

Communication Access Rights to Legal and Justice Services

- Voiceover** As a person who has a speech and language disability, you have the same rights as everyone else. This includes the right to report crimes to police discuss legal matters with a lawyer and to testify in court. Your rights are protected by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, human rights laws in provinces and territories, international laws and by court cases that have been fought by other people.
- Pamela Cross** It's important that you or someone you trust know your communication rights so that you can ask for the supports you need to communicate effectively in these situations. Everyone has different communication needs. You'll need to decide what works for you. Here are some examples of your communication rights when you are communicating with the police, with lawyers, judges, support people, anybody else who's involved in the legal or justice systems. You have the right to respect.
- Voiceover** Sometimes you may need to tell people how to show respect when communicating with you. For example, you might want to tell them to look at you and to talk to you and not the person with you. You might want to ask them not to shout, not to talk to you in a childish manner or underestimate your abilities.
- Pamela Cross** You have the right to use the communication method that works best for you and to have people follow your instructions about what you need so that you can communicate effectively with them and they can communicate effectively with you.

It's good to carry with you something in writing that describes what your needs are so that you can hand that to people and they will know and be able to meet those needs.

- Voiceover You can give instructions by using your device or showing a card with written instructions or having someone explain what you want them to do.
- Pamela Cross You have the right to have as much time as you need to communicate your messages to others.
- Voiceover Communicating a message by spelling, showing pictures or typing on a device takes longer than speaking. You may need to explain this and to ask for extra time during an appointment
- Pamela Cross You have the right to be understood.
- Voiceover You can ask people to tell you if they don't understand you. That gives you the opportunity to move to a quiet place to communicate and to repeat your message, or communicate it in another way.
- Pamela Cross And, you have the right to understand what other people are talking about and are saying to you.
- Voiceover You can ask people to use everyday language and to speak slowly. If you have aphasia after a stroke, you may want to have people write down key words or show you pictures to illustrate what you are talking about.



Communication Disabilities
Access Canada

Pamela Cross You have the right to have someone assist you with communication. There are some situations where you may require a neutral communication assistant.

Voiceover In a legal or justice situation, this means having someone who is trained and certified to assist with two-way communication between you and a police officer, lawyer or justice professional.

For more information, contact Communication Disabilities Access Canada and visit our website: www.cdacanada.com