



## **State Board of Sign Language Interpreters Board Meeting**

Thursday, March 28, 2024

6:00-8:00 p.m.

*Via Zoom and Live-streamed on YouTube*

### **In Attendance**

#### *SBSLI Members*

Susan Beaver, Community Member

Jacob Leffler, Community Member and Board Vice Chair

Trudy Suggs, Community Member and Board Chair

Kaylee Teixeira, Potomac Chapter Registry for the Deaf

#### *Governor's Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (GODHH)*

Katherine Breen, Policy Manager

Ushera DeBerry, Acting Director

Laura Lugar, Executive Assistant

Payal Sharmacharya, Communications and Policy Manager

#### *Others:*

Krystal Quinlan, Assistant Attorney General (Absent)

JAC Cook, Gavin Gobble Baker, Anna Rose, and Nancylynn Ward, Interpreters

Community members (non-participating; viewers only)

Chair Trudy Suggs called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

The January 3, 2024, and March 6, 2024 meeting minutes were approved as read. PASSED.

According to the bylaws, the vice chair is responsible for recording meeting minutes, so Vice Chair Leffler will record minutes from now on.

### **Old Business**

Chair Suggs shared that the Maryland Association of the Deaf (MDAD) representative on the board, Shane Feldman, tendered his resignation. She then discussed the current board composition, stating that the board is still awaiting the Governor's Office of Appointments to announce the selection for the DeafBlind and community member seats; MDAD will notify her of their recommendation to fill their board seat.

**Work Group Reports:** Vice Chair Jacob Leffler

Vice Chair Leffler identified who is leading each workgroup. He would like for each board member to lead a workgroup.

- Agencies/Businesses: Kaylee Teixeira
- Education: Susan Beaver
- Legal: Jacob Leffler
- Medical/Behavioral Health: Trudy Suggs

The board agreed to recategorize VRI regulations to the Agencies/Businesses work group instead of having a stand-alone VRI work group. We need more people to volunteer for each work group, especially with their input to the draft regulations. If they are interested, they can email [gov.odhh@maryland.gov](mailto:gov.odhh@maryland.gov).

We are making a lot of progress with the regulations, and we are on the right track. The timeline for the regulations to be effective may change from July to September according to the Attorney General's office. A presentation deck with the draft regulations developed to date was reviewed.

#### *Individual Work Group Reports*

##### Agencies: Kaylee Teixeira

An email was sent to agency owners, but more input is needed from agency owners for the draft regulations. We also need to investigate how out-of-state agencies can be regulated.

##### Education: Susan Beaver

There has been a lot of discussion on the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA). It has been determined that interpreters must have a minimum score of 4.0, as discussed by various research studies and reports from different entities. The group is currently discussing which assessment(s) to accept, such as ASL and PSE.

##### Medical/Behavioral Health: Trudy Suggs

The board has sent letters to different organizations and offices, and we have not heard back from them. However, we have a draft regulation that a previous board member and Jacob Leffler worked on. There was a concern about the requirement of hours of observation. The Board agreed to look into this further with the workgroup.

##### Legal: Jacob Leffler

The Board received the response from the Maryland Court System, the National Center of State Courts (NCSC), and RID. The regulations are based on their feedback and our meeting with the Maryland's Court ASL Consultant. NCSC has a requirement of written exam, but we are waiting to hear back from them on what the exam looks like.

#### **Town Hall Meeting**

A town hall meeting will be held on April 10, 2024, at the Maryland School for the Deaf, Columbia Campus. Participants can ask questions at the town hall, but they are encouraged to submit questions or comments prior to the meeting. At this town hall, the draft regulations will

be shared with the community for input, along with hopefully a fact sheet or frequently asked questions.

### **Public Comments**

Chair Suggs shared that two emails were received with numerous questions. The first was whether or not there would be a live question-and-answer session at the April 10<sup>th</sup> townhall meeting. There will be. The next question was about access to the meeting minutes, which will be posted on the website in draft and approved formats.

Another question was about outreach and how information would be disseminated to the community. This will be discussed once the regulations are completed. The law also requires an outreach campaign, so this will be accomplished. The next question asked about if someone doesn't pass the test and whether this would bar them from working. This is what the provisional license covers. The fifth question asked about heritage signers and marginalized interpreters who are not certified by 2025. This is covered in the law, and will be discussed during the regulations development, but also falls under the provisional certification and other pathways. More questions will be answered during the town hall meeting. In the meanwhile, all questions can be directed to [gov.odhh@maryland.gov](mailto:gov.odhh@maryland.gov).

The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

# PRESENTATION DECK OF DRAFT REGULATIONS SHARED DURING MEETING

## SBSLI Draft Regulations

March 28, 2024 SBSLI Board Meeting



## Agencies/Businesses

*Definition: Entity that includes sole owner LLC, and vendors in Maryland and other states that provides interpreters in person and virtually; provides or arranges for interpreting services, including, but not limited to, government agencies, places of public accommodations, and employers.*

- Register with GODHH
  - Name of agency
  - Owners/business information
  - Types of interpreting services provided
  - Proof of legal existence.
  - Proof of good standing.
- Agree to provide 100% licensed ASL interpreters in all situations
- SBSLI recommends that the GODHH reviews and approves pending licensure requests on a daily basis in order to sustain the supply of interpreters needed to meet demand.

## Education

- Have a 4.0 or higher on the EIPA ASL assessment. MCE EIPA assessments are not recognized by the SBSLI. \* PSE
- Have an educational degree (CHECK WITH NAIE)
- Licensed ASL interpreters who specialize in educational settings are required to accumulate 16 continuing education units (16 hours) in education ASL interpreting every two years.
- Educational interpreters with an EIPA but no national certification can only work in a K-12 setting.
- Pass background check requirements.

## Education (continued)

- SBSLI strongly urges IEP teams to consider an interpreters recognition in the elementary or secondary setting on the EIPA examination when determining whether the ASL interpreter is appropriate for the student's grade level.
- SBSLI strongly urges educational interpreters to hold an assessment score in both ASL EIPA examinations (Elementary EIPA and Secondary EIPA).

## Health Care

- Complete 50 hours observing medical interpreting.
- Pass a medical interpreting knowledge test. (WILL SPECIFY IMIA or CCHI or EITHER - need info).
- Licensed ASL interpreters who specialize in medical settings are required to accumulate 16 continuing education units (16 hours) in medical ASL interpreting every two years.
- Have three years of experience interpreting in general settings within the last three years.
- Have documentation of current inoculations.
- Pass background check requirements.

## Behavioral Health

- Complete 50 hours observing behavioral health interpreting.
- Licensed ASL interpreters who specialize in behavioral health settings are required to accumulate 16 continuing education units (16 hours) in behavioral health ASL interpreting every two years.
- Have three years of experience interpreting in general settings within the last three years.
- Pass background check requirements.

## Legal

- Complete 50 hours observing legal interpreting.
- ASL Interpreters must pass a legal interpreting knowledge test. (WILL SPECIFY NCSC OR MARYLAND COURT—awaiting information).
- Licensed ASL interpreters who specialize in legal settings are required to accumulate 16 continuing education units (16 hours) in legal ASL interpreting every two years.
- Have three years of experience interpreting in general settings within the last three years.
- Pass background check requirements.

## **VRI**

- Options: Adhere to agency requirements
- Discussion:
  - Emergency situations
  - Maryland-based interpreters who work from home for other states.

## **To consider:**

- Emergency situations (ER, disaster, weather, etc.)
- Temporary in-state work (filming, conferences, etc.)
- Volunteer interpreters (including religion)
- Other situations?