

# DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

1010 Richards Street, Room 118 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
Ph. (808) 586-8121 (V) • VP (808) 204-2466 • Fax (808) 586-8129

## NOTICE OF MEETING

### Disability and Communication Access Board

### Standing Committee on Communication Access Meeting

July 16, 2025

11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

The Disability and Communication Access Board will be meeting remotely using interactive conference technology. The public is welcome to participate as follows.

#### **Public In-Person Meeting Location**

Kamamalu Building, Room 111A and 111B  
1010 Richards Street, Room 118  
Honolulu, HI 96813

#### **Participate Virtually via Zoom**

Click on the link below or copy and paste it into your browser window:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87198854761> and enter Meeting ID: 871 9885 4761

#### **To join by phone**

Dial 1 669 900 6833 and enter Meeting ID: 871 9885 4761

#### **Public Testimony**

**Oral Testimony** - Members of the public may testify on each agenda item before the Standing Committee on Communication Access deliberates on the same.

**Written Testimony** - To ensure the public as well as its Committee members receive such testimony in a timely manner, written testimony should be submitted 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting date and time. Any written testimony submitted after such time will be distributed to the members and the public at the meeting. Written testimony may be submitted by one of the methods listed below:

1. By email to: [dcab@doh.hawaii.gov](mailto:dcab@doh.hawaii.gov)
2. By U.S. Postal Mail:  
Kirby Shaw, Disability and Communication Access Board, 1010 Richards Street,  
Room 118, Honolulu, HI 96813
3. By facsimile to: (808) 586-8129

## **AGENDA**

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call/Introductions
- III. Statement from Public and Written Testimonies Submitted
- IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes of June 19, 2025.
- V. Old Business
  - A. Update on the 2025 Communication Access State Conference.
  - B. Planning for the 2025 Deaf Awareness Day in September.
  - C. Review of the proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-2026 Plan of Action Communication Access Section including any proposed revisions to goals and objectives for the Communication Access Program.
- VI. New Business
  - There are no items for New Business.
- VII. Open Forum
  - Public comment on issues not on the agenda for consideration at the next meeting.
- VIII. Announcement of Next Meeting
- IX. Adjournment

If you require an auxiliary aid/service or other accommodation due to a disability, contact Cindy Omura at (808) 586-8121 and email at [dcab@doh.hawaii.gov](mailto:dcab@doh.hawaii.gov) as soon as possible. Requests made as early as possible have a greater likelihood of being fulfilled.

American Sign Language interpreters and Communication Access Real Time Translation (CART) will be provided.

Upon request, this notice is available in alternate/accessible formats.

The agenda and materials for this meeting are also available for inspection at DCAB's office located at 1010 Richards Street, Room 118, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 and on DCAB's website at: <https://health.hawaii.gov/dcab/dcab-agendas-and-minutes/>.

### 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 make improvements if necessary, and provide at least 0.5 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 quarterly 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, audio descriptions, and audio transcripts 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 2026. **(Priority 1)**~~
- 3.2.3 Collaborative effort or organize a celebration for the Deaf Awareness event. **(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.

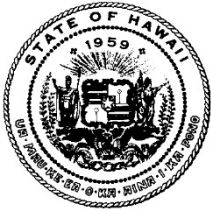
Objectives:

- 3.3.1 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)**
- 3.3.2 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)**
- 3.3.3 Provide training to first responders to increase awareness how to handle with Deaf, Hard of Hearing, DeafBlind, and persons with communication disabilities in the event of emergency situations. **(Priority 2)**
- 3.4 Advocacy efforts shall enhance effective communication for people who have communication access needs.

Objectives:

- 3.4.1 Engage in advocacy efforts involving services, rules, regulations, and other policies to enhance effective communication, including web accessibility and emergency broadcasts. **(Priority 1)**
- 3.4.2 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)~~  
Follow up on the report on the status of American Sign Language Interpreting Services in Hawaii pursuant to Act 204-24 by proposing funding to support increasing the numbers of ASL interpreters in the state of Hawaii. (Priority 1)



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## **DRAFT 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: June 19, 2025  
TIME: 11:00 a.m.

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

ABSENT: Nikki Kepo'o, Board Member

SIGN LANGUAGE  
INTERPRETERS: Keri Lee and Laura Safranski

REAL TIME  
CAPTIONERS: April Chandler and Kelly DeCamp

- I. Chairperson Gerald Isobe called the meeting to order at 11:10 a.m.
- II. Board members, staff, captioners, and sign language interpreters introduced themselves.
- III. Statement from Public and Written Testimonies Submitted.  
  
No written testimonies were submitted.
- III. Approval of Meeting Minutes of May 22, 2025.  
  
