



asdb
Alberta Society of the DeafBlind

**Alberta Society of the DeafBlind
Internal Policies and Procedures
SSP Services For DeafBlind Members' Personal Needs**

ASL summary: <https://youtu.be/tTupuHTMIU0>

Introduction

The Alberta Society of the DeafBlind (ASDB) has permission from the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission (AGLC) to use casino funds to provide SSP services for DeafBlind members for their personal use. However, this funding is limited, and ASDB must expend the money wisely. ASDB must provide reports every year to AGLC detailing how funds were spent.

The ASDB SSP volunteer coordinator supervises the use of these services, and can be reached at ASDBSSPCoordinator@gmail.com.

Limits of Service

ASDB will pay for a limited number of hours per month for SSP services for each DeafBlind member for their personal use. Please contact ASDB for the exact limit of hours allowed, as it may change from year to year (for example, 16 hours per person, per month is authorized for 2018). If a DeafBlind member uses more than the maximum hours permitted, usually ASDB would not pay.¹

¹ For more information about this policy, contact the SSP coordinator, or a member of the ASDB Board of Directors.

If there are extenuating circumstances during one month (e.g., time-consuming medical appointments), the DeafBlind member can make a request to the ASDB SSP coordinator - in advance - to ask for additional SSP hours, and provide the reasons why (general reasons, no need to provide very personal information). The SSP coordinator will consider the request. The SSP coordinator may need to get approval from the ASDB Board of Directors to pay for the extra hours. In these cases the name of the DeafBlind member will be kept confidential, and only the general reasons for requesting extended hours will be shared with the Board.

A month means the calendar month (e.g., month of January, month of June), even though some months have more days than other months – the maximum hours allocated is per calendar month. If the allocated hours are NOT used in one month, then what is not used is 'lost,' they cannot be carried forward.²

Booking SSPs

DeafBlind members contact SSPs directly to book services from the SSPs they want to hire for their personal errands and needs (do not contact ASDB SSP coordinator to book SSPs for personal services).

DeafBlind members must use SSPs who are on the ASDB approved list. For more information, contact the ASDB SSP coordinator at ASDBSSPCoordinator@gmail.com.

If members prefer to use other SSPs who are not on the ASDB approved list, then they are welcome to arrange payment / volunteer services of SSPs on their own.

The DeafBlind member and the SSP will have to agree in advance what the acceptable ways are for communicating with each other in order to book services (e.g., email, text, FaceBook, Glide, phone). Last minute requests may not be filled. It's best to try to book SSPs a few days (even a week) in advance, whenever possible.

ASDB rules: one SSP works with one DeafBlind member at a time. Due to safety considerations, two or more DeafBlind members with one SSP at the same time is not permitted.

Note: ASDB does not pay for interpreting services for DeafBlind members (except for ASDB meetings, socials or events). When DeafBlind members have appointments that require interpreting services, DeafBlind members must contact an interpreting agency to book services.

² Due to the limitations of coordinating SSP services using volunteers, tracking hours members use or hours they save is too complicated. In the event ASDB has paid staff to coordinate SSP services, this policy may be reviewed and revised.

Members can use their ASDB monthly SSP hours to book the SSP services to guide/bring members to and from the appointments where interpreting services have been booked.

DeafBlind Members Responsibilities – Reporting Services

At the end of every month DeafBlind members must email the ASDB SSP coordinator to report the SSP services they used:

- | 1. Date | 2. Time start | 3. Time finish | 4. Name of SSP |
|---------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
|---------|---------------|----------------|----------------|

ASDB needs this information in order to properly pay SSPs. Therefore, DeafBlind members **must** email³ the coordinator at the end of every month ASDBSSPCoordinator@gmail.com to confirm the services they used. ASDB does not need to know what DeafBlind members used SSP services for (what they were doing), ASDB just needs to know the dates, times and which SSP was booked. ASDB also needs this information to keep records of all the services used in order to prepare reports for the government (AGLC).

Cancelling SSP Services

If a DeafBlind member cancels an SSP with 48 hours or more advance notice, the SSP will not be paid. If a DeafBlind member cancels with less than 48 hours notice, then the SSP will be paid for two hours.

The date and time the message is sent by the DeafBlind member to cancel the assignment, is considered the time the 'notice' is given. For example if the DeafBlind member sends the message with more than 48 hours notice, but the SSP does not receive (check) the message until after the 48 hours deadline, then 'notice' is considered given by the DeafBlind person in time. If the message is sent with less than 48 hours notice, then the SSP can invoice for 2 hours.

Unfortunately, cancellations with less than 48 hours notice will be paid to the SSP and the two hours will count as part of the month's allotment of hours.

Expenses

ASDB does **not** pay for insurance, transportation, gas, parking, bus fare, taxis, meals, admission fees or any other expenses for the SSP or for the DeafBlind member. DeafBlind members can discuss (in advance) directly with SSPs to negotiate and agree on travel costs, or other expenses, if necessary. ASDB would not usually be involved in these negotiations.

³ If the DeafBlind person does not access email, then other monthly communication arrangements need to be discussed with the SSP coordinator.

