



Review of Interpreter Services and Opportunities to Improve

**Committee on Senior Citizens,
Veterans and Adults With Special
Needs**

**Aging and Disability Services
Division
May 2014**

EXHIBIT F - SENIORVETSPECIAL
Document consists of 15 pages.
Entire exhibit provided.
Meeting Date: 05-21-14

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Communication Access Service program is to provide access to telecommunication services for persons who are Deaf, hard of hearing, and persons with speech disabilities. Telephone Relay Service allows for use of Nevada's telephonic system.

Additionally, the program grants funding for the telecommunication device for the deaf/hard of hearing equipment distribution program. These devices are needed to use the Relay services.

The program also maintains a registry of providers of communication access assistance for persons utilizing captioning services called CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation) and sign language interpreter services.

AUTHORITY

NRS 656A

ADSD is the lead agency to develop and oversee the Interpreter/CART registry and related regulatory requirements.

FUNDING SOURCE

All Communication Access Services are 100% funded by a surcharge on wired and wireless phone lines.

The surcharge should be set to sufficiently:

- **Cover the costs of the program;**
- **Fund the centers for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing operated by this State; and**
- **Cover the costs incurred by the Division to carry out the administrative provisions related to Interpreters and Realtime Captioning Providers**

The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) is responsible for establishing the rate of the surcharge and approves the program budget for ADSD.

ADSD'S OBLIGATION FOR OVERSIGHT OF INTERPRETER REGISTRY

Enforcement, oversight:

- Application**
- Maintaining correct contact information**
- Skill level status updates**
- Verification of certification**
- Verification of professional development**
- Verification of mentoring, as determined by skill level**
- Review of complaints**
- Investigation as determined by review**
- Disciplinary action**
- Compliance/failure to register (reporting to DA/AG's office)**

INTERPRETER TYPES ON NEVADA'S REGISTRY

- CART (11)-Caption providers**
- Educational (54) work in K-12 settings**
- Community (56)- Sign language interpreters who work in non-K-12 settings, includes medical and legal**
- Dual (42) registered as both K-12 and Community settings**

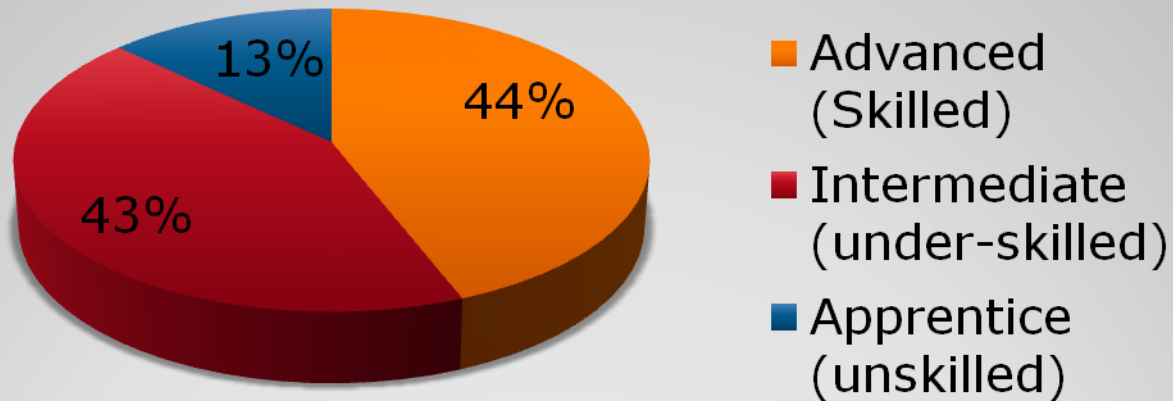
SKILL LEVELS FOR EDUCATIONAL AND COMMUNITY INTERPRETERS

Unskilled or under-skilled interpreters are allowed to register and engage in the practice of interpreting in Nevada provided they have mentors and engage in a minimum 40 hours of mentoring plus 75 hours of professional development every three years.

Skilled interpreters are not required to have mentors, but must meet the professional development requirement of 75 hours every three years.

