

## Communication Access Services Requester Policy Manual

This information is designed to assist our customers (aka “requesters”) in their efforts to request and secure interpreting and CART reporting services from Northeast Deaf and Hard of Hearings Services (NDHHS). This manual contains the following information:

- Explanation of the different kinds of communication access
- How to request and/or cancel interpreting or CART services
- Billing policies, procedures, and fees of NDHHS
- Billing standards for interpreters in New Hampshire
- How to report a grievance

The Referral Department screens the interpreters and CART reporters we refer. Referred interpreters are licensed to work in New Hampshire ([RSA 326-I](#)) and CART reporters meet strict professional standards and obtain certification from the [National Court Reporters Association](#). Interpreters/reporters referred through NDHHS have on file:

- Copy of current certification and licensure
- Proof of a criminal background check
- Copy of current certificate of liability insurance

Under the [Americans with Disabilities Act](#) (ADA), enacted in 1992, businesses are required by federal law to provide interpreting services 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. The Referral Department of NDHHS works with your business/organization to comply with the ADA by locating and confirming the most-appropriately qualified interpreter(s)/CART reporter(s).

The policies contained in this manual are in effect as of March 1, 2023.

## **What is American Sign Language?**

American Sign Language (ASL) is the primary language used by many people in the Deaf community; it is a visual gestural language with its own grammar, syntax, and structure. ASL is a distinct, recognized language - different from English - and can vary from region to region within the United States, similar to the way accents vary in different parts of the United States.

## **What is interpreting?**

Interpreting is a skill separate from ASL fluency, and it requires special training and many years of practice to become proficient. Interpreters pay close attention to what is being communicated so that they can extract the meaning and convert it into the second language. To do this, it is important that interpreters have solid foundations in both languages, awareness of the cultural ideas and attitudes for both language groups, and be able to articulate themselves clearly.

## **What does an interpreter do?**

An interpreter allows people who use different languages to communicate. An interpreter's responsibility is to accurately convey information from one person to another, in this case between a Deaf or Hard of Hearing person to a person who can hear. Interpreters are bound by a [code of professional conduct](#) which requires them to be impartial and that any information learned in the course of an interpreting assignment be kept strictly confidential.

There are different kinds of interpreters: i.e. Certified Deaf Interpreters (CDIs), Signed English interpreters, DeafBlind interpreters, and oral transliterators. If you are unsure what services you need to request, it is best to ask the Deaf or Hard of Hearing person what best matches their needs. Interpreters can work either in person or remotely, as needed according to the communication needs and preferences of the Deaf or Hard of Hearing person and the parameters of the interpreted event.

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

A CART reporter provides a display of the spoken conversation on either a large screen or a laptop computer. The CART reporter is similar to a court stenographer. The reporter types the spoken conversation verbatim into a stenotype machine that is connected to either a laptop or an LCD projector. Translation software translates the message into written English. The Deaf or Hard of Hearing person reads and follows the conversation via the laptop or the screen. They can provide services either in person or remotely (for the latter, some equipment is required at the physical location).

## **Who uses CART?**

Some Deaf and Hard of Hearing people use CART to gain full access to the conversation. CART may be especially helpful to Deaf and Hard of Hearing people who have strong English language skills and do not know sign language.

## **Business Hours & Contact Information**

NDHHS is open from 8:00am-5:00pm, Monday through Friday. The Interpreter/CART Referral Department can be reached at 603-224-1850, extension 250. We can also be reached by email at [referral@ndhhs.org](mailto:referral@ndhhs.org) or by videophone at 603-968-5891.

If your hospital has contracted with NDHHS for the [Emergency Medical Interpreter Services \(EMIS\)](#) program, please follow your hospital's policies for after-hours emergencies.

