



HM Government



Disability Unit

# The BSL Advisory Board

## What the board will do



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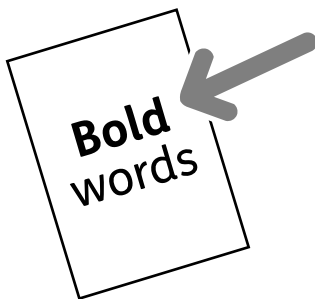
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In this Easy Read document, difficult words are in **bold**. We explain what these words mean in the sentence after they have been used.



Some words are [blue and underlined](#). These are links which will go to another website which has more information.



# Introduction



In 2022, the government made a new law, called 'The British Sign Language (BSL) Act'.

This law says that:



- British Sign Language (BSL) is a language that people in the UK use.



- The government needs to make sure information it gives to the public is available in British Sign Language.



To help us follow the new law, we are making a new group of people who use British Sign Language called the BSL Advisory Board.



This information explains what the BSL Advisory Board will do.

# What the BSL Advisory Board will do

The BSL Advisory Board will:



- Help the government to follow the new law.



- Give advice to the government about other issues that are important to people who use BSL.



- Help write new rules for using BSL when the government gives information to the public.



- Look at ways for the government to check and let people know what it is doing to include BSL in the information it gives to the public.



- Advise the government on how to get more people to be BSL interpreters.

**Interpreters** are hearing people who sign things that people say.



- Support other **D/deaf** people to let the government know what is important to them.



**D/deaf** means the person is either Deaf with a capital D, or **deaf** with a small d. The two are different.



**Deaf** people have been unable to hear all their lives and use sign language.



**deaf** means someone who finds it hard to hear.



The BSL Advisory Board will not make decisions for the government.

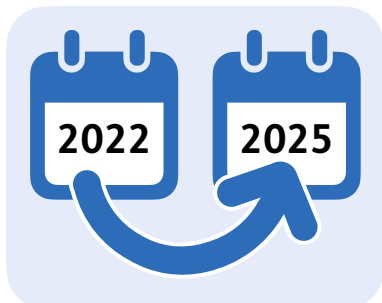


It will help the government to make decisions.



The BSL Advisory Board will not give advice to the government about things that the Scottish or Welsh governments are in charge of.

# Who will be on the board



To start with, the BSL Advisory Board will run from 2022 to 2025.



There will be 2 **co-chairs**.

**Co-chairs** are the people who will run the group.

The chairs will be:



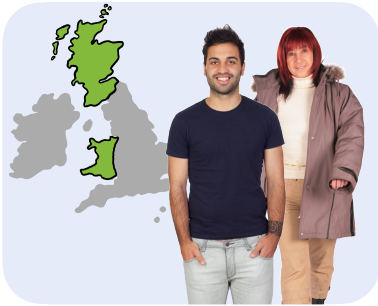
- An independent co-chairperson - this will be someone who uses BSL. You can apply to be the independent co-chairperson.



- A Civil Servant - this is someone who works for the government.



The BSL Advisory Board will be mainly made up of D/deaf people who use BSL from across England.



There will be 1 member from Wales and 1 member from Scotland.

Members of the BSL Advisory Board will:



- Be in the group for 3 years.



- Be checked every year by the government, to make sure they are doing what they should be.



- Be expected to come to all meetings.



We want to hear from lots of different people who use BSL, including:



- People from different parts of the country.



- Parents of Deaf children.
- Children Of Deaf Adults (CODA).



- People who have worked as interpreters.



- People who have used **tactile or hands-on BSL**.

**Tactile or hands-on BSL** is a type of BSL used to talk to people who are D/deaf and blind. You can use it by touching and feeling parts of people's hands.



- People from organisations that speak up for people who use BSL.



Anyone can apply.



The government will choose who will be on the BSL Advisory Board.



If you don't get picked, we might put you on a back-up list.



If someone has to leave the group, we might ask someone from the back-up list to take their place.



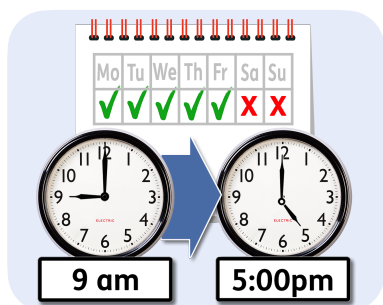
# How the board will work



The BSL Advisory Board will meet 4 times a year.



Some meetings will be in a room, and some will be online.



The meetings will be held during the day, between Mondays and Fridays.



The meetings will usually last at least 2 to 3 hours.



There will be time for a break.



The BSL Advisory Board will put information about what it has been doing on the internet.



This information will be in English and BSL.



All meetings will be held in BSL and English.



The Department for Work and Pensions will be the part of the government in charge of the BSL Advisory Board.



The BSL Advisory Board will work with people from the Cabinet Office Disability Unit.