

State Board of Sign Language Interpreters

December 9, 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.
 - Those individuals who only possess an Educational license can interpret in an educational setting (birth through 12th grade that applies to the child). They can also interpret in any non-academic event (after-school activities, IEP - IF FOR THE STUDENT SPECIFICALLY). An individual who holds BOTH a General and Educational license can interpret in any environment regardless of academic or non-academic status. An Educational license does not cover Adults in the school systems or adults engaged in the school systems.

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?
 - We are waiting on GODHH to provide an update of when they will be published.
- 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 or sbslimd@gmail.com

THANK YOU!

www.odhh.maryland.gov

sbslimd@gmail.com

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

