

## **ASL Video: How to File a Complaint When Deaf or Hard of Hearing People Don't Get Accessible Communications.**

Did you try to get an accommodation to communicate clearly with medical staff and didn't get the access you need? For example, did you try to get ASL, real-time captioning, assistive listening device or another accommodation? In this video we will show you how to file a complaint.

If you have Medicare **only** please contact Senior Health Insurance Benefits Assistance (SHIBA) at 1-800-722-4134 or visit <https://shiba.oregon.gov>.

Filing the complaint is easier if you have information ready. For example:

- When you asked for the accommodations.
- When your appointment was.
- What happened after you found out you couldn't get your accommodation.
- Also, if you know who you spoke with that day.

The more information you can share when filing, the better.

At <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/OEI/Pages/Public-Civil-Rights.aspx> you can find out where and how to file a complaint. It includes links to complaint forms in English and other languages. (We will share this link at the end of this video as well.) You can also find this information by going online and doing a search for "OHA Civil Rights."

There are a few ways to file your complaint:

- You can call 1-844-882-7889
- You can email your complaint to [OHA.PublicCivilRights@dhsoha.state.or.us](mailto:OHA.PublicCivilRights@dhsoha.state.or.us)
- You can print, fill out, then either mail or email the complaint form. If you decide to complete this form, the rest of the video will help guide you.

Now to go over the complaint form:

The complaint section starts on the second page.

Explain where and when you did not receive the accommodation. Check if you had any problem entering the building. If you did, state what kept you from being able to go in.

The next question asks if you were denied access to or participation in a program, service or activity. For example, you want to be in a program to stop smoking or take a class about healthy eating through your doctor's office. However, they won't provide you accommodations – explain that here.

After that a question asks you to tell what happened with as many details as you can. The more details, the better!

You can give the names and contact information of those with you who saw what happened when you went to your appointment and found no accommodations made for you.

Often when you find out your accommodation won't be made it's hard to do anything about it at that time. But if you were able to do something at the time – text an advocate or complaint line, for example – there is a space for you to describe that. It is OK to leave it blank.

In the next section you have the chance to say what you would like to happen after you make this complaint. For example, would it help to:

- Have ASL interpreters reliably available when you ask for them when you make appointments?
- Have an assistive listening device that works when you need it?
- Have real-time captioning ready to view on a mobile device large enough for you to see?
- Have staff who can work effectively with your choice of accommodations?

Here is where you can explain what would work best for you.

In the section after this, you can say why you think the discrimination happened. For example, you may think it's:

- Because you are Deaf or hard of hearing.

- Because of your age, race or ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender identity?

If you think there is more than one reason, check the boxes for those.

On the top of page five please check who filled out the form.

You can scan (or take clear photos) of the completed form and anything you want to include. Send it to the email address on the form for the OHA Office of Equity and Inclusion. Or if you prefer, you can mail them to the address on the form.

If you file your complaint by email, someone should follow up with you within a few business days. If they don't, you can email [OHA.PublicCivilRights@dhsosha.state.or.us](mailto:OHA.PublicCivilRights@dhsosha.state.or.us) to ask about the progress of your complaint. If you file your complaint during a phone call with OHA staff, you can ask them when you should get a reply as well.

If you file a formal complaint when your access needs aren't met, it's more likely you will get better language access in the future. You also help improve accessibility for all. So, thank you for taking the time and effort to do so!