



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

1010 Richards Street, Room 118 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Ph. (808) 586-8121 (V) • Fax (808) 586-8129

MINUTES

Standing Committee on Communication Access Meeting

LOCATION: Virtual via Zoom and In-Person Location
Kamamalu Building
1010 Richards Street, Rm. 111A and 111B
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

DATE: August 8, 2024

TIME: 11:00 a.m.

PRESENT: Gerald Isobe, Chairperson; LisaAnn Tom, Board Member; Kirby Shaw, Justin
"Pono" Tokioka, Bryan Mick, Kristine Pagano, Elizabeth Pearson, Staff

ABSENT: Nikki Kepo'o, Board Member

GUESTS: Sherry Shimizu and Fanny Yeh

SIGN LANGUAGE

INTERPRETERS: Yoshiko Chino and Denise Green

REAL TIME

CAPTIONERS: April Chandler and Val Ransom

- I. Chairperson Gerald Isobe called the meeting to order at 11:09 a.m.
- II. Board members, staff, guests, captioners, and sign language interpreters introduced themselves.
- III. Statement from Public and Written Testimonies Submitted

No written testimonies were submitted.
- IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes of May 9, 2024

The minutes of the May 9, 2024 meeting were approved as circulated (M/S/P Tom/Isobe).
- V. New Business
 - A. Approved Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-2025 Communication Access section of the Plan of Action. See Attachment.

The Standing Committee on Communication Access held a meeting on May 9, 2024, to discuss the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-2025 Communication Access section of the Plan of Action. At the May 9, 2024 meeting, Committee member Nikki Kepo'o proposed amending objectives 3.2.2, 3.2.3, and 3.3.2.

by adding the wording “video description” before audio description as an accessibility feature for deaf persons.

The Committee also added two new objectives:

3.2.3 Organize and prepare for a Communication Access State Conference in 2025. **(Priority 1)**

3.4.4 Pursuant to Act 204-24, SLH 2024, convene a working group to study the state of American Sign Language interpretation services in Hawaii and prepare a report to be submitted to the Legislature. **(Priority 1)**

At the May 9, 2024 meeting, the Committee voted on a motion to approve the amended Communication Access section of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-2025 Plan of Action (M/S/P Kepo’o/Tom).

1. Staff report on technical assistance and trainings with Assets School, Polynesian Cultural Center, and Maui Deaf Friends.

DCAB staff attended three (3) trainings and provided technical assistance. At the Assets School, DCAB staff provided training and resources to Assets School regarding accommodations for effective communication for parents of children attending the school, and persons who are deaf in the community.

The Polynesian Cultural Center (PCC) requested assistance with their night show regarding lighting for American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters. PCC has been using a flashlight shining on the ASL interpreter. DCAB staff noticed that it can be distracting for the ASL interpreter and others in the audience with the bright flashlight. Staff tried to consider the best ways of highlighting the ASL interpreter to provide an equitable experience for deaf guests. After observing the night show and the use of ASL interpreters, staff suggested PCC could put captioning on a screen or use advanced LED lights that can be dimmed. Also, there was a deaf performer in the night show and DCAB staff met with her.

Guest Fanny Yeh asked whether the deaf performer was born fully deaf and knows sign language. Staff said she knows sign language but could not say whether she was born fully deaf.

Board member LisaAnn Tom shared an experience where she took an astronomy course in college. In the evenings, she had difficulty figuring out how to see the ASL interpreters. A solution where the ASL interpreters wore headlamps worked fairly well.

Maui Deaf Friends invited DCAB staff to attend their board meeting on August 4, 2024. Staff provided a presentation about DCAB and answered their questions and concerns. The hot topic of discussion was the wildfire because it had been a year since then. There were deaf individuals who lost homes and Maui Deaf Friends shared their concerns about how they would be learning about the future in terms of emergency response and language barriers. They also expressed frustrations with Maui County, Maui Mayor, Maui Fire Department, and Maui Police Department for not

providing equitable communication. Maui Deaf Friends asked staff to provide future trainings and workshops for emergency response workers and the other government entities.

2. 57th Biennial National Association of the Deaf Conference – Chicago, July 1-6, 2024.

Chairperson Gerald Isobe reported that Justin “Pono” Tokioka attended the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) Conference last month. It was a rich experience and Pono Tokioka was able to network with a lot of other states’ representatives. He also attended the National Association of State Agencies for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NASADHH) Summit before the NAD Conference. The information was very beneficial for Pono Tokioka learning from other states’ issues and concerns, solutions, or specific laws that DCAB could use to address issues in Hawaii's deaf community.

3. Maui County Office of Aging Abilities Resources Fair, September 14, 2024.

Chairperson Gerald Isobe reported that the Maui County Office of Aging Abilities Resources Fair was scheduled for June 22, 2024 but was canceled due to liability insurance issues. It is rescheduled for September 14, 2024. DCAB staff will be participating.

VI. Old Business

A. Report on Senate Bill (SB) 3290 SD2 HD1 – Relating to American Sign Language. Requires the Disability and Communication Access Board to convene a working group to study the state of American Sign Language interpretation services in Hawai‘i. Requires a report to the Legislature. (Update)

Chairperson Gerald Isobe reported that Governor Green officially signed SB3290 on July 5, 2024. DCAB has invited ten (10) individuals to be part of the Working Group. DCAB must submit the final report to the Legislature by December 31, 2024.

Board member LisaAnn Tom asked about the persons who would be participating as Working Group members. Below are the names of the Working Group members and the organization or entity each represents.

