



Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Bulletin February 2009

VISION

Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, in concurrence with the Colorado Department of Human Service vision, seeks to become the nation's leader in empowering Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals, families, and communities to become safe and independent.

MISSION

To promote the interests of our constituents and to work to ensure the quality of communication access for individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing living in the state of Colorado.

Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Legislative Bill (SB 09-144)

Senate Bill (SB) 09-144 involves a combination of some "technical clean-up" of the Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing statute and an addition of two programs to the Commission.

The main highlights of the bill are:

- Modernizes the Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program for provision of the "current" telecommunications equipment, including wireless products.
- Clarifies the definition of the state court system to re-define the Commission Legal Auxiliary Services' responsibility to the state.
- Authorizes the Commission to schedule auxiliary services (interpreting and real-time captioning) for the state courts.
- Creates a system navigator/technical assistance specialist position within the Commission: 1) to improve and ensure equivalent access to auxiliary services and other needs by critical state and local government agencies, private agencies and other entities (non-profits included), and 2) to increase awareness of programs for and rights of deaf and hard of hearing individuals.
- Creates a grant program for the Commission to manage and a sub-committee to administer the grant program.

SB 09-144 was introduced to the Senate for first reading on January 27, 2009 and will be considered for vote after a hearing by the Senate Health and Human Services Committee at

1:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 12. It will be held in Room 353 (3rd floor) at the State Capitol (200 E. Colfax Ave., Denver, Colorado 80203).

People are always welcome to come to the legislative committee hearings. Come to support SB 09-144 if you wish!

See www.leg.state.co.us for more information on the state legislative activities, bills, contact information of legislators, etc.

Colorado Quality Standards for Interpreters Legislative Bill (HB 09-1090)

By Rachel Naiman and Danelle Jansen, Colorado Association of the Deaf CQSI
Committee Co-chairs

House Bill (HB) 09-1090, Colorado Quality Standards for Interpreter's (CQSI) Title Protection for interpreters bill, passed unanimously out of the House Judiciary committee on Thursday, January 29th!! Our heartfelt thanks to all of you who came out to testify or support the bill. A packed committee room full of people signing and hand waving is an awesome thing to behold! The passage in committee means the bill is going back to the full House of Representatives for two votes. There is no testimony during this next phase, but I am told that supporters in the Gallery would be a great help – keep your eyes open for time and date.

Once the bill passes through the House, it will go to the Senate and the same process will be repeated (approximately two weeks later). **We will also need your support when the bill goes to the Senate and will keep you informed when we get a date and time for that.**

The goal of the bill is for the State of Colorado to regulate the profession of interpreting. This bill, if passed will help to protect the titles used by sign language interpreters. Sign language interpreters must be nationally certified before they can use the titles listed in the bill. See the bill to find out what titles interpreters can not use if they are not nationally certified.

Interpreters who do not have national certification can still provide interpreting services, but they will need to disclose to the hiring party and Deaf consumers that they are a non-certified interpreter or interpreter-in-training.

You can find an electronic version of the bill and track its progress here: <http://www.leg.state.co.us/Clics/CLICS2009A/csl.nsf/BillFoldersHouse?openFrameset>. Use the drop down box at the top to get to HB 09-1090.

For more information, contact Rachel Naiman at rnaiman@comcast.net and Danelle Jansen at djansen@signlanguage.com.

Proposed ADA Regulations Withdrawn from Office of Management and Budget Review

On January 21, 2009, the Department of Justice notified the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) that the Department has withdrawn its draft final rules to amend the Department's regulations implementing title II and title III from the OMB review process. This action was taken

in response to a memorandum from the President's Chief of Staff directing the Executive Branch agencies to defer publication of any new regulations until the rules are reviewed and approved by officials appointed by President Obama. No final action will be taken by the Department with respect to these rules until the incoming officials have had the opportunity to review the rulemaking record. Incoming officials will have the full range of rule-making options available to them under the Administrative Procedure Act.

Withdrawal of the draft final rules does not affect existing ADA regulations. Title II and title III entities must continue to follow the Department's existing ADA regulations, including the ADA Standards for Accessible Design.

Posted on the Department of Justice website at: <http://www.ada.gov/ADAregrswithdraw09.htm>.

This email was sent to the CCDHH as a subscriber to the Rocky Mountain Access e-newsletter provided by the DBTAC: Rocky Mountain ADA Center: www.adainformation.org.

Accommodations at the State Capitol

The Colorado General Assembly has a policy that the programs, services, and activities of the legislative branch of Colorado state government be readily accessible to and usable by each person.

The Legislative Council staff will coordinate services available to the deaf and hard of hearing persons. The services include: interpreting, Communication Access Real-time Translation (CART) and Assistive Listening Device/System.

Persons desiring to make use of services available should contact:

Stephanie Smith, Assistant
Legislative Council
State Capitol
200 E. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203
303-866-3521 (voice)
303-866-3472 (TTY)
303-866-3855 (fax)
stephanie.smith@state.co.us

Meeting notes are available upon request as well. The legislative staff will be made available to take meeting notes for deaf and hard of hearing persons. Requests should be made at least 24 hours in advance of the time when a note taker is required so that proper scheduling and staff availability arrangements can be considered. Legislative meetings are recorded on audiotape, but written transcripts of meetings are not available.

The legislative branch of the Colorado state government consists of the state House of Representatives, the state Senate, and their staff agencies, the legislative Council staff, the

Office of Legislative Legal Services, the Joint Budget Committee staff, and the State Auditor's Office.

The regular legislative sessions run annually for 120 calendar days from the second Wednesday in January to early May, and special sessions may be convened at other times.

Mental Health and Substance Abuse System-Level Advocacy

The final Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Mental Health and Substance Abuse (MHSA) Action Plan and its Executive Summary are now available. The Division of Behavioral Health/Department of Human Services has reviewed the Plan and the CCDHH Commissioners approved the plan at the January 8, 2009 meeting. These documents will be posted on the CCDHH website: <http://www.coloradodeafcommission.com/advocacy/mhsa.aspx> in the next couple weeks. Please contact the CCDHH if you need a copy of either or both documents.

The CCDHH MHSA Implementation Team currently has funding for the continued work, including creation of the Coordinator position, as a priority. The Team will keep you updated through distribution of e-updates for the MHSA community. Contact the CCDHH to put yourself on the list.

ADARA Conference, April 15-19, 2009

ADARA: Professionals Networking for Excellence in Service Delivery with Individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing whose mission is to facilitate excellence in human service delivery with individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing will hold a five-day conference in San Antonio, Texas in April, 2009. See: http://www.adara.org/pages/conf_page.shtml for more information.

This mission is accomplished by enhancing the professional competencies of the membership, expanding opportunities for networking among ADARA colleagues and supporting positive public policies for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. In achieving the mission, ADARA members are committed to: full access for members to all aspects of the organization's business, including Board matters, conference planning, presentations and journal publications, recognizing and affirming the ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity of the membership, and fostering an inclusive language community through the use of American Sign Language, signed communication, and other communication strategies used by all members at ADARA events in order to strive for barrier-free communication.

Commission Meeting

Mark your calendar with the next Commission quarterly meeting! It will be held from **3:00 p.m. to 6:00 pm.** on **Thursday, March 5, 2009** at:

Colorado Department of Human Services
1575 Sherman Street, 6th Floor Conference Room
Denver, CO 80203

An update about the CCDHH Legislative Bill (SB 09-144) and other relevant issues will be presented and discussed at the meeting. Check the CCDHH website for the agenda.

Come and visit with us!

**Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
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