



NDHHS
Northeast Deaf and
Hard of Hearing Services, Inc.

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Communication Access Services Policy and Procedure Manual for Requesting Agencies

Attached please find a copy of the Policy outlining procedures for accessing American Sign Language Interpreter Referral Services from NDHHS.

The referral department takes pride in referring qualified interpreters. Referred interpreters are licensed to work in New Hampshire (RSA 326-I).

This information is designed to assist our customers in their efforts to secure interpreting referral services from NDHHS. The Policy contains the following information:

- How to request and/or cancel interpreting services
- How to access the Emergency Interpreter Referral Service
- Billing policies, procedures, and fees of NDHHS and of interpreters
- How to report a grievance

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), enacted in 1992, businesses/agencies are required by federal law to provide interpreting services as necessary to ensure effective communication with deaf and hard of hearing people. In other words, when interpreting services are necessary, it is the service provider's responsibility to secure and pay for these services. Service providers include lawyers, doctors, hospitals, state agencies, educational institutions, and courts among other businesses/agencies. The Referral Department of NDHHS works with your business/agency to comply with the ADA by locating the most-appropriately qualified interpreter within cost-effective terms.

The policies contained in this manual are in effect as of June 15, 2011.

Business Hours & Contact Information

NDHHS is open from 9:00am-4:30pm, Monday through Friday. The Interpreter Referral Department can be reached at 1-603-224-1850 Ext. 250. We can also be reached by email at referral@ndhhs.org or by videophone at 603-968-5891.

If you have an emergency need for a sign language interpreter after normal business hours or on a weekend or a holiday, and you are part of law enforcement or the medical or mental health community, you can access the Emergency Interpreter Referral Service (EIRS) at 1-800-552-3202. The 800# is for legal, medical, or mental health emergencies.

State of New Hampshire License

The New Hampshire Interpreter Licensure law, which became effective January 1, 2003, requires that interpreters for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing hold a license in order to practice as an interpreter in New Hampshire. The referral department takes pride in referring qualified and licensed interpreters. Please contact the NH Interpreter Licensure Board if you have specific questions (603-271-3877).

Referral Fees

Your agency/business will be billed a referral fee for using the Interpreter Referral service. The referral fee is separate from the fees for interpreting service you will receive from the interpreter(s). The referral fee applies once the request has been filled, and we have contacted you either by phone or email. The referral fee also applies regardless of cancellation or modification of the request. Generally, we mail referral fee invoices twice a month (at the end of the 2nd and 4th weeks of the month). We reserve the right to ask that a credit card number be provided to pay a referral fee. The credit card charge will take the place of a paper invoice. If a credit card number is provided, NDHHS will charge the credit card when the requester has officially confirmed the interpreter.

*****Referral Fees in Effect beginning July 1, 2011*****

Type of Request	More than 10 business days notice	4-9 business days notice	2-3 business days notice	Emergency- 2 business days notice or less medical, mental health, or legal only
General Request: Medical appointment, work/staff meeting	\$30 per interpreter	\$45 per interpreter	\$55 per interpreter, if filled \$30 if not filled*	\$55 per interpreter
Legal Requests: In-court, out-of-court, arrests, investigations	\$35 per interpreter	\$50 per interpreter	\$60 per interpreter	\$60 per interpreter
Ongoing Requests**: College classes, workshops	\$55 per interpreter	\$80 per interpreter	\$95 per interpreter	

Please note that we do not accept non-medical or non-legal requests with less than 48 hours notice.

* For requests that are received with 2-3 business days notice, NDHHS will charge a \$30 referral fee even if we are unsuccessful in filling the request.

** If more than 2 interpreters are needed to fill all the dates requested, \$30 will be charged for each additional interpreter needed to fill the request.

Referral fees are in effect once the request has been filled and we have contacted you either by phone or email. If we contact to confirm and are made aware at that time that the request is cancelled, the referral fee will still be in effect.

To avoid an unnecessary referral fee, please call in any cancellation as soon as possible.

These rates are in effect for requests received July 1, 2011 and after.