SSPs may use their personal vehicles to transport DeafBlind members when they work as an SSP, but they are not required to. For insurance and liability reasons, they may decline to use their personal vehicle, in such cases; they can guide the DeafBlind member when using other transportation methods such as taxis or public transit.

Respectful Relationships

ASDB promotes cooperation, empowerment and respect between SSPs and DeafBlind persons. Refer to the SSP role description, codes of ethics and conduct and ASDB policies (on our web site) for more information about expectations for working together.

If the DeafBlind member or SSPs have concerns about the other, this should be discussed first between yourselves. If there is no solution, bring the issue to the ASDB SSP coordinator. If the meeting with the coordinator is not satisfactory, the situation can be brought to the ASDB Board of Directors. The ASDB Board of Directors may select a neutral board member, **or** the Board may select another external neutral person to listen and respond to the situation.

ASDB has a zero tolerance policy for bullying behaviour – neither the DeafBlind person nor the SSP may be disrespectful or bully the other. All conversations and interactions should be polite and professional. Both the SSP and the DeafBlind person should understand the expectations of SSP services and how SSPs work in their role, as well as their work limitations. As stated above, if there are concerns about any situation contact the ASDB SSP coordinator.

ASDB Events

For ASDB events such as socials, or meetings (e.g., general, board, committee) interpreters, CF's, and SSP's⁴ will be booked by the ASDB SSP coordinator (not the DeafBlind member); for the same reason, only the SSP coordinator (or other board members) has the authority to cancel interpreting, CF, and SSP services for ASDB events.

DeafBlind members **must** inform the SSP coordinator in advance when they plan to attend ASDB events. If members do not email the coordinator at ASDBSSPCoordinator@gmail.com then services will **not** be provided for that member for the upcoming ASDB social, meeting or event. Finding the proper services takes time, so it is important that members understand their responsibility to inform the coordinator, in advance, when they plan to attend ASDB events (deadlines for members to inform the SSP coordinator will be provided in the announcement of the event, meeting or social).

⁴ See ASDB Glossary of Terms available on our web site <http://www.albertadeafblind.ca/>

Invoicing Guidelines

Every month SSPs must submit invoices to ASDB that contains the following information - see sample invoice:⁵

- SSP name, address, email, text/phone number
- Total of hours worked, hourly rate, and total amount \$\$ to be paid
- GST if you have the proper GST number

With the monthly invoice SSPs must submit a timesheet⁶

- List of dates, times of working hours and name of DeafBlind member
- Purpose for the service; ASDB social, ASDB board business, personal, other (explain)

Invoices should be submitted to the ASDB SSP coordinator **by the 5th** of the month with the information for the previous month. Then the ASDB SSP coordinator will forward the invoices to the ASDB treasurer, who will do the necessary paperwork to issue the cheques. Incorrect invoices could result in a delay in payment.

Please submit an invoice every month for SSP work. Do not collect hours over multiple months, as this makes tracking and reporting more difficult.

SSPs will be paid approximately 30 days from when ASDB receives the invoice. DeafBlind members need to verify the hours with the SSP coordinator before ASDB processes payment for invoices.

Paid work time starts when the SSP meets the DeafBlind member at the agreed time and place. Paid work time stops when the SSP leaves the DeafBlind member. This means that SSP travel time to meet the DeafBlind member, as well as the SSP time to get home after finishing with the DeafBlind member is NOT working time, and is not paid.

The SSP will be paid a two-hour minimum for each booking. If the DeafBlind member does not use the full two hours the SSP can still invoice for two hours. SSPs can invoice in 15-minute intervals.⁷ The SSP invoices for fees using their ASDB approved hourly rate.⁸

If the SSP arrives late, then their paid time starts when the SSP arrives and meets the DeafBlind person. If the DeafBlind person is late, paid time for the SSP starts at the agreed meeting time.

⁵ See Appendix A - SSP Sample Invoice

⁶ See Appendix C – ASDB Timesheet (blank)

⁷ See Appendix B - Sample of ASDB Timesheet showing time calculations at 15 minute intervals.

⁸ The ASDB Board of Directors may approve increases to hourly rates every few years, if funding levels permit.

If the DeafBlind person does not show up for 30 minutes after the agreed time, and has not contacted the SSP, then the SSP can leave, and will be paid for 2 hours.

SSPs can work for different DeafBlind members throughout the month, and SSPs are not limited to a maximum number of hours of work per month.

When the DeafBlind member is going to an appointment where an interpreter is booked, the time the SSP is waiting for the DeafBlind person to finish is paid time (while the DeafBlind person is in the appointment with an interpreter).

ASDB SSPs working with DeafBlind clients while on-the-job with another organization (e.g., Connect Society, Excel) cannot invoice ASDB for SSP services (double-billing). ASDB certainly welcomes all DeafBlind individuals to our events.

SSPs are independent contractors with ASDB. SSPs are responsible to track their income, expenses, and report their taxable income to government.

SSPs must understand the business practices of a contract / freelance person, and how expenses such as vehicle insurance (liability protection), gas, kilometers, parking, bus fares, meals, membership fees, professional development, as well as other business expenses can be applied to reduce taxes.

