



# Missouri Department of Mental Health

## Division of Behavioral Health

### Guidelines for Use/Billing of Interpreters

---

---

The following guidelines are identified to assist community behavioral health treatment providers (Provider) contracted with the Missouri Department of Mental Health, Division of Behavioral Health, when providing American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters for consumers who are deaf or hard of hearing (D/HH).

#### **Contractual Requirements**

The State of Missouri, Office of Administration, has a statewide contract for ASL interpreting services entitled "Sign Language Interpreter Services" that Providers may use in locating ASL interpreters. The contract provides county level contact information for ASL interpreting resources. This contract can be found at <http://www.oa.mo.gov/purch> or a copy may be requested from the Department of Mental Health's Office of Deaf Services at [deafservices@dmh.mo.gov](mailto:deafservices@dmh.mo.gov). This state contract is provided as a resource for locating interpreters only. Providers are not able to utilize the state contract, however you should ask for the state rates if a listed interpreter agency/individual is used. Providers may use the interpreting agency or interpreter of their choice. Formal contracts are not necessary for the provision of ASL Interpreting services. ASL Interpreting services are conducted on a per assignment basis.

#### **A. Usage of ASL Interpreters**

1. With the exception of crisis and/or emergency situations, ASL Interpreters should be requested at least 48 hours prior to the assignment.
2. In accordance with section 209, RSMo and 5 CSR 100-200.100, interpreters that are used for mental health assignments shall be licensed and certified in the state of Missouri. Interpreters for the Department of Mental Health (DMH) shall have a certification level of Comprehensive or Advanced and preference will be given to those interpreters that have completed the Introduction to Mental Health Interpreting training found at <http://dmh.mo.gov/deafsvcs/Training.htm>. For information on interpreters that have completed this training, please contact the Office of Deaf Services at [deafservices@dmh.mo.gov](mailto:deafservices@dmh.mo.gov).
3. ASL interpreting is a physically and mentally taxing occupation that may require a team of more than one interpreter for longer assignments. In the event an ASL interpreter is needed for 2 hours or longer, the interpreter agency will be allowed to use their discretion on the need for more than one interpreter.
4. Although it is not possible to identify every potential instance of a dangerous situation, Providers will inform the interpreting agency/interpreter of known potentially dangerous

situations, including behaviors of the consumer(s). The interpreting agency/interpreter will have the right to decline the assignment based on comfort level with the situation.

5. It is best practice to provide an ASL Interpreter for every mental health situation encountered. DOR 4.141 and DBH contracts **require** providing an interpreter for the following categories of service when provided directly to a D/HH consumer:
  - Any screening, assessment, or re-assessment, whether done for the purposes of determining eligibility for services, diagnosis, or for the development or modification of a plan of treatment;
  - Any treatment planning or discharge planning meetings, or the preparation for such meetings;
  - An individual psychotherapy/psychoeducational session;
  - A group psychotherapy/psychoeducational session;
  - An individual substance use counseling session;
  - A group substance use counseling session.

In addition, an interpreter shall be provided for a D/HH parent or guardian involved with a consumer's treatment and their treatment decision making.

6. If a consumer, parent, or guardian wants to waive their right to the use of a sign language interpreter in conjunction with services they are receiving, the consumer, parent, or guardian must complete a Waiver of Interpreter Services. This waiver may be found on the Office of Deaf Services website at <http://dmh.mo.gov/docs/deaf/WaiverofInterpreterServices.pdf> or a copy may be requested from the Office of Deaf Services at [deafservices@dmh.mo.gov](mailto:deafservices@dmh.mo.gov). To help identify and document the need for sign language interpreting services for a consumer, the Communication Profile may be used. This Communication Profile may be found at <http://dmh.mo.gov/docs/deaf/CommunicationProfileRev.pdf> or by requesting a copy from the Office of Deaf Services at the above mentioned email address.

## **B. Reimbursement of ASL Interpreting Costs**

1. Providers may receive reimbursement for ASL Interpreting costs for a consumer by billing the amount of the interpreter invoice on a consumer specific encounter using procedure code T1013.
  - a. For OMU, OEP, and ADEP the Provider must submit an invoice to DMH with the following details:
    - i. Invoice to DMH from the SATOP Provider for the total requested amount to be reimbursed.
    - ii. Copy of invoice from the interpreting agency.
2. Interpreting agencies/interpreters may bill 2-hour minimum fees as this is considered standard practice in the ASL Interpreting field. When referencing the state contract the fee includes the interpreter agency/interpreter's rate plus mileage. Please note that if a Provider uses an interpreting agency/interpreter outside of the above mentioned state contract, they may be

charged mileage separately from the interpreter agency/interpreter rate. Charges for mileage will not be reimbursed by DMH. ASL Interpreting assignments that continue longer than the standard 2-hour minimum shall be billed, from the ASL Interpreter, prorated to the quarter hour rather than being rounded to the next full hour.

3. If an interpreting assignment that was requested by the Provider is cancelled with 24 hours or more notice, the Provider is not responsible for any costs associated with the interpreting agency/interpreter. If an assignment that was requested by the Provider is cancelled with less than 24 hours' notice, the interpreting agency/interpreter may bill the Provider a 2-hour minimum fee; however, this will be not be reimbursable by DMH.
4. If the interpreting assignment is cancelled due to a client not showing for their appointment, the Provider may request reimbursement of interpreter charges if supporting documentation clearly reflects attempts to confirm the client's attendance and the client's transportation needs were reviewed with the client/family.
5. If an interpreter is requested by a Provider and that interpreter does not show up for the appointment, the Provider is not responsible for any costs associated.
6. Providers will not be reimbursed for ASL Interpreter costs utilized in the delivery of any service except for those listed in A.5 of this document without prior written approval from the Division of Behavioral Health and the Office of Deaf Services.

For any further questions or comments, please contact the Office of Deaf Services at [deafservices@dmh.mo.gov](mailto:deafservices@dmh.mo.gov) or by phone at 573-526-1857 – voice, 573-298-6764 – videophone.