

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH  
PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY



**PA 25-144—sHB 6932**

*Human Services Committee*

*Appropriations Committee*

**AN ACT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A STATE  
INTERPRETING STANDARDS BOARD**

**SUMMARY:** This act establishes a nine-member Interpreting Standards Board within the Department of Aging and Disability Services (ADS) to set education, training, and certification requirements for interpreters for people who are deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing. The standard board's duties also include establishing the training needed to provide interpreting services to select populations and reviewing complaints about interpreters who are not complying with state interpreting standards. The act requires the ADS commissioner to incorporate new interpreter standards based on the board's recommendations by March 1, 2027.

The act establishes the Interpreting Standards Board within ADS's Bureau of Services for Persons who are Deaf, Deafblind or Hard of Hearing and makes this bureau, rather than ADS, responsible for certain tasks related to interpreter credentialing and registration, including receiving interpreter registrations. The act allows the standards board to recommend (1) waivers from registration and related requirements and (2) acceptable credential equivalents.

The act delays, from January 1 to September 1, 2025, the deadline for the Advisory Board for Persons who are Deaf, Deafblind, or Hard of Hearing to submit its first annual report to the governor and legislature. It also (1) specifically requires the advisory board's recommendations to include policy and legislative changes needed to address gaps in interpreting services for non-English-speakers and (2) requires the board to refer complaints concerning interpreters to the Interpreting Standards Board, in addition to Disability Rights Connecticut, as existing law requires.

By law, anyone providing interpreting services must comply with certain requirements (e.g., annual registration). Existing law defines "interpreting" as a way to translate or transliterate English concepts to a language concept used by a person who is deaf, deafblind, of hard of hearing, or vice versa, using specified methods, such as American Sign Language, English-based sign language, cued speech, and oral transliterating. Under the act, it also includes translating or transliterating using (1) protactile language and tactile language for people who are deafblind, rather than using information received tactually, as under prior law, and (2) non-English-based language for non-English-speakers.

Lastly, the act makes minor, technical, and conforming changes.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** October 1, 2025, except provisions establishing the Interpreting Standards Board and changing advisory board reporting requirements take effect July 1, 2025.

## INTERPRETING STANDARDS BOARD

### *Board Appointments*

The ADS commissioner, in consultation with the bureau director, must appoint the board by October 1, 2025. Appointed board members must have expressed a willingness to serve on the board. The commissioner must appoint nine members, at least six of whom must reflect the state's geographic and racial diversity, as follows:

1. the Connecticut Association of the Deaf president, or designee;
2. the Connecticut Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf president, or designee;
3. the DeafBlind Association of Connecticut president, or designee;
4. one deaf interpreter professional representative;
5. one hearing interpreter professional representative; and
6. four consumers of interpreting services, one each representing consumers who are hearing, deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing.

### *Board Member Qualifications and Terms*

The act requires the appointed interpreter professionals and consumers to have been state residents for at least three years and have at least three years' experience providing or using interpreting services and interacting with people who are deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing. They must also be familiar with interpreting issues and professional interpreter standards. For the appointed interpreter professionals, the act gives priority to those who have been certified or registered interpreters involved in delivering interpreting services for deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing people for at least three years. And each interpreter professional must be trained in providing services in a different special setting (e.g., community, educational, legal, and medical settings).

The act staggers the standard board members' terms by requiring the ADS commissioner to initially appoint the interpreter professionals and two consumers to a three-year term and the other two consumers to a two-year term. After these initial terms, the commissioner must appoint six of the nine board members for two-year terms on a staggered basis.

The act requires the standards board members to elect a chairperson and other officers as they deem advisable at their first meeting, which they must hold by November 1, 2025. The standards board must meet at least quarterly.

### *Standards Board Duties*

The act requires the standards board to:

1. set education, training, and certification requirements for interpreters working in special settings, including community, educational, legal, and medical settings;
2. establish training needed to provide interpreting services to select populations (e.g., protactile language and tactile language interpreting

## OLR PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY

- training to serve deafblind people and training in interpreting methods to serve non-English speakers);
3. set operational standards for organizations and providers supplying interpreting services in these settings and to select populations (e.g., deafblind people);
  4. in consultation with the bureau director, expand interpreter access to educational, training, internship, apprenticeship, mentorship, and credentialing opportunities and promote access to these opportunities to grow the pool of interpreters in the state;
  5. receive and review all complaints on noncompliance with state interpreting standards and file associated reports (as described below); and
  6. make recommendations to the ADS commissioner by January 1, 2027, on new interpreter standards, regulations, and legislation on interpreter qualifications.

### INTERPRETER REGISTRATION

The act transfers from ADS to its Bureau of Services for Persons Who are Deaf, Deafblind or Hard of Hearing responsibility for registering interpreters, prescribing registration forms, issuing interpreter identification cards, and maintaining a current interpreter listing on ADS's website, categorized by the settings for which they are qualified. Under the act, this listing must also be categorized by specialized skills (e.g., protactile language or tactile language interpreting for deafblind people, or interpreting for non-English speakers). The act requires the bureau, rather than ADS, to issue annual identification cards listing the types of settings in which the registrant is qualified to interpret. It allows the bureau, rather than ADS, to require documentation of a registrant's training hours, in consultation with the Interpreting Standards Board.

### NEW INTERPRETER STANDARDS

Current law generally requires anyone providing interpreting services in the state to register, hold recognized national or state interpreter credentials, and meet one of nine separate pathways or combinations of credentials that satisfy certain requirements to provide interpreting services in general (community) settings, with separate requirements for medical and legal settings. The act requires the ADS commissioner to implement policies and procedures, by March 1, 2027, that incorporate new interpreter standards based on the Interpreting Standards Board's recommendations. It sunsets current law's requirements when these new standards are adopted.

The act requires the commissioner to implement these policies and procedures before adopting regulations, as authorized under the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act. She must post notice about the department's intent to adopt the regulations on the eRegulations system within 20 days after implementing the policies and procedures and prominently link to them on the ADS website. Under the act, the policies and procedures are valid until final regulations are adopted. The

## OLR PUBLIC ACT SUMMARY

act requires the commissioner to submit the policies and procedures in proposed regulation form to the Legislative Regulation Review Committee within 12 months after publishing the department's notice of intent.

The act exempts interpreters who are interpreting for deafblind people from existing requirements until these new standards are adopted or until a state or national standard is established for protactile language or tactile language interpreting.

### CREDENTIAL SUBSTITUTES, EQUIVALENTS, AND WAIVERS

The act allows interpreters and interpreter registration card applicants who hold different certificates or credentials from recognized national and state interpreter credentialing organizations to apply to the standards board for a review of whether an approved acceptable credential equivalent or substitute, or a waiver for up to three years from complying with state interpreting standards, may be granted. After reviewing an application for a credential equivalent, the act allows the standards board to recommend to ADS a substitute credential or waiver and a determination of any qualified settings in which the applicant may work. The ADS commissioner may grant a substitute credential or waiver in her discretion.

The act exempts from registration requirements any interpreter with an acceptable credential equivalent or waiver from ADS in accordance with the Interpreting Standards Board's recommendations.

### COMPLAINTS

The act requires the standards board to review complaints about noncompliance with state interpreting standards. It requires the board to file reports with:

1. Disability Rights Connecticut for all substantiated complaints;
2. the American Association for the DeafBlind, for substantiated complaints involving interpreters for deafblind people; and
3. a national or state professional interpreter certifying organization, if the board determines an interpreter violated the organization's interpreter code of professional conduct.