effectively, accurately, and impartially and should have the appropriate certification or licensure if required by the state or tribal government. As a best practice (where available), use qualified Deaf Interpreters or Certified Deaf Interpreters (CDIs) who use sign language as their first language to interpret during broadcasts.

Captioning

Captioning provides access to words and sounds through a text displayed on television or an end-user's device during a broadcast. The FCC requires captioning to be:

- accurate and match the spoken words without paraphrasing;
- synchronous to the pace of how the words are spoken at a speed that can be read easily;
- provided through the entire program; and
- placed where no other important information is blocked.

The FCC requires broadcasts captioned on television to be captioned on the Internet. For more information, please see the FCC guidance on [Closed Captioning of Internet Video Programing](#).



Audio Description

Emergency information must be made accessible through an audio description so that a person who is blind or has low vision can access visual information (such as maps, charts, screen crawls or scrolls). Individuals using this feature on a television are alerted by a tone and will access the audio description through their device's settings. This feature is not readily available on social media platforms, so speakers are encouraged to describe visual information during their presentation.