The minutes of the May 22, 2025, meeting were approved as circulated (M/S/P Tom/Isobe).
- IV. Old Business
  - There are no items for Old Business.
- V. New Business
  - A. Update on the 2025 Communication Access State Conference.

- Registrations: A total of one hundred twenty two (122) participants have registered to date. The target is one hundred thirty (130) attendees, with expectations for additional late registrations and same-day walk-ins.
- Planning: DCAB staff continue to actively prepare for the event and expressed enthusiasm about its progress.
- Event Details: Complimentary food and lunch will be provided. Ten (10) vendors representing the disability and hard-of-hearing community are confirmed to exhibit at the event.
- Chairperson Gerald Isobe asked whether the previously discussed goal of one hundred fifty (150) participants was still in effect. Staff clarified that the target has been adjusted to one hundred thirty (130) for planning and budgetary reasons.

B. Planning for the 2025 Deaf Awareness Day in September.

- Event Idea: The Committee discussed organizing a Deaf Awareness Day in September 2025.
- HSDB Event: The Hawai'i School for the Deaf and the Blind (HSDB) plans to hold its own event on Friday, September 26, with activities for students, parents, and teachers.
- Potential Collaboration: HSDB invited DCAB to support or partner with their event and requested assistance with lunch sponsorship.
- Board Considerations: Members discussed whether to join HSDB's event or host a separate one for the broader public. Some noted concerns about limited public participation due to the weekday timing.
- Alternative Ideas: Suggestions included partnering with American Sign Language (ASL) programs, hosting a separate Deaf Awareness Day or Week, or holding an event in May, another recognized month for Deaf Awareness.
- Next Steps: Further discussion is needed. The Committee will revisit this topic at the next meeting to decide on a direction.

C. Report on one new applicant for the Hawaii Quality Assurance System (HQAS) Test.

- New Applicant: One new individual took the HQAS test on Friday, June 6, 2025.
- Next Steps: The test footage is currently being edited and will soon be sent to evaluators. Results are expected in about three (3) months.
- Board member LisaAnn Tom asked how many interpreters have taken the test in the past year and a half. This applicant is the sixth to take the

HQAS test during that time. Currently, there are twenty three (23) interpreters with Hawaii state credentials, and some others hold national certifications (NIC).

- Board member LisaAnn Tom said that expanding the interpreter pool is beneficial and welcomed the continued interest in the HQAS test.

D. Review of the proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-2026 Plan of Action Communication Access Section including any proposed revisions to goals and objectives for the Communication Access Program.

- New Additions:
  - 3.2.4 Organize or collaborate on a celebration for Deaf Awareness events. (Priority 1)
  - 3.3.3 Provide training for first responders on how to assist Deaf, Hard of Hearing, DeafBlind, and persons with communication disabilities during emergencies. (Priority 2)
- Delete from FY 2024-2025 Plan of Action:
  - 3.4.3 Participation in a working group on accessible government documents and development of electronic information technology accessibility standards (Act 271-22). (Priority 1)
- Revised:
  - 3.1.2 Added the phrase “and make improvements if necessary” regarding operation and maintenance of the Continuing Education Program and secured website tracking system.
  - 3.4.4 Changed from convening a working group to study ASL interpreting services and submit a report, to following up on that report by proposing funding to increase the number of ASL interpreters in Hawaii. (Priority 1)

VI. Open Forum

Text-to-911 Discussion Summary:

- Issue Identified: The Text-to-911 system experienced a temporary outage on June 16, 2025 due to a virus and system errors, confirmed by the Honolulu Police Department (HPD). The system is now operational again.
- Lack of Backup/Notification: Currently, there is no backup system for Text-to-911. Users are not notified if their text fails to go through, which poses a serious risk, especially for Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing individuals relying on the service.
- Concerns Raised:
  - How users can be informed when their message fails to send.
  - Inaccessibility of Real Time Text or voice alternatives for some individuals (e.g., those without iPhones or senior citizens).
  - Need for clear failure messages or alerts.
- Recommendations:
  - HPD should develop a backup communication plan.



- Implement push notifications or emergency alerts when the system is down/restored.
- Clarify what failure messages are sent and ensure public education on alternative methods (e.g., RTT, Video Relay Services).
- Ensure Deaf individuals are not left waiting unknowingly in emergencies.
- Action Items:
  - Staff to follow up with HPD regarding what users see when Text-to-911 fails.
  - Consider collaboration with emergency management for further planning.
  - Add topic to the next meeting agenda for continued discussion.

VIII. Announcement of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 16, 2025, at 11:00 a.m.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:59 p.m.

NOTE: All votes were unanimous unless otherwise noted.

Respectfully submitted,

JUSTIN TOKIOKA