## **Interpreter/CART Requests**

The Interpreter/CART Referral Department accepts requests made through email ([referral@ndhhs.org](mailto:referral@ndhhs.org)), by phone (603-224-1850 x250), or via our online scheduling database (<https://ndhhs.usked.com>). Requests are not accepted via fax. If you submit a request by email and do not receive a reply within 24 hours, please check back with the referral staff to confirm the email was received. Our goal is to reply to all requests within 24 hours (M-F on business days)

The requester – your business or organization – is asked to provide the following information when making an interpreter or CART request:

- Business/Organization name, phone number, physical address, and billing information
  - Date, Time (start and anticipated end), and Location of assignment
  - Nature of the assignment (i.e. medical appt, annual physical; high school graduation; political debate)
  - Name(s) of all Deaf/Hard of Hearing people involved (and their roles)
  - Name(s) of all hearing people involved (and their roles)
  - Preferred mode of communication, if known (i.e. American Sign Language, Signed English)
  - Names of ideal-match/preferred interpreters or CART providers (Due to a natural range of language style, Deaf/Hard of Hearing individuals may have a preference for specific interpreters or CART providers who best match their communication needs.)
  - Name and phone number of an on-site contact person for communication on the day of the assignment
  - Any other pertinent information
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- NDHHS only accepts requests from other interpreter referral (third-party) agencies on a limited basis, at our discretion.
  - Please note that the requester is considered the billing party. The Referral Department is not able to accept requests from a person who is not employed by the billing party.
  - NDHHS will not accept a request if it has already been made to another referral agency. New Hampshire has a limited number of interpreters who work in the state and each referral agency works with a similar group of interpreters.

## What Happens Next?

- Referral Staff searches for the interpreter(s) or CART reporter, prioritizing the preferences of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing consumers and the interpreter’s proximity to the assignment (if in person, to minimize travel expenses).
- Once a suitable interpreter(s)/reporter has been confirmed, Referral will send you a Confirmation Email (see page 9 to view a sample confirmation email).
- Referral will also send the interpreter(s)/CART reporter a confirmation email with the details of the request and your business’ contact information.
- If we are unable to secure an interpreter or CART reporter for the request, we will give at least 48 business hours’ notice (unless of course the request was made less than 48 hours before the assignment). For short-notice assignments, the requester will be asked the latest time they need to be notified if the request is still not filled.
  - The interpreters/CART reporters are self-employed, independent contractors. You may contact the interpreter/CART reporter directly to inquire about their fees and policies; likewise, the interpreter/CART reporter may contact you to gather additional information regarding the assignment.

## Referral Fees

Your organization/business will be billed a referral fee for using the interpreter/CART referral service. The referral fee is separate from the fees for service you will receive directly from the interpreter(s)/CART reporter. **The referral fee applies once the request has been filled and the requester has received the Confirmation Email. Once confirmed the referral fee applies regardless of cancellation or modification of the request.**

Type of Request	More than 10 business days’ notice	4-9 business days’ notice	2-3 business days’ notice	Emergency Less than 2 business days’ notice	Subsequent & Reschedule Appts (same client & interpreter, as defined below*)
<b>General Request:</b> Medical appt., work/staff meeting, etc.	\$45 per interpreter	\$60 per interpreter	\$70 per interpreter	\$75 per interpreter	\$25 per interpreter
<b>Legal Request:</b> in-court, out-of-court, arrests, investigations, etc.	\$50 per interpreter	\$65 per interpreter	\$75 per interpreter	\$85 per interpreter	\$35 per interpreter

For a series of requests over multiple days, if more than 2 interpreters are needed to fill all the dates requested, \$45 will be charged for each additional interpreter needed to fill the request.

We email referral fee invoices once a week. A 5% processing fee will be added to invoices being paid via credit card.

To avoid an unnecessary referral fee, please notify NDHHS of any cancellation as soon as possible. These rates are in effect for requests received Dec 1, 2022 and after.