Chairperson, Pono Tokioka, DCAB
Rusnell Pascual-Kestner, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Jamia Green, Department of Education
Andrea Berez, University of Hawaii
Sherry Shimizu, Deaf and Blind Task Force
Jackie Gonzalez and Mala Arkin, interpreting community
Kekai Cummings, Kaua‘i
Vesta Morris and Nani Watanabe, Maui
Rebecca Bennett, the Big Island

B. Establish in-person Quarterly Continuing Education Unit Workshops for sign language interpreters. (Update)

Chairperson Gerald Isobe reported that DCAB staff is currently working with a person who is interested in providing a Continuing Education Unit (CEU) workshop for Hawaii's ASL interpreters. Hopefully it can be set up in September.

C. Organize a State Communication Access Conference by Next Summer. (Update)

Chairperson Gerald Isobe reported that DCAB staff is currently preparing for a State Communication Access Conference next year. Staff is working on securing a location and a date sometime in March or April 2025. More information will be at the next meeting.

D. Recruit individuals to take the Hawaii Quality Assurance System test and increase the number of interpreters with a Hawaii State Sign Language Interpreter Credentials. (Update)

Chairperson Gerald Isobe reported that an individual took the Hawaii Quality Assurance System (HQAS) test last week. Staff is currently editing the videos and will send them to evaluators for evaluation. The evaluators take up to two (2) months to produce the results. There are few people who indicated that they want to take HQAS test this year, but they have not followed through.

VII. Open Forum

No topics were submitted for discussion.

VII. Announcement of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday October 24, 2024, at 11:00 a.m.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/
JUSTIN TOKIOKA

Attachment
(FY 2024-2025 Plan of Action – Communication Access)

3. Communication Access

Communication Access includes the provision of auxiliary aids and services that facilitate the effective exchange of information with or by persons with disabilities who require such access. Communication access occurs through communication access providers (individuals) as well as through telecommunication and electronic information devices, auxiliary aids and services.

The goals and objectives in the area of **Communication Access** are:

- 3.1 The quantity and quality of communication access providers in the State of Hawaii will be increased. State agencies will be aware of existing communication access providers and their qualifications.

Objectives:

- 3.1.1 Operate and maintain the Hawaii Quality Assurance Screening (HQAS) credentialing program for sign language interpreters who do not possess national certification; develop an instructional video for HQAS applicants. **(Priority 2)**
 - 3.1.2 Operate and maintain the Continuing Education Program for State credentialed interpreters, including the secured website tracking system, and provide at least .5 hours of continuing education workshops geared towards Level III sign language interpreters. **(Priority 1)**
 - 3.1.3 Provide technical assistance regarding Hawaii Administrative Rules, Title 11, Chapter 218, including the Hawaii State Sign Language Interpreter Credential and the recommended fee schedule. **(Priority 3)**
 - 3.1.4 Update and maintain a registry of current communication access providers (for Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and other persons with communication access disabilities) and their credentials and post it on the Disability and Communication Access Board's website. **(Priority 2)**
 - 3.1.5 Keep informed of nationwide efforts on regulation and oversight of American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters or ASL interpreter referral agencies. **(Priority 3)**
 - 3.1.6 Provide continuing education workshops and trainings for State credentialed interpreters and individuals studying for a credential to gain workforce experience. **(Priority 1)**
 - 3.1.7 Update the Hawaii State Sign Language Interpreter Credential and recommended fee schedule, as needed. **(Priority 1)**
- 3.2 Individuals with communication access needs shall be aware of their rights to communication access services and technology.

Objectives:

- 3.2.1 Provide technical assistance to individuals with communication access needs on their right to effective communication (American Sign Language interpreting, notetaking, audio description, and captioning) with an emphasis on State and county services. **(Priority 1)**
 - 3.2.2 Produce videos in American Sign Language with captions, and audio descriptions, relating to the legislative process with the Legislative Reference Bureau and the Public Access Room. **(Priority 2)**
 - 3.2.3 Organize and prepare for Communication Access State Conference in 2025. **(Priority 1)**
- 3.3 Service agencies, program providers, and consumers will have access to updated information about federal and state laws relating to communication access.

Objectives:

- 3.3.2 Provide technical assistance to covered entities on their obligation to provide effective communication including accessible formats (American Sign Language interpreting, notetaking, audio description, and captioning) with an emphasis on State and county services. **(Priority 1)**
 - 3.3.3 Serve on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advisory Board (DHHAB), Department of Human Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation; the Deaf and Blind Task Force (DBTF); and the Department of Health, Office of Language Access, Language Access Advisory Council (LAAC); to coordinate with Title II entities to improve communication access services. **(Priority 3)**
- 3.4 Advocacy efforts shall enhance effective communication for people who have communication access needs.

Objectives:

- 3.4.2 Engage in advocacy efforts involving services, rules, regulations, and other policies to enhance effective communication, including web accessibility and emergency broadcasts. **(Priority 1)**
- 3.4.3 Monitor, review, and submit comments to the Federal Communications Commission regarding rulemaking and pilot programs on improving accessibility for people with communication disabilities. **(Priority 2)**
- 3.4.3 Pursuant to Act 271-22, participate in a working group on accessible government documents and develop electronic information in technology accessibility standards titled, "Hawaii Electronic Information Technology Disability Access Standards" to be implemented by all state entities with the Office of Enterprise Technology Services. **(Priority 1)**
- 3.4.4 Pursuant to Act 204-24, SLH 2024, convene a working group to study the state of American Sign Language interpretation services in Hawaii and prepare a report to be submitted to the Legislature. **(Priority 1)**