Chapter 10:

Interpreter Services for Individuals Who are Deaf, Foreign Language Interpreters, and Tactile Interpreting Services for Individuals Who are DeafBlind

Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired
Policy and Procedures Manual

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# Section I. Definitions

* 1. "Individual who is Deaf" that has severe to profound hearing loss that may require alternative methods of communication. Some examples of alternative communication include but are not limited to sign language, lip-reading, electronic communications such as texting or email, and cue speech. Some deaf people also have their own culture which means that they have their own language, ways of life, values, and arts.
	2. “Interpreter for the deaf” (interpreters) are nationally credentialed through the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf. They are bound by a code of professional conduct (<https://rid.org/ethics/code-of-professional-conduct/>) and must adhere to each of the seven tenants. To be qualified to accept any assignment, interpreters must ensure they are competent in American Sign Language and in English – written and/or spoken. Interpreters facilitate communication between Deaf and hearing speakers matching intonation, affect and register. Interpreters may be hearing or Deaf. Staff must utilize the State contract for ASL interpreter services to ensure that the interpreters meet requirements.
	3. “Foreign Spoken Language Interpreter” means a qualified individual who can translate a foreign language.
	4. “Support Service Provider (SSP)” are specially trained professionals who provide individuals who are DeafBlind with visual and environmental information, sighted guide services, and communication accessibility. A SSP does not make decisions for the DeafBlind individual. An SSP usually volunteers or barters for their services. An SSP is not an interpreter and is not required to hold state or national certification.

# Section II. General Policy

Provision of interpreter service is to assure that effective communication is available to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, DeafBlind, and people whose primary language is not English.

Most individuals who are deaf are served by the 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 shall be used. See DVR policy “Personal Services” at [www.vocrehab.vermont.gov](http://www.vocrehab.vermont.gov) for details.

Only interpreters nationally credentialed through the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (NRID) who are on the state contract and who are acceptable to the individual will be used. Staff must utilize the State contract for ASL interpreter services to ensure that the interpreters meet requirements. DBVI staff can request interpreters for the Deaf by calling 802.271.0103; emailing: interpretingservices@vancro.com; or accessing Vancro’s website: <https://vancroiis.com>.

Exception to the certification requirement may be made only if the person:

1. Already has his/her own interpreter who is not certified but is satisfactory to him/her; or
2. Has been given the option of rescheduling when a certified interpreter is available and has chosen to proceed with a non-certified one; and
3. The Director or designee has determined that the proposed non-certified interpreter
	1. Has a skill level appropriate for the assignment; and
	2. is knowledgeable of and will uphold the AHS confidentiality policy.

# Section III. Spending and Related Guidelines

After comparable services and benefits have been identified and used, if available, interpreter 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.

Exception to the spending guidelines may be made by the DBVI Director or designee depending on the level of difficulty of the task at hand, the current lack of alternative qualified providers, and the immediacy of the need.

1. **Interpreters for the dea****f and Tactile interpreters.**  DBVI staff must utilize the State contract for ASL interpreter services to ensure that the interpreters meet requirements. To access: call 802.271.0103; email: interpretingservices@vancro.com or visit Vancro’s website: <https://vancroiis.com/request-interpreter.html>
2. **Foreign language interpreters**. DBVI staff should use the AHS blanket contract for foreign language interpreters and pay the prevailing rate. Information of AHS resources for foreign language interpretation can be found at, [Limited English Proficency LEP (sharepoint.com)](https://vermontgov.sharepoint.com/sites/AHSIntra/LEP/Pages/LEP.aspx) “AHS LEP (limited English proficiency) policy, AHS Interpretation and Translation Services”.
3. **Support Service Providers (SSP)**. Rates can be negotiated based on the level of expertise of the provider and the length and breadth of services needed by the client.