### **\*Subsequent Hire & Rescheduled Appointments\***

Follow up appointments/meetings scheduled from an assignment initially referred through NDHHS should be referred back through NDHHS. In practice, this means that if - while a consumer is checking out of an appointment, for example - the interpreter present is asked to be at the subsequent appointment (same consumer, requester, and topic/focus/issue), the requester can ask the interpreter to hold that date, and **then contact NDHHS to make the request as a Subsequent Hire, including the name of the interpreter who is holding the time.** This process saves Referral the work of finding and assigning interpreters; therefore, the referral fee is reduced (\$25 compared to the baseline referral fee of \$45). Likewise, for **rescheduled appointments**, if Referral is able to simply reassign the originally assigned interpreter, the Subsequent Hire fee will be used. If the originally assigned interpreter is not available for the rescheduled date, the reschedule will be handled as a new request.

#### This Subsequent Hire system supports all parties involved:

- Deaf/HH consumers get to establish and maintain their needs and preferences (since NDHHS Referral staff prioritizes consumer's ideal-communication-match preference)
- Requesters get a reduced referral fee, the reliability of a confirmation letter, the benefits of continuity of interpretation service, and the confidence of an effective communication match
- Interpreters get the protection of a confirmation letter, letter and, if not interested, the option to deny the assignment through Referral instead of denying the assignment on-site.
- NDHHS gets to better maintain maintain consumer and customer records, and more effectively serve the Deaf/HH community

If you have the opportunity to schedule a subsequent date and would like the interpreter to hold the time, please ask them to do so! Then simply contact Referral to let staff know an interpreter is Holding. Requesters who have interpreters/CART reporters holding for a subsequent hire will be charged the reduced Subsequent Hire rate if the same vendor is hired. If for any reason the interpreter who was holding the time is not available after all, and a new interpreter must be sought

and confirmed, regular referral fees will apply. If there is any change to the appointment in question, Referral will contact all parties involved and reach a solution.

## **Assignment of Jobs**

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

If the interpreter/reporter who is the ideal communication match is not available, the requester can either postpone the appointment to another time when the individual is available, or we will try to locate another suitable interpreter/reporter.

If a list of preferred (ideal communication match) interpreters has not been provided by a Deaf/Hard of Hearing person, Referral will first contact nationally certified interpreters. We also take into consideration interpreters'/reporters' areas of specialty as well as their distance to the assignment's location when filling a request. If a nationally certified interpreter is not available, referral staff will then contact state screened interpreters using the same criteria as above.

## **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 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. Occasionally, because of their complexity, assignments lasting less than one hour may require two interpreters. Referral staff will provide guidance for the specific situation. Each assigned interpreter is paid for the full time of the assignment.

## **Legal Requests**

NDHHS only refers to legally trained and/or legally certified interpreters/CART reporters for legal requests. A Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI) will automatically be referred for any legal request involving a deaf person under the age of 18.

## **Referral of Certified Deaf Interpreters (CDIs)**

Sometimes because of the language and communication needs of a Deaf individual or the complexity of an assignment a Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI) is needed. A CDI is a Deaf person who has been trained in interpretation and teams (works in tandem) with a hearing interpreter to provide interpretation services.

### **A CDI is useful when the Deaf consumer/client:**

- uses idiosyncratic, nonstandard signs or gestures (referred to as “home signs”)
- uses a foreign sign language
- is DeafBlind or is Deaf with limited vision
- uses signs particular to a given regional, 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 CDI whose first-language fluency allows for a more accurate interpretation. Please see the [RID Standard Practice Paper: Use of a Certified Deaf Interpreter](#) for more information.

## **Standard Billing Practices in New Hampshire**

Freelance interpreters referred by 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 are honored. A copy of New Hampshire state rate fee schedule is attached below.

