

# State Board of Sign Language Interpreters

November 22, 2024  
Town Hall



Website - FAQs



# Agenda

- Board make-up
- Board Goals
- Regulations
- Grievance Process
- Web Portal
- Q & A

# Current Board

- **Current Board**

- Jacob Leffler, Community Member and Chair
- Leslie Puzio, Community Member and Vice Chair
- Susan Beaver, Community Member
- Ritchie Bryant, MDAD Representative
- Paige Franklin, DeafBlind Representative

- **Vacancy**

- Community Member
- PCRID Representative

- **Current status**

- Regulations
- Preparing web portal

# Board Goals

- Implementation of the responsibilities placed upon the Board by the law and State of Maryland.
- Establishment of standards for quality interpreting services in the state.
- Elevation of profession while also elevating the quality of life for the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing community.

# Regulations

- General License & Provisional General License
- Agencies/Businesses
- Speciality License (SL): Education & Provisional
- Specialty License (PSL): Education
- General Questions
- Q&A

# General License

# General License

- Hold National, Regional
  - RID (all national - NOT Ed:K-12), BEI, or NAD (level III & above)
- Board is working on the option of other “criteria established by Board” for the full license (*implementation at a later date*)
- Fee
  - Initial Application \$150
  - Renew - \$100

# Provisional General License

- Pass a Knowledge and Ethics Exam
- NOTE:
  - *Cannot work in the following fields:*
    - *Legal*
    - *Education*
    - *Medical (the individual is accompanied with a general licensed interpreter OR a part of a formal mentorship)*
    - *Mental/behavioral health (the individual is accompanied with a general licensed interpreter OR a part of a formal mentorship)*
  - Fee
  - Initial Application - \$300 for 3 years
  - Renew - \$100 for 2 years (one time)



# Most asked Questions...

- Any exceptions for those working a long time or lapsed certification or close to retirement?
  - NO
- Does the General license apply to hearing and Deaf interpreters?
  - Yes
- What tests are available for Deaf interpreters?
  - CASLI - CDI
  - BEI - Intermediary Certification
- Does licensure apply to government settings, as well as government properties?
  - Yes
- If an interpreter is freelancing with an agency or a school employee, is license still required?
  - Yes

**Agencies/Businesses**

# Agencies/Businesses

*Definition: "Agency" means any for-profit or non-profit entity that provides or arranges for sign language interpretation services in the State for any individual or other entity, including but not limited to:*

- (a) Consumers;*
- (b) Government agencies;*
- (c) Places of public accommodation; and*
- (d) Employers.*

## **Responsible for providing ONLY licensed ASL interpreters in all situations**

- Register with GODHH
  - Owner/business information
  - Types of interpreting services provided
  - Proof of legal existence
  - Proof of good standing with state

# Agencies/Businesses *(continued)*

- **VRI:**
  - All VRI assignments (Emergency situations, Oncall, Pre-scheduled)
  - Maryland-based interpreters who work from home in other states
  - Any consumer or business who is based in Maryland
  - Does not include VRS
- **Fees**
  - Initial Application - \$250.00
  - Renew - \$200.00

*Disclaimer: Agencies shall provide sign language interpreting services via video remote interpreting or on-site, in-person interpreting according to the discretion of deaf and hard of hearing individuals.*

# Most asked Questions...

- Who/what is considered an agency?
  - Any agency or entity that is hiring or contracting with interpreters to provide interpreting services.
- Do Sole Proprietorship, LLC, have to apply for a license?
  - ONLY if they contract out services OTHER THAN THEMSELVES
- Do organizations such as hospitals with staff interpreters need to register if they provide services?
  - Yes and No. If interpreters are considered Hospital Staff, then no. If the hospital has an interpreting department/office that operates outside of the hospital, then yes.
- What does “proof of good standing” mean?
  - Maryland has a business registry and records whether the business is in good standing or not. The Board follows the State’s identification of good standing.
- What about businesses in other states?
  - If they are conducting business in the state of Maryland, they must hold an Agency License.
- Who will be holding agencies accountable?
  - ODHH, in support and partnership with the community.
- How do we know if a business is registered?
  - Check at 1st acceptance of a job and then yearly.

