



**State of Louisiana**  
Louisiana Department of Health  
Office of Public Health

**MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** May 14, 2026

**To:** Louisiana Sign Language Interpreters, Sign Language Interpreting Coordination Agencies, Special Education Directors, Supervisors, and Human Resources of Local Education Agencies, Sign Language Interpreter Hiring Entities

**From:** Jana M. Broussard, Acting Executive Director, Louisiana Commission for the Deaf  
Amy Zapata, Director, Bureau of Family Health

**Subject:** Louisiana Sign Language Interpreters

**Purpose:** To provide time-sensitive information for sign language interpreters, providers, human resources, hiring entities and public school district leaders related to minimum qualification requirements and registration of all sign language interpreters in Louisiana

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**I. Background:**

The Louisiana Commission for the Deaf (LCD), a section within the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH), was established in law in 1980 to serve as the State's principal agency advocating for the approximately 326,000 d/Deaf, DeafBlind, and hard of hearing (DDBHH) individuals living in Louisiana<sup>1</sup>. Under La. [R.S. 46:2351-2355](#), the LDH is responsible for establishing the credentialing standards and for maintaining a professional registry of all sign language interpreters practicing in the state. This includes interpreters under the purview of the Louisiana Department of Education, the Louisiana Supreme Court Office of Language Access, as well as individuals serving in general community settings, whether in-person or virtually.

Effective May 20, 2026, all sign language interpreters practicing in the state in general community settings or PreK-12 educational settings, whether virtually or in-person, must meet minimum standards, or show active progress (education, professional credentialing, experience, etc) toward meeting the standards, and apply for inclusion in the Louisiana Interpreter Registry.

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<sup>1</sup> Health U.S. State Profile Data for Louisiana  
<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/impacts/louisiana.html> accessed 5/30/2023  
R.S. 46:2351-2355;  
<https://legis.la.gov/Legis/Law.aspx?d=100616>  
Act 128  
<https://legis.la.gov/legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=1285142>

This memo is to provide you with information you may need to register with the state as a sign language interpreter or to assist you in hiring or contractual practices if you employ interpreters or procure services. This information is also intended to ensure you know who to contact with any questions or guidance as you prepare to implement these important changes.

## II. Implementation Overview:

The practice of sign language interpreting is a learned profession that affects public health, safety, and welfare. This profession is subject to regulation in Louisiana and many other states in order to protect the general public from the practice of sign language interpreting by unqualified persons. Registration with the LCD is required through the Louisiana Interpreter Registry, a publicly-accessible website of registered interpreters. Publication of all approved registrants is intended to ensure that only individuals who have met certain minimum qualifications may represent themselves as a sign language interpreter or engage in the practice of interpreting in the State of Louisiana. In discharging its obligation to protect the general welfare of Louisiana's d/Deaf, DeafBlind, and hard-of-hearing communities, the LCD adheres to best practices from the national professional organization(s) overseeing the certification and ethical compliance of all sign language interpreters.

Registration with the LCD requires individuals seeking to work as a sign language interpreter to demonstrate they have met the minimum requirements of the prescribed credentials and/or certification(s), including knowledge and performance-based competency verification and/or higher education.

Standards and registration requirements will be provided in [Title 46, Professional and Occupational Standards: Sign Language Interpreters](#), and can be found by visiting the LCD's [Minimum Qualification Standards for Sign Language Interpreters webpage](#).

Please note the following regarding the implementation of the subject rules:

1. Registration requirements take effect upon publication of the LCD's final rules in the Louisiana Register on May 20, 2026, and its codification in the Louisiana Administrative Code (LAC), as required by law.
2. Beginning May 20, 2026, these requirements apply to all sign language interpreters working in general community settings—including healthcare, conferences, workplaces, vocational rehabilitation, and postsecondary environments—as well as in all PreK–12 educational settings under the Louisiana Department of Education.
3. Requirements for interpreters working in court and legal settings—including courtrooms, law enforcement interactions, depositions, and attorney-client meetings—are expected to be issued in Fall 2026. Minimum standards for Deaf interpreters (individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and provide interpreting or language support across signed languages or modalities) are also expected at that time.
4. Interpreters working in general community and PreK–12 educational settings are encouraged to begin registration July 1, 2026, to ensure timely compliance.

Interpreters in court/legal settings should maintain their current registration with the Louisiana Supreme Court Office of Language Access and also register as generalists with the LCD until court-specific requirements are issued.

Deaf interpreters will be eligible to register once new standards are published in the Fall of 2026. In the meantime, are encouraged to create a profile in the Louisiana Interpreter Registry beginning July 1, 2026.

5. Eligibility determinations, registration decisions, and any enforcement actions shall be conducted in accordance with applicable Louisiana law, administrative procedures, and formally promulgated rules.
6. Enforcement of the registration requirements will begin on January 1, 2027. No penalties for noncompliance will be imposed prior to that date.
7. These rules apply to any individual performing sign language interpreting services or otherwise facilitating communication for DDBHH individuals, regardless of job title (e.g., interpreter, paraprofessional, aide, contractor). This includes full-time, part-time, and as-needed personnel.

The rules do not apply to individuals providing direct instruction in sign language (such as Teachers of the Deaf), individuals providing services without compensation, or those serving in religious settings.

8. Existing contracts and employment arrangements should be brought into compliance in accordance with the implementation timelines established herein and under applicable rules and regulations.

### **III. Additional Assistance:**

For questions, additional information, or assistance during this transition, please contact the Commission's Acting Executive Director, Jana Broussard, at [jana.broussard@la.gov](mailto:jana.broussard@la.gov).

For guidance on professional standards and ethics, refer to the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) [Code of Professional Conduct](#), which outlines expectations for interpreter professionalism. Additional information is available at <https://rid.org/>.

For Standards of Professional Practice, Scope of Professional Practice, Role and Responsibilities of Interpreters in Education Settings, and other considerations, be sure to consult The National Association of Interpreters in Education (NAIE) [Professional Guidelines for Interpreting in Educational Settings](#) and/or visit their website at <https://naiedu.org/>.

This memorandum is intended solely to provide implementation guidance and general informational notice regarding applicable Louisiana statutes and administrative rules. In the event of any conflict between this memorandum and applicable law, regulation, or formally promulgated rule, the governing statute and administrative rule shall control. This memorandum does not create a private right of action, substantive entitlement, or independent basis for civil liability

Nothing in this memorandum shall be construed to authorize interruption, delay, or denial of legally required communication access or educational accommodations for d/Deaf, DeafBlind, or hard-of-hearing individuals.

Inclusion in the Louisiana Interpreter Registry does not constitute state employment, certification of fitness for a particular assignment, or endorsement by the State of Louisiana.

The LCD reserves the authority to revise and/or issue additional rules, guidance, clarifications, and implementation materials consistent with applicable laws and rules.

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