ABA
AMERICAN**BAR**ASSOCIATION

Commission on
Disability Rights

Zoom: Accessibility for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing

DISCLAIMER
This guide does not constitute an endorsement, sponsorship or recommendation of Zoom or its affiliates.

On behalf of the Commission on Disability Rights, we are pleased to provide this guide on making your Zoom meetings and webinars accessible to attendees who are deaf and hard-of-hearing. Specifically, the guide will address how to add third-party closed captioners and interpreters to your meetings and webinars. To ensure full and equal participation for all attendees, we strongly encourage you to add an accessibility statement to your communications. We suggest the following language: "We are committed to accessibility. To request any accessibility needs, please contact name@americanbar.org or (telephone) by (provide deadline for requests)." Also, it is essential that, before your meetings and webinars start, you leave sufficient time to test the set up for captioners and interpreters so that individuals can join with the proper accommodations from the start.

Recently, Zoom added an automatic closed captioning feature called "live transcription". However, this feature currently only supports English, and its accuracy depends on many variables, including:

- Background noise
- Volume and clarity of the speaker's voice
- Speaker's proficiency with the English language
  Lexicons and dialects specific to a geography or community

NOTE: Because of these limitations, if you are required to use speech-to-text support for any compliance or accessibility needs in your meetings and webinars, Zoom does not recommend using this live transcription feature but instead a manual captioner or service that may be able to guarantee a specific accuracy.

Closed Captioning

Assume that everyone who may need real-time closed captions will not request them. Accordingly, provide them for all your meetings and webinars. In Zoom, closed captions in real time can be added to meetings and webinars for attendees who are deaf or hard or hearing, as well as for those who have cognitive, learning, or other disabilities. To do so, you will need to hire a CART (Communication Access Real-Time Transcriber) reporter from a third-party provider. Many at the ABA use ACS (Alternative Communication Service) at https://www.acscaptions.com. Also, you must advise the provider that you would like a transcript of the meeting. Before distributing the transcript, review and make any necessary edits.

You will need to send the third-party provider the following information: Event title and description, date, time, Zoom link, onsite contact's name and number, and preparatory materials (e.g., agenda, speaker names, presentations).The provider will then schedule a captioner and send you a confirmation email with the captioner's name and email address.

The CART reporter can caption directly to Zoom, to its external captioning page through StreamText, or to both simultaneously. Attendees may request both. You must notify the provider of your choices. For the external captioning page, ensure that the page is fully customizable for each individual viewer to set their own font size, style, color, and background. For captions to be directly connected into the Zoom meeting, the meeting host has to activate closed captioning in Zoom and assign our captioner.

Enabling Closed Captions

1. Go to www.Zoom.us.
2. Click **SIGN IN** to your account at the top right-hand corner.
3. On the left, navigate to **Settings**, click **In Meeting (Advanced)**.
4. On the right, scroll down to **Closed captioning**. Toggle on: blue is on, grey is off.
5. **Save captions** should turn on automatically. This allows participants to save captions and transcripts at the end of the meeting.
6. **IMPORTANT**: If you plan to import the captions when uploading the video to a video-streaming platform – YouTube or Brightcove – you must have a CC file-type. To save a copy of the closed captions in a compatible format – .VTT rather than .TXT – follow these steps:
    1. From your Zoom account, navigate to your **Settings**, and select **Recording**.
    2. Under **Advanced cloud recording settings**, select **Audio Transcript**. This will enable you to download the closed captions in a compatible format.
    3. To download this file after the meeting, navigate to **Recordings** from your Zoom profile. Select the meeting. The **Audio Transcript** should be available for download.