You will receive an invoice directly from the interpreter(s) after completion of service. Bills will include:

- A two-hour minimum or total time onsite (if more than 2 hours)\*
- Travel time (portal to portal) billed at the interpreter’s hourly rate
- Mileage, billed at the federal reimbursement mileage rate
- All tolls and parking costs 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 canceled with less than 48 hours advance notice, interpreters will

bill the business for the scheduled time of the appointment as well as for travel time (but not for mileage).

Please note that these are standards throughout New Hampshire. Each interpreter/CART reporter is a self-employed, independent contractor and therefore may set their own policies. Please contact the interpreter/CART reporter directly to discuss any negotiations of rates or policies.

Upon receiving the confirmation email, the interpreter/CART reporter is responsible for:

- Following the Code of Professional Ethics/Professional Conduct mandated by their certifying entity
- Contacting the requester - if necessary - to negotiate fees, cancellation policy, and other relevant details
- Notifying NDHHS Referral staff if for any reason they are unable to interpret an assignment they have accepted so that a qualified and licensed substitute can be found.
- Contacting the requester with any questions or concerns about travel in case of inclement weather
- Paying the referral fee if she/he does not show up for the confirmed assignment

### **Grievance Procedure**

Any business or organization having a complaint or grievance is encouraged to provide direct feedback to the interpreters/CART reporters 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, the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc., or the National Court Reporters Association.

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

SAMPLE CONFIRMATION EMAIL:

Subject: Service Confirmation

Message: Hello Polly,

This email serves as your confirmation for all of these service request(s) / assignment(s).

Your additional message goes here.

Service Request	99999
Status	To Be Filled
Organization	Email Templates
Event Name	Family Meeting
Date	Saturday, 3/4/2023
Service Provider	[REDACTED] - 1:15 pm EST to 5:15 pm EST ASL: Email: [REDACTED]@gmail.com (Office) Phone: 603-[REDACTED] (Cell)
Location	Example Location
Address	80 M St SE Washington, District of Columbia 20003
POC	Example POC
Client	Jane Doe - ASL
Details	Lorem ipsum feugiat vivamus taciti congue dolor ligula. Egestas fringilla mi himenaeos pulvinar faucibus. Sapien ullamcorper sodales euismod blandit bibendum nec porta, bibendum mattis cubilia phasellus quis sem. Maecenas eleifend ut volutpat dictumst curae cubilia, iacinia nisi nullam id congue tortor. Dictumst posuere cras sapien inceptos torquent fames quisque nullam.

If the appointment/event is canceled or rescheduled, please let us know immediately!

Best wishes,  
Communication Access & Referral Team

Northeast Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, Inc.  
56 Old Suncook Rd, Suite 6 - Concord, NH 03301

Voice Phone: 603-224-1850 ext 250  
Video Phone: 603-968-5891  
<https://ndhhs.usked.com>  
[www.ndhhs.org](http://www.ndhhs.org)

## **Role of the Interpreter**

- Facilitate communication between hearing and Deaf/Hard of Hearing people.
  - Interpret the message accurately.
  - Convey the feelings of the speaker.
- Maintain impartiality and confidentiality.

## **How to Work Effectively with an Interpreter**

### **Preparation:**

- Send outlines, scripts, notes, copies of speeches, or other materials to Referral 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 ensure the quality of services provided. Because both members of a team are responsible for the entire interpretation, guidelines for breaks listed above are still applicable.

- Keep in mind, 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 aids 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.

### **State Screenings Recognized by the State of New Hampshire**

#### **MCDHH (Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing)**

MCDHH-approved interpreters are considered entry-level interpreters and are referred to interpret in settings appropriate to their skill level. Interpreters must pass an interview and a performance examination to become MCDHH-approved. Interpreters are encouraged to continue to upgrade their skills in order to become certified by the RID.

#### **NHICS (New Hampshire Interpreter Classification System)**

The NHICS 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.

