

Chapter 10

**INTERPRETER SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO
ARE DEAF, FOREIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS,
AND TACTILE INTERPRETING SERVICES FOR
INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE DEAF-BLIND**

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SECTION 1: DEFINITIONS

Deaf means a hearing impairment of such significance that the individual must depend primarily upon visual communication such as writing, lip reading, manual communication and/or gestures.

An *interpreter for the deaf* means an individual fluent in both English and sign language or other methods of interpreting who facilitates communication between individuals who hear and individuals who are deaf. In addition to sign language, other methods of interpretation such as finger spelling and lip-reading may be used.

SECTION 2: GENERAL GUIDANCE

Provision of interpreter service is to assure that effective communication is available to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and people whose primary language is not English. Most individuals who are deaf or deaf/blind are served by the general Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). However, if DBVI serves an individual who needs such interpreter services for the deaf, the policies and procedures developed by DVR which are described below shall be used. (Please note that the Interpreter Referral Service, telephone 1-800-639-1519, may be very helpful in arranging interpreters for the deaf.)

Only interpreters certified as appropriate for the task at hand by the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (NRID) or the Vermont Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (Vt. RID) and who are also acceptable to the individual will be used. Exception to the certification requirement may be made only if:

1. The proposed interpreter has filed a request with NRID or Vt. RID to be evaluated for certification at the organization's next session; and
2. The DVR region's counselor for individuals who are deaf or its coordinator of services for individuals who are deaf has determined that:
 - a. His/her skill level is appropriate for the given interpreting assignment, and
 - b. S/he is knowledgeable of and will uphold the DBVI's confidentiality policy; and
 - c. A certified interpreter suitable for the assignment is not available; and
 - d. The proposed interpreter is acceptable to the individual.

3. Currently there is no certifying body for tactile interpreting services for individuals who are deaf-blind. However, there are facilities to train interpreters for the deaf to be able to do tactile interpreting. DBVI shall strive to ensure that tactile interpreters have received such training.

SECTION 3: SPENDING AND RELATED GUIDELINES

After other reasonable alternatives and comparable services and benefits have been used to the maximum, interpreter and related services may be provided as they are necessary for an individual to participate in the vocational rehabilitation process including post-employment services. The duration of providing this service is limited to the time it takes to accomplish (or fail to accomplish) the objective(s) for which it is needed.

- 1) **Interpreters for the deaf:** The Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living has established rates for interpreter services, “Policy and Fees Schedule for Sign Language Interpreter Services”, these rates are adjusted annually.
- 2) **Foreign language interpreters:** Rates of payment may be negotiated with the interpreter; they may be at the State’s minimum wage but shall not exceed the maximum payable to an interpreter for people who are deaf. Considerations in determining the rate are: 1. Number of available interpreters for a specific language e.g. (in Vermont, French speaking interpreters are likely to be more numerous than Russian speaking). 2. Complexity of the task for which interpreting is needed e.g. (a visit with an ophthalmologist may require a higher level of foreign language expertise than a meeting with a DBVI counselor).
- 3) **Tactile interpreters:** Rates of payment may be negotiated using the “Policy and Fees Schedule for Sign Language Interpreter Services” as a guide.

The spending and related guidelines in this chapter will be reviewed by DBVI every three years with input from the State Rehabilitation Council.