Representative to enable a specific witness to communicate with committee members, and only during the witness’s testimony. Interpretation of committee meetings for audience members who are deaf or hard of hearing should be arranged for and paid by the committee.

- Sign language interpretation can be provided for official activities, including staff meetings, visits with constituents, press conferences, and work-related instructional classes (such as computer training). Interpretation by the CSSO staff is available only within the Capitol Hill complex.

- If you need an interpreter off Capitol Hill, the Congressional Special Services Office can offer assistance in locating one. The Special Services Office maintains a list of interpreter referral agencies nationwide and a listing of individual interpreters who are certified by the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf.

- A Senator’s or Representative’s office may make arrangements with a commercial vendor for interpretation for an official function in the home State or outside the jurisdiction of the CSSO. This can be paid for with official funds.

**Sign Language Classes**

Basic sign language classes are offered for Congressional employees by staff of the Special Services Office when scheduling permits. For more information and registration forms, call the CSSO.

**FM Systems**

This is a wireless transmitting system that transmits sound to those who wear hearing aids, a special receiver to those who do not wear a hearing aid. The FM system can be used for guided tours and in certain galleries and hearing rooms. This system can be of benefit both in one-on-one situations and in meetings of any size.

Congressional Offices may obtain FM equipment for short term use by contacting the CSSO.

**Special Events**

**On Capitol Hill**

CSSO provides support services and information to Congressional Offices for official business at the Capitol which may require special assistance for participants with disabilities (i.e., wheelchair access information, sign language interpreters or escorts).

**In the Home State**

The CSSO can provide accessibility information to Senator’s and Representatives’ Offices who are planning events in the home State. This may include the following:

- Interpreters (see Interpreter Services), assistive listening devices and captioning for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

- How to provide information in alternate formats (braille, large print) for individuals who are blind or have low vision. (The preferred point size for large print is 18 pt.)

- How to provide seating to accommodate visitors or participants using wheelchairs or other mobility aids.

The individual with the disability is the person who can best inform you of his or her needs. The Congressional Special Services Office is available to provide information and support services to Senate and House offices in meeting those needs.
The Congressional Special Services Office (CSSO) is a joint Office under the jurisdiction of the Special Services Board, composed of the Senate Sergeant at Arms, the Clerk of the House, and the Librarian of Congress. CSSO offers a variety of services to assist staff, constituents, and visitors who have disabilities. Services include adaptive tours of the Capitol building, escort services, publications in alternative formats for individuals who are blind or have low vision, interpreting services for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, and instructional classes for Congressional staff.

The Congressional Special Services Office is located on the first floor of the Capitol in the Crypt, directly below the Rotunda. It is open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. To request assistance or obtain more information, call Ext. 4-4048 (V) or 4-4049 (TTY).