



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

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MINUTES

Standing Committee on Communication Access Meeting

Location: Disability and Communication Access Board
919 Ala Moana Blvd., Room 103
Honolulu, HI 96814

Date: December 1, 2016
Time: 11:00 a.m.

PRESENT: Misella Tomita, Chairperson; Colin Whited, Board Member; Francine Wai, Kirby Shaw, Kurstin Chun, Staff.

ABSENT: Ed Chevy, Board Member

SIGN LANGUAGE

INTERPRETERS: Michele Morris and Sabina Wilford

GUESTS: Mala Arkin (by phone), Heather Benjamin, Ann Ito, Tamar Lani, Laura Safranski

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Misella Tomita called the meeting to order at 11:10 a.m.

II. Introductions

The attendees introduced themselves.

Francine Wai also announced that Nikki Kepoo has been appointed by the Governor on an interim basis to the Board. Francine Wai will contact her, as her stated interest was communication access.

III. Approval of November 1, 2016 Meeting Minutes

The Committee approve the minutes of the November 1, 2016 meeting (M/S/P Whited/Tomita).

IV. Old Business

A. Hawaii Quality Assurance System – Update

Kurstin Chun reported that there are currently 32 Hawaii Quality Assurance System (HQAS) interpreters in the state. Six of these interpreters are not currently enrolled in the Continuing Education Program (CEP). Of the interpreters with credentials expiring on December 31, 2016, there are 8 interpreters that have completed their CEP requirements, 2 interpreters are still working to complete their CEP requirements, and 3 interpreters requested an extension.

She also noted that there will be a HQAS test on December 7-8, 2016 and that there is only one candidate for this test date.

B. Community Workshops – Update

Kurstin Chun reported that the Maui “Effective Communication in an Emergency” workshop was very successful and that the Maui Police Department has taken the initiative by talking with schools that have Deaf/hard of hearing students.

The Kauai workshop on the same topic was also very successful. There were a small number of Deaf and hard of hearing in attendance, but there were many more community members and first responders than anticipated, including the Kauai Fire Department, Emergency Medical Technicians, and Civil Defense.

DCAB will be sharing this same workshop on the Big Island on December 10 and is working with the Big Island Association of the Deaf and the Aging and Disability Resource Center.

Kurstin Chun also explained that the “Effective Communication and Your Health Care Provider” workshop will be shared with Maui, Kauai and the Big Island communities between the months of January–March 2017.

There was discussion about the feasibility of these workshops. Francine Wai mentioned that DCAB staff will review and evaluate the feasibility of holding these neighbor island workshops after the Effective Communication and Your Health Care Provider workshops are completed. Francine Wai also mentioned that the cost to fly Deaf and hard of hearing participants to Oahu to be involved would still be more cost efficient than flying out staff and other providers to the neighbor islands.

C. CEP Workshops – Update

Kurstin Chun distributed a flyer and the application form for Non-HQAS Interpreters to earn continuing education units (CEUs). She reported that DCAB will hold a CEP workshop series focusing on Linguistic Development in Deaf Children on January 6-7, 2017 at Kapiolani Community College. The presenter is an instructor with the Gallaudet University Linguistics Department. Kurstin Chun noted that seating is limited and the information was sent to HQAS interpreters. She also emphasized that this workshop will be the first workshop to charge professionals not enrolled in the CEP.

Colin Whited asked whether the presenter would be able to do more workshops because the topics would benefit groups other than interpreters. Kurstin Chun said that if other agencies want to ask the presenter to conduct additional workshops, they may, but that the contract has already been set for this specific workshop.

D. Amend Hawaii Administrative Rules, Title 11, Chapter 218, "Communication Access Services for Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Deaf-Blind" – Continued Discussion

Kurstin Chun distributed a 3-page document titled "3 Stages for HQAS Interpreters." She explained that the "HQAS Test Procedure" and the "How to Earn CEUs" sections are almost completed and that the focus for the meeting would be on the "Credential/Renewal" section.