**INTERPRETER FEE SCHEDULE  
(STATE AND MUNICIPAL AGENCIES)**

Effective March 21, 2022

The following fee schedule for interpreters will be used by state and municipal agencies pursuant to RSA 200-C:20, Department of Education Rules Ed.1010.15 (a)(10) and Ed. 1010.16 (d) and NH Chapter 521-A:12. The fee schedule will be re-evaluated every two years (next re-evaluation: 2021). Interpreters accepting assignments with state and municipal agencies will provide professional service in accordance with their certification's respective code of conduct and bill according to this fee schedule.

**Licensure Requirement:** All interpreters working in the State of New Hampshire must hold current licensure from the NH Interpreter Licensure Board. In order to use a non-licensed interpreter a waiver must be obtained. For more information about licensure requirements, information on grievance procedures, and/or to obtain a waiver form please visit the Licensure Board website at: (QR code to the right).



<https://www.education.nh.gov/who-we-are/deputy-commissioner/bureau-of-vocational-rehabilitation/interpreter-licensing-board>

**After hours Emergencies:** Interpreters hired for legal, medical, and/or mental health assignments between the hours of 5pm – 8am Monday-Friday or 24 hours on weekends/holidays that are emergencies or urgent in nature may charge their current state rate times one and a half.

**Cancellations:** The interpreter may bill for assignments which are cancelled within:

- General Assignments: 48 hours (2 standard business days)
- Legal Assignments (single day or less): 48 Hours (2 standard business days)
- Legal Assignments (multiple day): 72 hours (3 standard business days)
- Inclement Weather: If the place of business is closed due to inclement weather, the interpreter may not bill. However, if the appointment is cancelled while the entity is still open, the interpreter may bill for the cancellation.
- Interpreters may not bill if the hours scheduled are replaced with a comparable number of billable work hours.

**Billable charges may include:** (unless otherwise negotiated)

- Hourly rate (for time scheduled or actual time services were performed, whichever is greater)
- Travel time (portal to portal), paid at the interpreter's current rate
- Mileage (Billed at current approved state rate)
- Parking/Tolls
- 2 hour minimum applies to all assignments (portal to portal time counts toward the minimum)

Category	Titles	Base Rate		
		Standard	In Legal Setting Only with Legal Training	In Legal Setting Only with SC:L or CLIP:R
Nationally Certified	NIC, NIC-E, NIC-M, NIC-A, CI&CT, CI, CT, NAD-V, NAD-IV, NAD-III, CSC, MCSC, RSC, IC/TC, TC, IC, BEI-Master, BEI-Advanced, BEI-V, BEI-IV (includes all future generalist national certifications)	\$39	\$44	\$49
	OTC, OIC:S/V, OIC:V/S or OIC:C [For Oral Interpreting Assignments Only]			
Nationally Certified: Specialty	CDI/PDIC	\$44	\$49	\$54
	SC:L, CLIP:R [For Legal interpreting Assignments Only]	\$49	N/A	N/A
State Screened	NHICS, NHICS-Advanced, MCDHH, BEI-Basic, BEI-III or approved equivalent	\$28	N/A	N/A
State Screened: Specialty	NH DI Screening (if/when available), MCDHH-DI	\$34	N/A	N/A
	NH DIP-Advanced	\$33		
	NH DIP-Basic	\$27		
Non-credentialed (with waiver or in emergency situations):	*No experiential increase will apply	\$24	N/A	N/A

Deaf-Blind/Deaf-Low vision work will be an additional \$5 per hour

**Experiential Increase**

*An additional \$1 every two years from anniversary date of first national certification or state screening, given that it is current and valid, will be added to the categories above. Once state screened interpreters pass national certification, they will begin with the applicable starting national base rate. Years of experience earned under state screening will start anew when national certification is achieved.*

**Non-State or Non-Municipal Work:** Interpreters hired by persons and entities other than state and municipal agencies may vary from the schedule above. Rates and fees should be based on experience, skill, certification level, and the nature of the assignment. Discussion of individual rates should happen prior to the assignment.