COMMUNICATION SUGGESTIONS

It is hoped this card will alleviate some communication problems between law officials and deaf people. Deaf people 1) have not responded correctly to police because they could not be lipread, 2) have reached for paper/pencil and were assumed to be reaching for weapons, 3) have not heeded police warnings because they could not hear them.

Although the speech of deaf people sounds different from that of hearing people, there is no direct cause-effect relationship between deafness and inability to speak. The terms “deaf-mute” and “deaf and dumb” are incorrect and are considered insults by the deaf.

Messages need not include signs for all words in English sentences. For example, the words in parentheses may be understood by context, natural body movement, etc. (“Were any) people hurt? I need (some) paper (and a) pencil.” Many sentences can be made from the signs on this card; e.g., “Please show me your registration card.”

When asking questions, lean forward, use a questioning expression, and hold the last sign. Use natural gestures, e.g., headshakes for agreement and negation.

In the sign illustrations, dotted hands show starting positions. Use the manual alphabet to fingerspell names and other key words for which you have no sign. Be sure to speak when signing; understand signs, so be patient. Also, since speaking is easier than lipreading, deaf people can often speak understandably, but cannot understand others without signs or writing.

LOCAL INTERPRETERS AND SERVICES

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA:
Cypress: (714) 826-9793 Voice
Los Angeles: (323) 478-8000 Voice
Riverside: (951) 275-5000 Voice
San Diego: (619) 398-2441 Voice
Ventura: (805) 644-6322 Voice

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA:
Fresno: (559) 225-3323 Voice
Merced: (209) 230-9910 Voice
Salinas: (831) 753-6540 Voice

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA:
Sacramento: (916) 349-7500 Voice
Stockton (209) 474-3088 Voice

BAY AREA AND NORTHERN CALIFORNIA:
San Leandro: (510) 343-6670 Voice

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