Interpreter/CART Requests

Your agency (the requester) is asked to provide the following information when making an interpreter/CART request:

- Name of the agency and phone number
- Date, time and length of assignment
- Location and nature of the assignment and/or agenda
- Name(s) of Deaf/Hard of Hearing people involved
- Preferred mode of communication, if known (i.e.: American Sign Language, Signed English, Oral, etc.)
- Names of preferred interpreters. (Often Deaf individuals will have a preference for specific interpreters.)
- Total number of participants, number of Deaf/Hard of Hearing participants
- Name, address and phone number of the billing party
- Name and phone number of the contact person for the day of the assignment
- Any other pertinent information

Please note that we no longer accept requests from other interpreter referral (third party) agencies.

What Happens Next?

Our referral staff will search for and find an interpreter qualified for the particular situation. After we have secured an interpreter, we will contact you by phone or by email to confirm the request. Once confirmed, we will send you a letter with the interpreter's name, phone number, and address. We will also make sure the interpreter has your contact information, the date/time of the assignment, billing and any other pertinent information.

If you submit a request by email and do not receive a reply within 24 hours, please check back with the Referral Department to see if the email was received. Our goal is to reply to all requests for interpreters within 24 hours.

You may contact the interpreter/reporter directly to inquire about their fees and policies, and the interpreter may contact you to gather additional information regarding the assignment. The interpreters/reporters are all independent contractors in private practice. From time to time and in an effort to fill requests, we may refer an NDHHS Staff interpreter to fill your request. If that is the case, then NDHHS will bill your organization for the staff interpreter's services.

In the event we are unable to secure any interpreter for the assignment requested, we will give you as much notice as possible. We attempt to give at least 48 hours notice if we are unable to find interpreter(s)/reporter(s) for a given assignment.

The requesting agency will be responsible to contact the interpreter(s)/reporter(s) directly to inform of cancellation or change to the assignment. This will avoid traveling to this assignment unnecessarily. It would be helpful if NDHHS is also made aware of the cancellation but is not required.

Legal Requests

It is the policy of NDHHS to refer only legally trained and/or legally certified interpreters/reporters for legal requests. A CDI (Certified Deaf Interpreter, please see definition in Appendix 3) will automatically be hired for any legal request involving a deaf person under the age of 18.

Assignment of Jobs

Individual preference of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing person will be the primary consideration in making a referral. Based on the circumstances and the needs and/or preferences of the participants involved, there are different types of interpreters that may be provided: American Sign Language interpreter, Signed English interpreter, Certified Deaf Interpreter (a CDI works as a team with the hearing interpreter), Oral interpreter, and/or CART reporter.

If the preferred interpreter is not available, you can postpone the appointment to another time when the preferred interpreter is available, or we will try to locate another interpreter.

If a list of preferred interpreters has not been provided by the Deaf/Hard of Hearing person, referral staff will first contact nationally certified interpreters (RID CI, CT, or CI&CT, NIC, CDI). If no nationally certified interpreter is available, referral staff will then contact NH state-screened interpreters. (Please see Appendix 3 for explanations of certifications.)

Number of Interpreters Referred to an Assignment

The number of interpreters referred to an assignment will be agreed upon in advance by the requester and NDHHS referral staff, and will be based on the nature of the assignment and interpreters' expressed needs.

Most assignments lasting more than one hour require a team of two interpreters who work together. Occasionally, because of their complexity assignments lasting less than one hour may require two interpreters. Referral staff will provide guidance for your specific situation. Each assigned interpreter is paid for the full time of the assignment.

Team Interpreting

Team interpreting occurs when two interpreters take turns actively interpreting. The "On" interpreter is actively voicing or signing. The "Off" interpreter is not actively signing or voicing, but is listening and processing the information in order to monitor the interpretation for accuracy. The "Off" interpreter is also responsible to supply the "On" interpreter a word or phrase that may have been missed.

During an assignment the two interpreters will take turns interpreting roughly 20-30 minutes each. Medical research has established that one can maintain an efficient level of output for no more than 30 minutes at a time on a job, which demands close attention. After 30 minutes of interpreting, the number of errors made increases and the accuracy of the message is affected.

