

Hello Everyone,

The Office on Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) has exciting changes taking place and news to share!

We are collaborating with our lead agency, the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services (MDRS), to bring a new interpreter evaluation/testing system to Mississippi. We will depend on the guidance of our Interpreter Registering Authority council to help us decide which testing system to choose, and it will be housed under the ODHH office.

In the spirit of being transparent with you, ODHH and MDRS have decided that we will no longer recognize the MSQA evaluation testing system. Within the interpreting law, passed in 2005, ODHH has the authority to recognize various testing systems and we will continue to recognize Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), National Association of the Deaf (NAD), Board for Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI), Educational Interpreter Performance Appraisal (EIPA) 3.0 or higher, and other state's interpreter evaluations.

Since we do not have the new testing system in place yet, we will continue to honor all MSQA certification levels given prior to August 24, 2023. We are aware that some of the interpreter's MSQA certifications will expire in the coming months, and we have an alternate path planned. When an interpreter's MSQA certification expires, while we are getting the new testing system in place, we will allow them to apply for a provisional registration (\$20 fee) with our office. This also applies to those interpreters who do not have a MSQA level but wanted to take the test or who took the test and didn't receive a level.

A recap of the changes:

- ODHH, with the guidance of our Interpreter Registering Authority council, will bring a new interpreting test to Mississippi.
- The MSQA evaluation testing system is no longer recognized by ODHH and MDRS as of August 24th of 2023.
- ODHH, as the Registering Authority, will grant provisional registration to all the interpreters whose MSQA certification will expire and those who didn't have a chance to take the test or took it and didn't receive a level.
- All other certifications from RID, NAD, BEI, EIPA and other states will still be honored.

ODHH is so excited about the direction our office is taking with this new endeavor and appreciates your patience during this time of transition.

If you have any further questions, concerns or comments please contact ODHH. Our contact details are listed below.

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Koleshia O'Quinn, our Administrative Assistant, will be out for a while, therefore, please excuse her.

Sincerely,

Ben Wagenknecht, Director
Office on Deaf and Hard of Hearing