

## Communication Access Services Policy Manual

This information is designed to assist our customers in their efforts to 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 the most-appropriately qualified interpreter/CART reporter(s).

**The policies contained in this manual are in effect as of July 1, 2019.**

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

American Sign Language (ASL) is the primary language used by many people in the Deaf community and is a visual gestural language with its own grammar, syntax and structure. ASL is very 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 knowing how to sign 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: Certified Deaf Interpreters (CDIs), oral interpreters, Signed English interpreters, and Deaf-Blind interpreters. It is best to ask the Deaf or Hard of Hearing person what kind of interpreter will best match their needs.

## **What is CART?**

### **Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) Reporters**

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.

## **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 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.

If you have an emergency need for a sign language interpreter after normal business hours or on a weekend or holiday, and you are part of law enforcement or the medical or mental health community, you can make an after-hours request to the New Hampshire E911 Supervisor at 1-800-552-3202. This phone number is only for legal, medical, or mental health emergencies.

### **Interpreter/CART Requests**

The Interpreter/CART Referral Department accepts requests made through email ([referral@ndhhs.org](mailto:referral@ndhhs.org)) or by phone (603-224-1850 x250). Requests received via fax are **not** accepted. If you submit a request by email and do not receive a reply within 24 hours, please check back with the referral staff to see if the email was received. Our goal is to reply to all requests within 24 hours.

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, and address
- 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, etc.)
- Names of preferred interpreters or CART providers (Deaf/Hard of Hearing individuals may have a preference for specific interpreters or CART providers.)
- 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.

Please note that the requester is considered the billing party. The Department is not able to accept requests from a person who is not employed by the billing party.

If a request has been made to another referral agency, NDHHS we will not accept the same request. 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 an interpreter or CART reporter.
- When we have secured an interpreter or CART reporter, we will call or email you to ask you to confirm the interpreter/CART reporter.
- Upon receiving verbal or email confirmation from you we will either fax or email you a confirmation letter. (Please see page 7 to view a sample confirmation letter.)
- We will send the interpreter/CART reporter a confirmation letter 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 you at least 48 business hours' notice.

You may contact the interpreter/CART reporter directly to inquire about their fees and policies, and the interpreter/CART reporter may contact you to gather additional information regarding the assignment. The interpreters/CART reporters are self-employed, independent contractors. 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.

The requester is responsible to contact the interpreter/CART reporter(s) directly to inform of cancellation or change to the assignment. This will avoid any unnecessary travel. It would be helpful if NDHHS is also made aware of the cancellation but is not required.

### 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 from the interpreter/CART reporter(s). The referral fee applies once the request has been filled and you have given the authorization for the confirmation of the interpreter/CART reporter.

Type of Request	More than 10 business days' notice	4-9 business days' notice	2-3 business days'	Emergency- 2 business days' notice or less medical, mental health, or legal only
<b>General Request:</b> Medical appointment, work/staff meeting	\$40 per interpreter	\$55 per interpreter	\$65 per interpreter	\$70 per interpreter
<b>Legal Requests:</b> In-court, out-of-court, arrests, investigations	\$45 per interpreter	\$60 per interpreter	\$65 per interpreter	\$70 per interpreter
<b>Ongoing Requests**:</b> College classes, workshops	\$65 per interpreter	\$85 per interpreter	\$100 per interpreter	<b>Referral Fees in Effect beginning July 1, 2019</b>

\*\* If more than 2 interpreters are needed to fill all the dates requested, \$40 will be charged for each additional interpreter needed to fill the request.

Once confirmed the referral fee applies regardless of cancellation or modification of the request.

We mail or email referral fee invoices twice a month. A 4% processing fee will be added to invoices being paid via credit card.

We reserve the right to ask that a credit card number be provided to pay a referral fee. If a credit card number is provided, NDHHS will charge the credit card following confirmation of the request.

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, 2019 and after.

### **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/reporters that may be provided: American Sign Language interpreter, Signed English interpreter, Certified Deaf Interpreter, Oral interpreter, and/or CART reporter.

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

If a list of preferred interpreters has not been provided by a Deaf/Hard of Hearing person the referral staff will first contact nationally certified interpreters. We also take into consideration interpreters or 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 the 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 your specific situation. Each assigned interpreter is paid for the full time of the assignment.

### **Legal Requests**

NDHHS only refers 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 a Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI) is needed. A CDI is a Deaf person who has been trained in interpretation and works with a hearing interpreter to provide interpretation services.

#### **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. 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 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 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 business for the scheduled time of the appointment as well as for travel time. Please note that since interpreters/CART reporters are self-employed they may have a different cancellation policy.

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

Upon receiving the confirmation letter, the Interpreter/CART Reporter is responsible for:

- Contacting the requester to negotiate fees, cancellation policy and other relevant details.
- Following the Code of Professional Ethics/Professional Conduct mandated by their certifying entity.
- Finding a qualified and licensed 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.
- Contacting the requester with any questions or concerns about travel in case of inclement weather.
- Paying the referral fee if he/she 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 would appreciate any feedback, whether it is positive or negative.

## SAMPLE CONFIRMATION LETTER

Date: Tuesday, 1-May-2018

To: Thomas Pie  
Sweet Pie Co.  
999 Muffin Street  
Concord, NH 03301

This is a confirmation of services for the American Sign Language Interpreter and/or CART Provider request:

**Date and Time:** Monday, May 14 from 10am-11am

**Location:** Sweet Pie Co, 999 Muffin Street, Concord, NH 03301

**Assignment:** Staff Meeting

**Request #:** 09999

**Deaf Person(s):** Jane Cake

**Notes:** 1 speaker with PowerPoint presentation, Q&A at end of meeting

**Interpreter Name:** Liza Torte

Certification: NIC

Address: 33 Crisp Street, Concord, NH 03301

Contact Information: 603-555-1234 (Cell), liza@torte.com

- **You will receive a referral fee invoice in the amount of: \$XX.XX.**
- Referral Fee Parameters: General request with 10 or more business days' notice (\$30 per interpreter/CART).
- The referral fee is in effect regardless of cancellation or modification of the request.
- Interpreters/CART Reporters referred are not employees of NDHHS.
- You will receive an invoice from the interpreter/reporter for services performed onsite.
- Interpreters/reporters' bills will include: labor, travel time (portal to portal) and mileage.
- Cancellations of non-legal assignments require two business days' (48 hours) notice to avoid interpreter/reporter billing.
  - Cancellation of legal assignments require five business days' (120 hours) notice for trials and three business days' (72 hours) notice for legal hearings to avoid interpreter billing.
  - You will receive an interpreter/reporter bill for any assignments cancelled for any reason with less than two business days' (48 hours) notice.
    - Please contact the interpreter/reporter directly for cancellation or modification of the assignment.
    - Please contact the interpreter/reporter directly for specific questions regarding rates, policies, and job specifics.

Thank you!

Rebecca Crumble  
NDHHS Referral Specialist

### **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 ensure 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 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.