# **Speciality License: Education**

# Speciality License (SL): Education

- Hold a current, valid RID/NAD/BEI certification **OR** hold a minimum score of 4.0 on EIPA.
  - EIPA - Can be PSE-ASL or ASL-PSE assessment for the appropriate grade level the interpreter has been assigned to.
- Educational interpreters who hold the required EIPA score but no certification can only work in a pre-K-12 (ages 0-21) setting.
- Fee
  - Initial Application - \$75
  - Renew - \$50
- Renew every year
  - *Earns 1 CEUs in educational interpreting and relevant topics. 0.5 of the CEUs required of PPO including deaf culture, deaf awareness, and diversity in education. They are good for 2 years*

# Provisional Speciality License (PSL): Education

- Obtain a passing score on the written Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA)
- Length of Provisional license
  - 3 years with option of 2 year extension (upon applying)
- Fee
  - Initial Application - \$150 for 3 years
  - Renew - \$100 for 2 years (one time)



# Most asked Questions...

- How is educational setting defined?
  - Educational programs or services by a public, state-funded, or nonpublic school means any setting birth through secondary education.
- How recent must the EIPA written be taken to apply for the provisional?
  - The EIPA written doesn't expire. If you have taken the test and passed - you do not need to take it again.
- Are there areas in which an Educational provisional or specialty license cannot work?
  - Yes - anywhere that is not an Educational setting.
- Does the Educational specialty license apply to post secondary?
  - No. Only birth through secondary.
- Why were educational requirements removed?
  - This was a huge ask from the community. The Board viewed EIPA scores as more imperative and applicable to the setting than a random educational attainment.
- Does an Educational license apply to other activities such as: Deaf adults in a school setting, Deaf parents, after-school activities, IEPs, etc.
  - Yes. Educational licensed interpreters can ONLY work in educational settings. General license interpreters can work in these settings that are not birth through secondary.

# Grievance Process

# Grievance Process

- No automatic suspension of license
- Cannot be anonymous
- GODHH will review to ensure all required documents are provided
- Grievance will be forwarded to the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH)
  - OAH will review
  - The administrative judge will submit in writing the proposed findings of facts, proposed conclusions of law, and recommendations.
  - The judge will distribute the written proposed decision to all parties.

# Most asked Questions...

- Is there a list of what constitutes a violation of the law with corresponding disciplinary measures?
  - The Board has asked GODHH for this information.
- Do other licensed professionals in the state have similar grievance processes?
  - The Board has asked GODHH for this information.
- How will interpreters know if they are accepting work through non-licensed businesses and what repercussions will the interpreters face?
  - Interpreters can always refer to the State Registry. Penalties will fall on the agency, NOT the interpreter.
- Isn't RID managing the consequences of abiding by the CPC? Why does Maryland need to have this process as well?
  - Yes, but RID only accepts grievances from Deaf consumers. MD law allows consumers, guardians of consumers, interpreters, and anyone overseeing services to file a grievance.
- Is OAH a diverse board to ensure that unfair bias doesn't occur?
  - The Board has asked GODHH for this information.

# **Internship/Practicum Students**

# Internship & Practicum Students

- A student who is part of a supervised internship or practicum for an accredited institution of higher education, may NOT provide sign language interpretation services in the following areas:
  - A legal setting;
  - A behavioral health setting, unless the individual is accompanied by a licensed sign language interpreter;
  - An emergency medical setting, unless the individual is accompanied by a licensed sign language interpreter;
  - A school setting, unless the individual is accompanied by an licensed Educational interpreter.

# Web Portal

# Web Portal Updates

- Register at <https://onestop.md.gov>
- See the demo: <https://youtu.be/7kRzLGZyXtQ>
- The Web Portal is still in progress.
- Release when the regulations are finalized.



# Most asked Questions...

- When will the regulations be posted on the Maryland Registrar?
  - November 25th
- When do the other specialty licenses take place?
  - The Board voted in September to move the effective date for all specialty licenses to January 1, 2026
- How do visiting interpreters work in the state?
  - Interpreters working less than 80 hours can work without license. They must self-report to ODHH. The guidelines for enforcing and monitoring interpreters working less than 80 hours are still being determined by the Board, ODHH, and the AAG offices,
- For interpreters that are doing video work, how would they know where the Deaf client is physically at during an assignment?
  - This is the for agencies to oversee since they are the ones working with the contracts. You can double check by confirming with the agency prior to accepting work.
- How will CEUs be tracked?
  - They will align with your license issuance date.
- I don't live in Maryland - am I required to be licensed?
  - If you work or provide services for someone in Maryland, then you are required to be licensed.
- I interpret at a church - am I required to be licensed?
  - If it is volunteer - No. If you are being compensated, then yes.
- Who is keeping CASLI accountable for their results timeline?
  - Currently, CASLI has a 2 month response result rate

# Comments & Q&A

Ground rules:

- Raise your hand - Board will call on you
- Identify yourself
- Speak one at a time
- Use one language at a time
- Be mindful of the interpreters working today
- Adhere to the two-minute limit for your comment or question

*Any questions or comments not answered due to time constraints may be emailed to [gov.odhh@maryland.gov](mailto:gov.odhh@maryland.gov) or [sbslimd@gmail.com](mailto:sbslimd@gmail.com)*

# THANK YOU!

[www.odhh.maryland.gov](http://www.odhh.maryland.gov)

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<https://sites.google.com/view/sbslimd/faq>