Team interpreting can be critical in preventing interpreter injuries and language errors. Due to the physically demanding nature of the job combined with the high level of stress associated with

interpreting, many interpreters have been affected by repetitive motion injury. The enormous amount of mental processing and concentration required to interpret is exhausting.

Having a team of interpreters is also beneficial to the presenter. When there are two interpreters working there is less interruption of the speaker to ask for clarification of information because the second interpreter is often able to provide this information while the presenter continues to lecture.

Team Interpreting with Certified Deaf Interpreters

Sometimes because of the language and communication needs of a Deaf individual a Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI) is needed.

A CDI is useful when your Deaf consumer/client:

- uses idiosyncratic, non-standard signs or gestures (referred to as “home signs”)
- uses a foreign sign language
- is deaf-blind or is deaf with limited vision
- uses signs particular to a given region, ethnic or age group
- has minimal or limited language skills
- has characteristics reflective of Deaf Culture and are not known to hearing interpreters

Legal, mental health or other complex or sensitive situations may also require a Certified Deaf interpreter whose first language fluency allows for a more accurate interpretation.

The Interpreter/Reporter Responsibilities:

- Contacts the hiring party to negotiate fees, cancellation policy and other relevant details.
- Follows the Code of Ethics mandated by their certifying entity.
- Finds a qualified substitute if they are unable to interpret an assignment they have accepted. In the event of illness or emergency, NDHHS referral staff, at their discretion, will attempt to find a replacement.
- Contacts the requester with any questions or concerns about travel in case of inclement weather.
- Pays the referral fee if he/she does not show up for the confirmed assignment.

Standard Billing Practices in New Hampshire

Freelance interpreters working with NDHHS are self-employed, independent contractors. They set and negotiate their own fees, with the exception of jobs for the State of New Hampshire where New Hampshire state rates need to be honored. A copy of New Hampshire state rate fee schedule can be found at http://www.education.nh.gov/career/vocational/documents/sign_lang_interp.pdf .

You will receive an invoice directly from the interpreter after completion of service.

Bills will include:

- A two hour minimum
- Travel time (portal to portal), billed at the interpreter’s hourly rate
- Mileage, billed at the federal reimbursement mileage rate
- All tolls incurred

The two hour minimum can be inclusive of travel time (i.e., if the meeting is 30 minutes and travel is 30 minutes each way, the time that would be billed is the two hour minimum).

The standard practice cancellation policy in New Hampshire is 48 hours, regardless of inclement weather. If an appointment gets cancelled with less than 48 hours advance notice, interpreters will bill the agency for the scheduled time (the time of the assignment as well as the expected travel time, no mileage). Please note, given that these service providers are self-employed, they may negotiate a different cancellation policy.

Please note that these are standards throughout New Hampshire. Each interpreter/reporter is a self-employed, independent contractor and therefore may set his or her own policies. These policies are negotiable with each contractor prior to the assignment. From time to time and in an effort to fill requests, we may refer an NDHHS Staff interpreter to fill a customer request. If that is the case then NDHHS will bill your organization for the staff interpreter's services and the interpreter will follow the standard practices set forth in this manual.

Grievance Procedure

Consumers of interpreting services are encouraged to provide direct feedback to the interpreters involved and to the NDHHS referral staff. The referral staff will make a recommendation to the appropriate person or organization based on the nature/severity of the grievance. The grievance may be referred to the Executive Director of NDHHS, the New Hampshire Interpreter Licensure Board, or the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc.

Please feel free to call our agency if you have any questions or concerns. NDHHS would appreciate any feedback, whether it is positive or negative.

What is American Sign Language (ASL)?

ASL is the primary language used by many people in the Deaf community and is a language with its own grammar, syntax and structure. ASL interpreting is not a word-for-word translation of English. English is a second language for many ASL users.

**What is CART?
(Communication Access Realtime Translation)**

CART combines the court reporter's stenography machine, special translation software, and a laptop computer to almost instantly display the spoken word so that people with hearing loss can fully participate in a variety of settings by reading the computer screen. CART can be used for conferences, classes, workshops or any other large gathering.