SSP Responsibilities

SSPs be knowledgeable about the

1. SSP Role Description and Responsibilities
2. (ASDB) SSP Code of Ethics and Conduct
3. ASDB Internal Policies and Procedures: SSP Services For DeafBlind Members' Personal Needs

All of these documents are available on our web site in ASL and printed English.

Performance Quality

ASDB reserves the right to monitor the services provided by SSPs and CFs to ensure they are performed at the expected level of service quality, and are adhering to their Codes of Conduct and ASDB policies and procedures.

In the event that services are not meeting expectations, the person will be asked to meet with the SSP coordinator (or designate) so feedback and support can be given to improve services. ASDB values the work and commitment of our SSPs and CFs - your success is our success!

In the event that services or behaviours do not improve, even after ASDB has attempted to work with the person to solve the concerns, ASDB reserves the right to remove them from the approved list.

Applying to become a Service Support Provider or Communication Facilitator

To apply to register as an ASDB SSP and/or a CF, the individual must provide the ASDB SSP coordinator a resume and cover letter (in English or ASL) explaining why you are interested in working for ASDB, and in which role(s). The letter should also outline your background with DeafBlind people.

Once your resume and letter are received, then you will be asked to review ASDB's documents. The SSP coordinator and possibly (an)other ASDB Board member(s) will make arrangements to interview you, at a mutually convenient date. The interview will focus on questions about your experience (if any) of providing SSP / CF services, your knowledge of ASDB's documents and policies regarding SSP and CF services, and your suitability for working in those roles.

If you are successful in the interview, then you will be notified, and asked to complete some standard paperwork (information required for taxes/payroll, acknowledgment of responsibilities, hourly pay rate, etc.) before ASDB can authorize hours.

The SSP coordinator will monitor your service quality over the first six – twelve months as a way to support your success.

**Appendix A
SSP Invoice
Template**

Date: _____

Billing To:

Alberta Society of the DeafBlind (ASDB)
6240 113 Street NW
Edmonton, AB T6H 3L2
Email: asdbservice@gmail.com

Pay to the order of: *(SSP information)*

Name:
Address:
Text/phone:
Email:

Hourly rate: \$ _____

Total hours: _____

Total Earnings: \$ _____

GST: \$ _____

Grand Total: \$ _____

**All invoices must be submitted with an ASDB timesheet
showing details of work provided.**



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Appendix B
Timesheet
Support Services Provided

Sample

	Date	Start Time	End Time	Total Hours	Name of DeafBlind member	Reason
Example	Jan 5/15	5:00pm	7:35pm	2.75	Jane Smith (Board Meeting)	B
	Jan 7/15	1:00pm	4:20pm	3.5	John Doe	P
	Jan 12/15	Noon	3:00pm	3	Max Murphy (ASDB AGM)	O
	Jan 17/15	9:00am	1:00pm	4	Jane Smith	P
	Jan 30/15	7:00pm	9:10pm	2.25	John Doe (ASDB Bowling)	S
	Hourly Rate	\$ 20.00	Hours Total	15.5	Grand Total \$	310.00

Reason:

B = ASDB Board Business

S = ASDB Social Event

P = SSP services for DeafBlind personal business

O = Other, please provide short explanation

This timesheet must be submitted with the your invoice.



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**Appendix C
 Timesheet
 Support Services Provided**

SSP Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Date	Start Time	End Time	Total Hours	Name of DeafBlind member	Reason
Hourly Rate		Hours Total		Grand Total \$	

Reason:

- B = ASDB Board Business P = SSP services for DeafBlind personal business
 S = ASDB Social Event O = Other, please provide short explanation

This timesheet must be submitted with your invoice.

Resources

The ASDB document *Internal Policies and Procedures SSP Services For DeafBlind Members' Personal Needs* was created using the valuable information provided in the following documents:

Communication Access Network Guidelines for Contracted SSPs (ND).

http://www.cancorp.org/pdf/ssp_guideline_042010.pdf

Deafblind International. (1999). Guidelines on Best Practice for Service Provision to Deafblind People.

<http://www.deafblindinternational.org/PDF/Guidelines%20for%20Best%20Practice%20for%20Service%20Provision%20to%20Deafblind%20People.pdf>

Morgan, S. (2001). What's My Role? A Comparison of the Responsibilities of Interpreters, Intervenors, and Support Service Providers. *Deaf Blind Perspectives*. Vol 9 (1).

<http://www.hadley.edu/IAER2015/comparing%20interpreter,%20intervener,%20and%20Ossp.pdf>

Nuccio J., & Smith T. (2010). Comprehensive Training for Deaf-Blind Persons and Their Support Service Providers. Seattle, Washington. <http://seattledbsc.org/dbssp-curriculum/>

Resource Centre for Manitobans who are Deaf-Blind (ND). Training and service practices.

Winnipeg, Manitoba. <http://www.rcmdb.mb.ca>

South Dakota Department of Human Services (ND). Role of the SSP – SSP Fact Sheet.

<http://dhs.sd.gov/sbvi/fos/documents/ROLEOFTHESSP.pdf>