# Notes that may help you if you are told that you have to employ an interpreter instead of using freelance interpreters

“If a Support Worker is required full time, for example 30 hours or more a week, Access to Work will normally fund on the basis of an annual salary rather than an Agency worker employed on an hourly basis” (AtW 340)

If ATW say you have to employ a salaried interpreter instead of freelancer, these notes might help you to explain why employing an interpreter might not meet your needs, reduces your employability, and may not be possible:

**Why employing an interpreter does not meet your work access needs:**

* You need to use different interpreters in different situations, according to their abilities, skills and strengths.
* You need to work with different interpreters at different times to ensure that they are fit and able to do the work, to the required professional standard. (AtW 387-390)
* Even if you are unable to recruit an interpreter AtW will only offer you an award equivalent to the budget they have set for employing an interpreter. The reduced budget that you have will no longer be enough to pay for freelance interpreters to meet your employment needs. This means:
* No longer having sufficient budget to book sufficient appropriate interpreters to cover your agreed hours. For example, you may have to book interpreters for a lot less hours than you need them, or book one interpreter where you really should be booking two
* No longer being able to book suitably skilled, experienced, qualified interpreters to meet your access needs. (AtW 387-390)
* No longer being able to fully fulfill your work role and responsibilities, on days where you no longer have access to an interpreter, and where you are not able to fully understand or participate through using inappropriately skilled and experienced interpreters. (AtW 387-390)

**Why having to employ an interpreter reduces your employability:**

* As any one employing you will also have to employ an additional full time member of staff, with all the additional on costs etc., this is a barrier to getting, keeping, and getting promotion in your work. (Employers have said that they would be less likely to employ Deaf people if they had to employ an interpreter as well).
* As the AtW budget for staff interpreter on costs does not nearly cover the full on costs, this is even more of a problem, with the employer having additional costs and liabilities from employing a Deaf person.
* This will be even more of a barrier with small businesses, where having to employ an additional member of staff would have a disproportionate impact. E.g. a business employing three staff, if recruiting a Deaf member of staff, would have to employ four (including the interpreter). An additional 33% staffing.
* This will also be more of a barrier for businesses employing several Deaf people. For example, a business employing 5 Deaf people would have to increase to a team of ten, including five staff interpreters. (Employers of several Deaf people have said that is this is the case they will employ hearing people instead).

**Why it is difficult / impossible to employ appropriately experienced, skilled and qualified interpreters as staff interpreters to meet your work access needs:** (AtW 386-390)

* If you have a very demanding schedule, then it will not be appropriate for interpreters to work with you full time for their Health & Safety, as they won’t be able to control and vary their work load, e.g. balancing a heavy day of meetings with community interpreting with GPs.
* Interpreters suitable for your work access needs are not willing to be employed full time, as they regard full time employment with one Deaf person as neither appropriate (both because of their need to have varied work as part of their professional development and CPD, and because of the risk of role conflict developing over time) nor sufficiently interesting / challenging for a full time role.
* Interpreters suitable for your work access needs are not willing to work at the staff salary suggested. (Interpreters generally work as staff earlier on in their careers, as a way of building up their experience and skills, and so are willing at that point in their careers to accept a lower salary).
* Interpreters suitable for your work access needs are not willing to change from being self-employed to employed.
* Interpreters suitable for your work access needs are not available to be employed full time, as they already have other interpreting commitments.

**Why the amount offered for employing a full time salary equivalent won’t cover the actual cost of getting the same number of hours of support that ATW have already agreed you need to meet your needs:** (AtW 310, 351, 353, 354, 352, 364, 365, 366, 560, 561, 562, 619, **also see attached spreadsheet** showing staff interpreter will full on costs, and comparing with freelance interpreter costs).

* Please see separate spreadsheet for help with calculating the costs of employing an interpreter, and comparing those costs to using freelance interpreters.

For example it shows that using AtW’s own information, just with Employers NI and Management costs at 5%, **additional employment costs on a salary of £30,000 should be an extra £9,000 (£39,000 in total)**, not an additional £5,000 (£35,000 in total) as AtW have said to some Deaf people.

* Market forces (why the overall amount isn’t enough to buy the support you need).
* The need for the budget to also cover reasonable travel costs, especially where there may be lots of travel, and previously you may have used interpreters where you were working to keep travel costs down. (AtW 362, 368, 369, 563).
* If converting to a ‘salary’ basis, the need for the budget to include direct and indirect costs (employers’ NI, company pension, holiday pay, sick pay, maternity pay, payroll costs, advertising, recruitment etc.).
* The need for the budget to include sufficient to pay for interpreters CPD, professional supervision, and professional registration.
* The need for the budget to include sufficient to pay for a freelance interpreter for those situations requiring two interpreters to work together, e.g. meetings two hours or more. (AtW 559)
* The need for the budget to provide sufficient resources to provide alternative access if your employed interpreter is on annual leave, sick, has compassionate leave, maternity leave, etc. (AtW 310, etc. as above).
* Note that many agencies stopped employing experienced and qualified staff interpreters (e.g. AoHL) as the overall cost of employing staff interpreters was higher than the cost of working with freelance interpreters. Many of those that continue to employ staff interpreters do so by charging them out at above the freelance rate.