Assigning a Captioner to a Zoom Meeting

1. When you are in the Zoom meeting, click **Closed Caption** from the bottom menu.
2. Click **Assign a participant to type**. A list of participants will be enabled on the right side of the screen. The captioner must join the meeting as a participant. For easy identification, "captioner" should appear after the captioner's name. Choose the captioner from the participant list.
3. Click **More** and then **Assign to type Closed Caption**.
4. Users can turn the captions on or off by clicking the CC (Close Captioning) icon.
5. Within menu, users will see **Subtitle settings** which allows them to set the size of the captions.
6. Once the meeting ends, the host will see the option to have the captions saved. Click on that option. Note the captions will be saved as a .TXT file. You must convert to a .VTT file to upload the captions to a video platform.

Assigning a Captioner to a Zoom Webinar

1. Before the webinar begins, navigate to **Webinars** and select your program.
2. About halfway down the page, under **Invite Panelists**, select edit on the right-hand side.
3. Add the Name + (Captions) and email address provided by the CART services provider and selec SAVE.
4. About minutes before the webinar, while you are in **Practice Mode**, the captioner should join. You can assign this person as captioner using the instructions above from a Zoom Meeting.
5. Alternatively, you can select **Participants** from the bottom menu, locate said representative, select **More**, and assign that person as the captioner.
6. Often times, this representative will confirm via chat; you will also see a blue CC icon next to their name in the **Panelist** tab of the participant list.

Assigning a Captioner to Zoom Breakout Rooms

1. Click **Meeting Participants**.
2. Click the captioner's name.
3. Click **More**.
4. Click **Assign to type Closed Caption**.
5. Once captioner is assigned, it is not necessary to reassign the captioner when moving to a breakout room.
6. Open breakout room. Be sure to move your captioner to that room.
7. Click **Breakout Room**.
8. Assign your captioner to the breakout room.

9. Click **Open All Rooms** when ready to move to breakout rooms.
10. Once in breakout room, captioner clicks the cc button and then clicks on the bottom portion of the screen and begins to caption.
11. To view captions, users must click the up arrow to the right of the cc button and then click **View Subtitles** and/or **View Full Transcript**.
12. When returning to main room, captioner and users must repeat step 11 to view full captions.

Users Guide to StreamText

1. Click on the URL assigned by the provider.
2. NOTE: This link can be opened on a laptop, tablet, or smartphone. If you have trouble opening the link, try using a different internet search engine (Google, IE, Firefox, Bing, etc.)
3. After opening the realtime page, you will see a green checkmark in the lower right corner to indicate you are connected. If you see a yellow circle an exclamation point, you are not connected.
4. Tabs at the top of the screen that will allow you to change the appearance of your realtime screen. Click on **Theme**, **Font Size**, **Font Family**, **Background**, and **Text Color** to personalize the appearance of the realtime page.
5. If you uncheck the box under Scroll, realtime text will stop scrolling.
6. Click **View Transcript** to go back and review the text. While you are viewing the transcript, realtime captions continue to run in the background. To return to realtime, simply close the transcript.

Interpreters

Assigning an ASL Interpreter to a Webinar or Meeting

Some attendees may request American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters for a meeting or webinar. You will need to hire an ASL interpreter from a third-party provider. Many at the ABA use ACS (Alternative Communication Service) at https://www.acscaptions.com. For webinars, the host will need to make the interpreter part of the panelist group, following the instructions above under the heading "Assign a Captioner to a Zoom Webinar."

For meetings, the interpreter must join the meeting as a participant. For easy identification, "interpreter" should appear after the interpreter's name. The host must ensure that the deaf person is able to "pin" the interpreter in order to see the interpreter at all times. Be sure to alert all participants that you will have an ASL interpreter, provide the interpreter's name so they can find the interpreter, and include instructions on how to pin the interpreter.

How to Pin an ASL Interpreter on Zoom

The pin screen allows you to disable active speaker view and only view a specific speaker. Pinning another user's video only affects your local view in the Zoom Room, not the view of other participants and does not affect cloud recordings.
Instructions
1. Start a new or scheduled meeting.
2. Tap **Manage Participant** on the Zoom Room Controller.
   Tap the Host or Participant's name > tap **Pin Video**.
3. If you have multiple screens in your Zoom Room, you can choose which screen to pin the video to.