



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

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HOW TO OBTAIN COMMUNICATION ACCESS SERVICES OR PROVIDERS (as of December 2018)

What Does the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Say About Communication Access?

The ADA requires that covered entities communicate effectively with people who have vision, hearing, or speech disabilities (“communication disabilities”). The goal is to ensure “effective communication”, which means communication with people with disabilities is equally effective as communication with people without disabilities.

The key to communicating effectively is to consider the nature, length, complexity, and context of the communication and the person’s normal method(s) of communication. The requirements apply to communicating with the person who is receiving the covered entity’s goods or services as well as with that person’s parent/guardian, spouse, or companion in appropriate circumstances.

What are Auxiliary Aids and Services for Communication Access?

The term “auxiliary aids and services” refers to the ways to communicate with people who have communication disabilities. The ADA requires auxiliary aids and services to be provided by covered entities when needed to communicate effectively with people who have communication disabilities. A type of service is a Communication Access Provider. The following are examples of Communication Access Provider services commonly requested by individuals with communication disabilities:

- Notetakers
- Readers
- Real-Time Captioners
- Sign Language Interpreters
- Speech-to-speech Transliterators

The ADA requires the use of “qualified” providers of communication access services. A “qualified” service provider means someone who can provide services effectively, accurately, and impartially, using any necessary specialized vocabulary.

Who Decides Which Service Is Needed?

When choosing a service, the ADA requires state and local governments to give primary consideration to the choice of service requested by the person who has a communication disability. Other covered entities are encouraged to consult with the person with the disability to discuss what service is appropriate. The goal is to provide an accommodation that will be effective, given the nature of what is being communicated and the person’s method of communicating.

Finding a Communication Access Provider for an Assignment

- 1) You may contact and negotiate with a service provider directly. The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) maintains a list of Communication Access Providers. View the list on our website at <http://health.hawaii.gov/dcab/communication-access/>.

NOTE: As of December 2018, this list only includes sign language interpreters. Check back in the future for more Communication Access Providers.

- 2) There are two (2) referral agencies for communication access services in Hawaii. Contact a referral service to get a quote and they will send the service provider to the job assignment.

Hawaii Interpreting Services
Phone: (808) 394-7706
Website: <http://interpretinghawaii.com/>

Isle Interpret (*)
Phone: (808) 445-9125
Website: <http://www.isleinterpret.com>

- The State Department of Human Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), has a contract with the interpreter agency noted above with an asterisk (*) through 6/30/19. All public procurement units in Hawaii with a signed cooperative purchasing agreement (CPA) in place with VR may obtain referral services from the contracted agency without being charged an administrative fee. However, even with a signed CPA in place, it is not required that public entities obtain services via the VR-contracted agency. Public entities are free to utilize any referral service they choose.

Paying for Communication Access Providers

- You may arrange for and pay the Communication Access Provider directly, or you may pay a referral agency to arrange for and pay the provider. Using a referral agency may involve a fee for placement and/or billing, but this may be more desirable if you need multiple providers and wish to minimize paperwork or delay (with purchase orders) to pay the providers. Check with the referral agency for their rates and fees.
- Fees are negotiable. DCAB issues a [recommended fee schedule](#) for providers as part of its administrative rules. The recommended fee schedule is non-binding and is meant to provide guidance to state agencies on appropriate fees, including mileage and related costs. All entities may find the recommended fee schedule useful when preparing an annual budget for anticipated costs for providing communication access services.
- Referral agencies will accept a P-Card for payment from state agencies. Such services are not subject to procurement for multiple quotes.

- If the assignment is related to vocational training or assistance referred by VR, ask the individual with the communication disability if he or she is a VR client. If yes, contact the person's counselor to assist with the provision of communication access services. Note: This does not apply when the VR client is taking courses offered by the University of Hawaii System.
- If the assignment is related to a medical evaluation or appointment, ask what type of insurance the person has. Some medical insurance providers pay for communication access services. Ultimately, entities providing the medical service are responsible for fees.
- Federal tax credit is available to eligible small businesses. To learn more about credits and deductions, go to [Form 8826, Disabled Access Credit](#) at IRS.gov.

For more information, contact DCAB at (808) 586-8121 or email at dcab@doh.hawaii.gov.

NOTE: This informational sheet provides technical assistance related to auxiliary aids or services for people with disabilities. If you need a spoken or foreign language interpreter, or want information about how to obtain a foreign language interpreter, please contact the Office of Language Access at (808) 586-8730 or toll-free (866) 365-5955, or e-mail ola@doh.hawaii.gov.