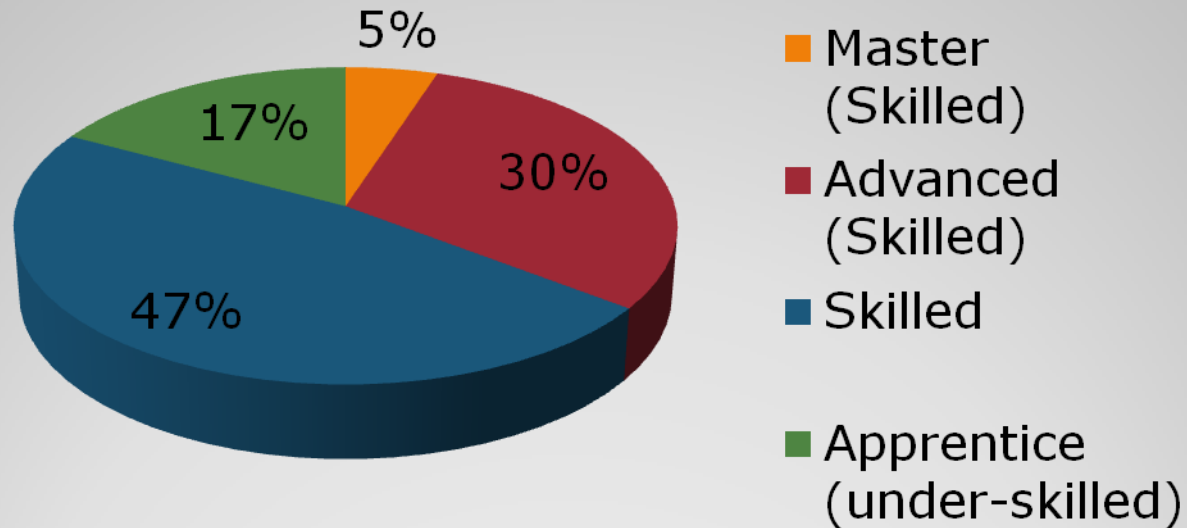
- **EDUCATIONAL INTERPRETERS**

Skill Level



- **COMMUNITY INTERPRETERS**

Skill Level



ADSD'S OBLIGATION FOR OVERSIGHT OF INTERPRETER REGISTRY

The statewide Interpreter/CART registry keeps track of all providers in the state to ensure continuing education, and certification maintenance.

Agencies and individuals use the registry to find, contact and hire communication access service providers.

Currently ADSD has one FTE staff designated for the all of communication access services, not just the interpreter registry. This staff works with administrative support staff and occasionally the AG's office to coordinate oversight of the registry, but has other responsibilities to oversee Relay and Equipment Distribution. ADSD has determined that one staff is insufficient to effectively oversee the registry.

ADSD'S OBLIGATION FOR OVERSIGHT OF INTERPRETER REGISTRY

ADSD continues to experience difficulty educating consumers and providers about these terms:

- ***registered*** –refers to an interpreter on the State of Nevada's Registry. The registry keeps track of all individuals engaged in the practice of interpreting per NRS 656A. It includes both apprenticed students and certified professionals.
- ***certified*** refers to an interpreter who holds certification from a national certifying body, usually RID (Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf). There are many types of certification. There is no one-size-fits-all certification type.
- ***qualified*** this is a subjective and ambiguous term. It doesn't necessarily mean registered or certified. Usually the deaf client (typically developed adult) can make this determination. ADA uses this term to allow for flexibility for the consumer (accounts for family members who interpret, etc.)

INTERPRETER CONCERNS FROM THE COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE



INTERPRETER CONCERNS FROM THE COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE

- **The opportunities for educational, vocational and life success in Nevada is non-existent for most who are Deaf, because there are not enough qualified interpreters to meet the need in Nevada, approximately 85,000 Nevadans.**
- **Interpreters have few, if any opportunities for skill development, including Deaf and Hard of Hearing people who want to become interpreters.**
- **Highly skilled interpreters have no incentive to work in Nevada.**
- **Cultural differences exist for new interpreters entering Nevada making communication more difficult.**
- **Interpreters do not collaborate to improve services.**

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE

- **Increase number of interpreters in NV**
 - **Short-term: video remote interpreting**
 - **Long-term: college interpreter training programs**
- **Improve quality of interpreters by including the Deaf in training and Cultural Awareness events**
- **Establish in-state training program for interpreters to include onsite experts**
- **Create attractive opportunities for employment**
- **Create a pool of interpreters who work for the State of Nevada to address service access and structural improvements.**

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

- **Creation of a web-based registry that creates a more transparent, user-friendly experience for consumers and providers.**
- **Addition of at least two professional staff, and one administrative support staff to oversee the registry and provider qualifications.**
- **Creation of an advisory board to regulate interpreters.**
- **Creation of a policy office to oversee all state services offered to Nevadans who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and/or Speech Disabled**