

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

POLICY / PROCEDURE



SUBJECT: HEARING IMPAIRED MENTAL HEALTH ACCESS	POLICY NO. 202.17	EFFECTIVE DATE 01/01/01	PAGE 1 of 2
APPROVED BY: Original Signed by: MARVIN J. SOUTHARD Director	SUPERSEDES 102.17	ORIGINAL ISSUE DATE 09/01/93	DISTRIBUTION LEVEL(S) 2

- PURPOSE:**
- 1.1 To update the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH) policy regarding hearing impaired mentally ill client access to directly operated and contract mental health services and to establish standard procedures to utilize translation/interpretation services to aid in their treatment and care.
- POLICY:**
- 2.1 DMH, in accordance with applicable Federal, State and County policies and agreements, will provide equal access to services for hearing impaired mentally ill clients in Los Angeles County at all directly operated and contract clinic programs.
 - 2.2 Staff having client contact will review this policy annually in order to become familiar with utilization or interpretation services and to become sensitive to the needs of the hearing impaired. Supervisors will document this review.
 - 2.3 Interpretation services are available at not cost to hearing impaired clients.
 - 2.4 DMH staff proficient in American Sign Language (ASL) will be identified and utilized to provide services to the hearing impaired as appropriate to their service site assignments.
 - 2.5 Sign language interpretation/translation service are available Monday through Friday, after-hours and on weekends. Interpretation services are available via the DMH agreement with LIFESIGNS.
- PROCEDURE:**
- 3.1 STAFF ACCESS, Non-Emergent Sign Language Interpreter Services

The DMH Planning and Program Support Bureau coordinates all STAFF requests for sign language interpreter services. DMH and Contractor staff must contact the Planning and Program Support Bureau at 213-637-2320 Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to receive authorization to access services from LIFESIGNS. After-hours and on weekends staff may contact LIFESIGNS directly at 800-633-8883. LIFESIGNS requires a three day notice prior to dispatching an interpreter for non-emergent counseling services.

 - 3.1.1 Staff must notify the Planning and Program Support Bureau on the next business day of all after-hours and weekend requests.

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3.2 STAFF ACCESS, **Emergency** Sign Language Interpreter Services

Emergency interpretation/translation services are available by contacting the DMH Planning and Program Support Bureau at 213-637-2320 Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. After-hours and on weekends staff should contact LIFESIGNS Emergency Services at 800-633-8883.

3.2.1 Staff must notify the Planning and Program Support Bureau on the next business day of all after-hours and weekend emergency interpreter requests.

3.3 HEARING IMPAIRED PUBLIC ACCESS, Mental Health Services

Access to DMH services information by the hearing impaired public is available via a teletypewriter-telephone (TTY/TDD) device, telephone number 562-651-2549, installed in and staffed by the 24-hour DMH ACCESS Telecommunications Center/Emergency Outreach Bureau at Metropolitan State Hospital. ACCESS Center staff are available 24 hours, 7 days per week to provide mental health services information and referral response.

3.3.1 TTY/TDD devices are also available through special hearing impaired contract service providers:

Greater Los Angeles Council on Deafness, Ind. (G.L.A.D.)
St. John's Hospital Hearing Impaired Program

3.4 DMH and contractor staff can also make calls to and take calls from any hearing impaired client in Los Angeles County with the assistance of the California Relay Service (CRS). This Statewide service of the telephone company, free to all users, facilitates communication via a centrally located telephone interpreter. Calls from standard DMH and contractor office telephones to hearing impaired clients who possess TTY/TDD telephone-typewriter devices can be accessed by linking via the CRS at 800-735-2922. Similarly, hearing impaired clients using personal TTY-TDD may call mental health offices via this CRS linking service.

3.5 Signs in English and other languages, denoting the TTY/TDD telephone numbers for the DMH 24 Hour ACCESS Program and for the California Relay Service, are posted in each directly operated and contract service site.

AUTHORITY:

Voluntary Compliance Agreement OCR 09-89-3143/US
Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Civil Rights