CART/ Captioning services are for people who are fully competent in English, both written and oral, and who either are not able to use ASL interpreters or sign language transliterators or do not choose to do so in a particular situation. In general, persons who choose to use CART service are people who have lost their hearing as adults, oral deaf persons, and some hard of hearing persons.

The Role of the Interpreter

- Facilitate communication between hearing and Deaf or hard of hearing people.
- Interpret the message accurately.
- Convey the feelings of the speaker.
- Maintain impartiality and confidentiality.
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How to Work Effectively with an Interpreter: Preparation

- Send travel directions to the interpreter before the assignment.
- Meet with the interpreter 15 to 30 minutes before the assignment.
- Send outlines, scripts, notes, copies of speeches, or other materials in advance to help the interpreter prepare for the assignment.
- Be sure there is adequate lighting and appropriate backdrops for the interpreter to be seen.
- Anticipate that breaks will be needed. Interpreting and watching sign language continuously is tiring. Allow for at least a 5 or 10 minute break every hour. Some lengthy assignments will require two interpreters who will work as a team at approximately 20-30 minute intervals to insure the quality of services provided. Because both members of a team are responsible for the entire interpretation, and guidelines for breaks listed above are still applicable.
- Remember: the interpreter is present because you and the Deaf person do not speak the same language. The interpreter will not be able to answer any questions for or about the Deaf person. Avoid asking the interpreter for opinions or comments regarding the Deaf persons' background or about the content of the meeting.

During the assignment

- Establish rapport by looking at or talking directly to the Deaf or hard of hearing person. It will help make your message clear if you speak in the "first person".
- Speak at a normal rate, but be aware that there will be a slight delay due to the interpreting process.
- Take care to speak at a normal conversational pace especially when reading from a printed text. (Research has shown that the pace while reading aloud is double or triple that of normal conversation.)
- Allow extra time for Deaf and hard of hearing participants to scan visual aides before speaking again.
- In group settings speak in turn, one person at a time.
- Understand that the interpreter will not personally participate in any discussions or activities during the assignment.

After the assignment

- Any questions directed to the interpreter should be discussed prior to or following the assignment if at all possible instead of while the interpreter is working.

Explanation of Certificates

The certificates described below are an indication that the interpreter was assessed by a group of peers according to a nationally recognized standard of minimum competence. The individual's performance was deemed to meet or exceed this national standard.

CI (Certificate of Interpretation)

Holders of this certificate are recognized as fully certified in Interpretation and have demonstrated the ability to interpret between American Sign Language (ASL) and spoken English in both sign-to-voice and voice-to-sign.

CT (Certificate of Transliteration)

Holders of this certificate are recognized as fully certified in Transliteration and have demonstrated the ability to transliterate between English-based sign language and spoken English in both sign-to-voice and voice-to-sign.

NIC (National Interpreter Certification)

Individuals achieving certification at the NIC, NIC Advanced or NIC Master level are all professionally certified interpreters. In all three domains, certificate holders must demonstrate professional knowledge and skills that meet or exceed the minimum professional standards necessary to perform in a broad range of interpretation and transliteration assignments.

SC:L (Specialist Certificate: Legal)

Holders of this specialist certificate have demonstrated specialized knowledge of legal settings and greater familiarity with language used in the legal system. Generalist certification and documented training and experience are required prior to sitting for this exam.

CDI (Certified Deaf Interpreter)

Holders of this certificate are Deaf or hard of hearing themselves and work in tandem with a hearing interpreter. Most CDIs have ASL as their native language and have had specific training in ASL/English interpretation. A CDI may be needed when the communication mode of the deaf consumer is idiosyncratic or limited.

EIPA (Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment)

The Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA) is a tool designed to evaluate the voice- to- sign and sign- to- voice interpreting skills of interpreters who work in the elementary and secondary school classroom setting. The EIPA evaluates the ability to expressively interpret classroom content and discourse and the ability to receptively interpret student or teen sign language.

NH State Screening Classification

The state screening is designed for approving persons not yet nationally certified by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf to interpret in New Hampshire in basic and limited interpreting environments. An interpreter must pass an interview and performance evaluation before becoming state screened. The screening allows interpreters to work in the interpreting field while developing and improving their skills.