On the second page of the 3-page document, Kurstin Chun reported on a survey sent to entities that would help them understand the different skill levels of interpreters. The results were as follows:

- Top Level: Master
- Middle Level: Intermediate
- Lower Level: Basic
- No color coding needed.

The Committee discussed the results and other options at length. Despite the survey results, the Committee decided that it would be best to indicate the levels by using First Level, Second Level, and Third Level, with the First Level being the highest level. The following motion was made:

MOTION: The simplified levels will be identified as: First Level, Second Level, and Third Level (M/S/P Whited/Tomita).

Kurstin Chun then suggested a second motion to include a "Specialized Category." This category would not be issued as a state credential, but would recognize unique situations in which interpreters may need to be placed.

MOTION: There shall be a Specialized Category for jobs that require specialized skills such as legal interpreting, tactile interpreting, etc. (M/S/P Whited/Tomita).

On the third page of the 3-page document, Kurstin Chun pointed out that deadlines for CEU submissions and extension requests are needed. She recommended that November 30 of the year the credential expires as the deadline date for state credentialed interpreters because it will allow for one month processing before an interpreter receives a new credential to start on January 1.

MOTION: The deadline date for which CEUs must be submitted to the DCAB office, or the deadline date for which the interpreter files for an extension, will be November 30 of the year the credential expires (M/S/P Whited/Tomita).

As noted in previous Committee meeting minutes, interpreters filing for an extension can only apply for a one-time extension that extends for 3 months. Given the previous motion, Kurstin Chun suggested that the deadline date for interpreters who are on extension should be the last day of February. The Committee agreed.

MOTION: For interpreters on extension, CEUs must be submitted to the DCAB office by the last day of February the year after the credential cycle expiration date (M/S/P Whited/Tomita).

Kurstin Chun asked the Committee to decide whether an interpreter on an extension should still be considered as a credentialed interpreter. She researched the matter and found that other states and the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf consider interpreters who are on extension as credentialed/certified.

MOTION: While an interpreter is on extension, the interpreter is still considered a credentialed interpreter (M/S/P Whited/Tomita).

E. Licensure Bills for Sign Language Interpreters and Referral Agencies – Update

Per staff's suggestion, the Committee decided to discuss item F before E.

Francine Wai provided history on how and why the 2 licensure bills came to be. She explained to the Committee that the bills will be introduced as a part of the Administrative package. Once the bills are introduced, they will be automatically deferred and a resolution will ask the State Auditor to conduct a sunrise study to determine whether interpreters and/or interpreter referral agencies should be licensed.

A question was raised about where the State Auditor would obtain input. Francine Wai said that the State Auditor would probably interview people who testified on the bills, the credentialing agency [DCAB], and interpreter referral agencies. She suggested that the interested parties go to the State Auditor's web site to see previous sunrise studies.

F. Task Force – Continued Discussion

Francine Wai explained that going forward with the Task Force as planned was proving too difficult due to real and perceived conflicts on the part of many of the voting members. Instead of a Task Force, she said that the Deputy Attorney General suggested that DCAB hold a series of public meetings to collect and compile comments on the recommended fee schedule and other matters from interested persons, and then ask the Committee and then the Board to decide on what to do with the information.

To do this, the Committee would have to rescind the motion that created a the Task Force.

MOTION RESCINDED: The Committee rescinds the motion to establish the Task Force and in its place, DCAB will gather information through community informational meetings (M/S/P Whited/Tomita).

The Committee then went back to item E.

V. New Business

Colin Whited reported on an article he read in "Civil Beat" about a Deaf couple from Chuuk with unique language needs that were not met by a hospital, which lead to their baby dying. A sign language interpreter was provided, but the Deaf couple did not know American Sign Language. Staff will review the matter.

VI. Next Meeting

The Committee's next meeting is scheduled for January 12, 2017, at 11:00 a.m.

VII. Announcements

No announcements were made.

VIII. Open Forum: Public comment on issues not on the agenda, but to be considered for placement on a future Committee meeting agenda.

No public comments were made.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:55 p.m.

NOTE: All votes were unanimous unless otherwise noted.

Respectfully submitted,



KURSTIN CHUN