

804.31 Arrest of deaf or hard-of-hearing person — use of interpreters — fee.

1. When a person is detained for questioning or arrested for an alleged violation of a law or ordinance and there is reason to believe that the person is deaf or hard of hearing, the peace officer making the arrest or taking the person into custody or any other officer detaining the person shall determine if the person is a deaf or hard-of-hearing person as defined in [section 622B.1](#). If the officer so determines, the officer, at the earliest possible time and prior to commencing any custodial interrogation of the person, shall procure a qualified interpreter in accordance with [section 622B.2](#) and the rules adopted by the supreme court under [section 622B.1](#) unless the deaf or hard-of-hearing person knowingly, voluntarily, and intelligently waives the right to an interpreter in writing by executing a form prescribed by the department of health and human services and the Iowa county attorneys association. The interpreter shall interpret the officer's warnings of constitutional rights and protections and all other warnings, statements, and questions spoken or written by any officer, attorney, or other person present and all statements and questions communicated in sign language by the deaf or hard-of-hearing person.

2. [This section](#) does not prohibit the request for and administration of a preliminary breath screening test or the request for and administration of a chemical test of a body substance or substances under [chapter 321J](#) prior to the arrival of a qualified interpreter for a deaf or hard-of-hearing person who is believed to have committed a violation of [section 321J.2](#). However, upon the arrival of the interpreter the officer who requested the chemical test shall explain through the interpreter the reason for the testing, the consequences of the person's consent or refusal, and the ramifications of the results of the test, if one was administered.

3. When an interpreter is not readily available and the deaf or hard-of-hearing person's identity is known, the person may be released by the law enforcement agency into the temporary custody of a reliable family member or other reliable person to await the arrival of the interpreter, if the person is eligible for release on bail and is not believed to be an immediate threat to the person's own safety or the safety of others.

4. An answer, statement, or admission, oral or written, made by a deaf or hard-of-hearing person in reply to a question of a law enforcement officer or any other person having a prosecutorial function in a criminal proceeding is not admissible in court and shall not be used against the deaf or hard-of-hearing person if that answer, statement, or admission was not made or elicited through a qualified interpreter, unless the deaf or hard-of-hearing person had waived the right to an interpreter pursuant to [this section](#). In the event of a waiver and criminal proceeding, the court shall determine whether the waiver and any subsequent answer, statement, or admission made by the deaf or hard-of-hearing person were knowingly, voluntarily, and intelligently made.

5. When communication occurs with a person through an interpreter pursuant to [this section](#), all questions or statements and responses shall be relayed through the interpreter. The role of the interpreter is to facilitate communication between the hearing and deaf or hard-of-hearing parties. An interpreter shall not be compelled to answer any question or respond to any statement that serves to violate that role at the time of questioning or arrest or at any subsequent administrative or judicial proceeding.

6. An interpreter procured under [this section](#) shall be paid a reasonable fee and expenses by the governmental subdivision funding the law enforcement agency that procured the interpreter.

[84 Acts, ch 1264, §1; 85 Acts, ch 131, §2; 86 Acts, ch 1220, §42; 88 Acts, ch 1134, §115; 93 Acts, ch 75, §14; 2016 Acts, ch 1011, §121; 2023 Acts, ch 19, §1318; 2023 Acts, ch 64, §100](#)