



Legal Seat – Helsinki, Finland

WORLD FEDERATION OF THE DEAF

An International Non-Governmental Organisation in official liaison with ECOSOC, UNESCO, ILO, WHO and the Council of Europe. WFD was established in Rome in 1951.

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STATEMENT ON EQUALITY & NON-DISCRIMINATION DURING THE GLOBAL COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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The [World Federation of the Deaf \(WFD\)](#) works towards the realisation of human rights for the approximately 70 million deaf people worldwide.

Deaf people, like other marginalised groups, can experience greater vulnerability during times of crisis. In this Covid-19 global emergency it is critical that deaf people are treated equally and without discrimination by ensuring the provision of access to information and health services in their national sign languages, as well as access to all forms of daily life activities such as education and other public services which may be presented in different formats during this pandemic.

Deaf people can be subject to multiple or aggravated forms of discrimination on the basis of race, colour, gender, sexuality, language, religion, political opinion, national, ethnic, indigenous or social origin, age or audist attitudes and actions. Deaf people from marginalized groups can also experience intersectional discrimination based on historical, social and political contexts.

The WFD has conducted [video meetings with our nine global regions](#) to learn more about the status of deaf people during the Covid-19 pandemic. During these meetings the WFD was concerned to learn that some deaf people are experiencing intersectional discrimination, such as by being deaf and of Asian descent. Article 7 of the [United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) and Article 5 of the [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) states that all are equal before the law and all are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection and equal benefit of the law.

The WFD condemns all discrimination against deaf people on any basis and calls on all people and governments to respect deaf people as equal citizens. We are all in this together, and must work together to defeat this pandemic.

The World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) is an international non-governmental organisation of deaf organisations from 125 nations; its mission is to promote the human rights of deaf people and full, quality and equal access to all spheres of life, including self-determination, sign language, education, employment and community life. WFD has a consultative status in the United Nations and is a founding member of the International [Disability Alliance](#) (IDA).

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