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OFFICE OF ADULT CAREER AND CONTINUING EDUCATION SERVICES
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TO: All ACCES-VR Staff **PRO-12-01**

FROM: John C. Tracy

DATE: February 6, 2012

RE: Sign Language Interpreter Referral Service Procedures

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Introduction

ACCES-VR provides sign language interpreter services to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to assist them in accessing and participating in vocational rehabilitation (VR) services. These services are provided through contracts with pre-approved vendors. Vendor contract information is available in the electronic case record under '*Reports*', Case Management System (CaMS), including name, address and rates.

Types of Services

Interpreter services can be purchased for a consumer or ACCES-VR staff:

- **Consumer Service:** Sign language interpreters are needed to support consumers who are deaf, deaf blind, hard of hearing, late deafened and low functioning deaf to access vocational rehabilitation services at various stages of the VR process.

Interpreter services may be provided via face-to-face in person interpreting provided to assist consumers with hearing impairment in order to facilitate participation in the vocational rehabilitation process and training.

- **Staff Service:**
 - **Face-to-Face:** Sign language interpreters are utilized to assist hearing impaired VR staff or to accommodate the needs of hearing impaired individuals at ACCES-VR administered events.
 - **Video Remote Interpreting (VRI):** This service is purchased to allow communication between an ACCES-VR staff member and consumer who are in the same location while the interpreter is in an alternate location.

Rates

Consumer and Staff Interpreter Service Rates

- Region 1:** *(Bronx, Brooklyn, Garden City, Hauppauge, Manhattan and Queens)*
- RID/NAD Certified Interpreter \$ 70.00 Per Hour
 - Pre-Certified, MCSP Qualified Interpreter \$ 60.00 Per Hour
- Region 2:** *(Albany, Buffalo, Malone, Mid-Hudson, Rochester, Southern Tier, Syracuse, Utica and White Plains)*
- RID/NAD Certified Interpreter \$ 60.00 Per Hour
 - Pre-Certified, MCSP Qualified Interpreter \$ 50.00 Per Hour

Video Remote Interpreter Rates (RID/NAD Certified interpreters only)

Statewide Rate:

- RID/NAD Certified Interpreter \$ 35.00 Per Half Hour
- The rates include all administrative costs, including travel expenses for the interpreter. ACCES-VR is not responsible for any arrangements between the contractor and any of their subcontractors (i.e., interpreters).
 - The rates are considered “payment in full” for ACCES-VR authorized services.

Referral and Authorization Process

- Referrals for consumer service are generated by the VRC or Rehabilitation Counselor for the Deaf (RCD).
- Interpreter services may be authorized in any active status.
- ACCES-VR staff will contact the contractor to notify them of the specific consumer need. Initial contact may be by phone, e-mail or fax but formal referral documentation must follow as soon as possible. Documentation minimally includes the A/V for the specific services and may also include a Case Management System (CaMS) generated *Referral Form*.
- Non-case staff services are initiated by a designated individual in the CO or DOs. Initial contact may be made by phone but must be followed up in writing.

- VRI is authorized by a designated individual in the DO or CO and can be requested by phone but must be followed up in writing.
- If a contractor is unable to fill a request for face-to-face or VRI interpreting services, the contractor must notify ACCES-VR two (2) business days in advance.

Note: Two (2) business days is defined as the preceding consecutive 48 hours excluding weekends unless the accepted assignment is scheduled for a weekend and then 48 hours is the preceding 48 consecutive hours.

Authorization/ Voucher (A/V)

- Authorization (A/V) or **Emergency Interpreter Services Request (VR-2)** form is required prior to provision of service.
- All A/Vs for interpreter services require two service lines.
 - First line of the authorization; use Case Service Support Code 'I' for the pre-certified interpreter service rate.
 - Second line of the authorization; use Case Service Support Code 'L' for the certified differential rate.
- The A/V should include the service provider's Contract Number selected from the drop down list and must identify the time frame and number of hours of service authorized.
- ACCES-VR supervisory staff will review service A/Vs for reasonableness prior to issuance to the contractor.
- For ongoing assignments, print multiple vouchers and timesheets to allow the contractor to bill monthly.
- When a contractor requests additional units of service, they must contact the VRC or DO at least two (2) business days prior to the service to be provided. Failure to make this request on time will result in lack of reimbursement. No service can be provided without an A/V or Emergency Interpreter Services Request (VR- 2) which is then followed up with an A/V.

Timesheets

- A standard time sheet has been created and is attached to this procedural memo. All contractors are encouraged to use this timesheet. Time sheets will be attached to billing guidelines sent to all contractors, may be provided to contractors by ACCES-VR Central or local District Office or downloaded from ACCES-VR's website at http://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/interpreter_service/home.html
- Contractors may use their own timesheets when providing interpreting services for Consumers, ACCES-VR Staff and VRI as long as their time sheet provides all information required:

- Vendor Name and ID Number
- Job Number
- Location of the Job
- Date(s) of Service
- Total Hours Provided
- Interpreter Name
- Certification Level

Service provided: date, start and end time, consumer or ACCES-VR staff members name, referring ACCES VR District of Central Office, consumer, ACCES-VR staff member or on-site contact signature, and interpreter's signature.

- If the job involves more than one consumer or ACCES-VR staff member, the signature of each consumer/ACCES-VR staff member is required.
- If the consumer or ACCES-VR staff member is absent or a "no show," the timesheet must be signed by the on-site contact person.
- Pre-printed or electronic signatures will NOT be accepted unless the ACCES-VR Counselor determines this is a necessary accommodation for the consumer.

Emergency Requests

- In the case of an emergency where there is inadequate time to send the hard copy A/V to the contractor prior to the start of required services, an **Emergency Interpreter Service Request (VR-2) form**, signed by the SVRC or other management team member can be faxed to the contractor.
- All Emergency Interpreter Service Requests must be followed up with an A/V.
- Refer to PRO-05-03 Emergency Interpreter Services Authorization Request (attached) for additional instruction.

How to Use VRI

- With VRI, the consumer and ACCES-VR staff are located together at one location using a web camera and a computer or lap top.
- Required hardware and software: appropriate software, an air card (if in the field) and an internet connection using a MOVI account (in the office and Google Chat when located outside of the DO) to communicate with the interpreter at a separate location. The computer/internet provides an audio and video link allowing off-site sign language interpretation (American Sign Language) via the internet.

Interpreter Assignments

ACCES-VR requires the Interpreter Referral Service (contractor) assign a certified interpreter a minimum of 60% of the time to meet the communication needs of ACCES-VR consumers or staff. An available Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf/ National Association of the Deaf (RID/NAD) certified interpreter must be assigned before a pre-certified interpreter who may be qualified based on the Minimum Competency Screening Process (MCSP).

- For assignments up to and including one (1) hour in duration, ACCES-VR will fund only one (1) interpreter.
 - Determination regarding authorization of a second interpreter for assignments of 1 hour or less will be made by the ACCES-VR VRC and approved by the SVRC.
- If two interpreters are authorized, the 2-hour minimum applies to each interpreter and the contractor may bill the 2-hour minimum for both.

- If a contractor needs to secure more than two (2) interpreters for an assignment then the two-hour minimum may only be applied for two interpreters.

Cancellation Guidelines

- ACCES-VR may cancel a scheduled assignment, via phone, fax, or email with at least two full business days notice to the contractor without incurring a charge. The contractor may NOT bill for the assignment hours.
- If ACCES-VR cancels a scheduled assignment, via phone, fax, or email with less than two full business days notice to the contractor the contractor MAY bill only for an amount equal to the minimum two (2) hour assignment charge.
- No payment will be made for cancellation due to 'Force Majeure'; e.g., cancellation due to inclement weather. Force Majeure includes conditions beyond the party's control and includes acts of God, government restrictions and/or prohibitions, wars, mechanical, electronic, or communications failure, emergency school closures and delays and/or any other cause beyond the reasonable control of the party whose performance is affected.

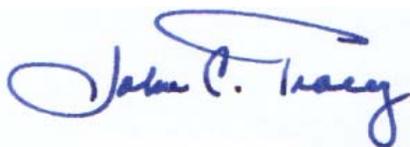
No Show Procedures

- If a consumer does not arrive for the scheduled assignment the contractor should notify the ACCES-VR DO and the interpreter must wait 60 minutes. The RCD/VRC may have additional information affecting the assignment (e.g. remaining classes, etc.). The contractor may bill for the first two hours of the scheduled time period for that day provided ACCES-VR is notified of the consumer's failure to show.
- Contractors must immediately notify the ACCES-VR, RCD/VRC or appointed staff at the ACCES-VR DO of interruptions in service delivery; including but not limited to delays in arriving at the assignment, early dismissal/release from assignment or inclement weather.

References

Commissioner of Education Regulations - Part 247
1391.00 - Personal Assistance Services Policy
1391.00P - Interpreter Procedures (Sign Language)
PRO-05-03 - Emergency Interpreter Services Authorization Request Form

EFFECTIVE DATE: February 15, 2012



John C. Tracy
Director of Operations