

CHS

INTERPRETER POLICY

&

PROCEDURES

HANDBOOK

TENTH EDITION
2019

I. Introduction

Established in 1916, Chicago Hearing Society (CHS), a division of Anixter Center, is a not-for-profit agency serving Deaf, hard of hearing and hearing people. As an organization that works to affirm the basic human rights of these populations, CHS provides, among other programs and services, referral for interpreting services.

This manual is designed to serve as a reference guide for those individuals who are private practice (freelance) sign language interpreters wishing to work as independent contractors for interpreting assignments from CHS. This is not intended as an employment handbook for CHS/Anixter Center. Any questions or comments regarding the following policies and procedures are welcome and may be directed to the Director of Chicago Hearing Society

The following policies and procedures apply to Interpreting Services during regular business hours (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) as well as to the Emergency Interpreting Services which are coordinated separately through a voice mail paging system from 4:30 p.m. to 8:30 a.m. weekdays, from 4:30 p.m. Fridays until 8:30 a.m. Mondays and certain holidays.

Address: Chicago Hearing Society
Interpreter Services Department
1444 W. Willow Street
Chicago, IL 60642

Telephone: 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Mondays-Fridays
(Voice) 773-248-9121 Ext. 312
(VP) 773-598-8927
(FAX) 773-442-0619

Emergency Interpreter Services: Weekdays, 4:30 p.m. – 8:30 a.m. weekends and holidays

(Voice/text) 866-251-0220
(E-mail) chsinterp@anixter.org

II. Interpreter Services Policies

A. Obtaining Assignments

Interpreters are encouraged to call the Interpreter Services Department (ISD) frequently to update their availability, check on available work and confirm assignments. ISD will also call, email or text Interpreters as needed to check availability and/or interest in assignments.

Upon beginning to work for CHS, you will be given a user name and password for the chs.ersp.biz website. Once you accept an assignment, the job number and pertinent information about the assignment will be posted onto your personal calendar at this site. Please contact CHS immediately if you find any discrepancies with information provided by ISD staff and what is posted on the site.

It is Interpreter's responsibility to check the information the day before the assignment to solve any issues, get answers to any questions, or resolve any concerns about the assignment with the ISD staff.

B. Eligibility

Interpreters will be considered by CHS and be given assignments based upon:

- * Possession of a State of Illinois Interpreter License level appropriate for the assignment
- * Certification, qualification, skills, specialized training
- * Consumer request
- * Reliability/flexibility and professionalism as demonstrated to staff and known within the professional community
- * Availability for days, times and locations
- * Frequency of "returned assignments" experienced by CHS staff
- * ISD's ability to quickly contact the Interpreter

C. Requirements for Interpreters

1. Contact the Manager of ISD and submit an application form to initiate process for those Interpreters not yet on our independent contractor interpreting list.
2. Current license from the State of Illinois Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission permitting you to work in the State of Illinois
3. Copy of current RID Certification/ISAS or other state testing and interpreting resume.

4. Compliance with the RID Code of Professional Conduct (see appendix).
5. Completion of W-9 and other required forms.

D. Liability

Chicago Hearing Society does not assume legal responsibility for the actions of freelance Interpreters or for any injuries that an Interpreter may suffer traveling to, from, or during assignments. The Interpreter shall be responsible for all of her/his personal belongings at all times. Interpreters are encouraged to obtain professional liability (malpractice) insurance available through RID or other sources.

III. On-The-Job Policies

A. Punctuality/Preparation

Interpreters are expected to arrive *fifteen minutes* prior to assignments in order to locate the parties involved and/or access assignment logistics. Interpreters are to remain for the entire contracted time unless dismissed by the contact person or person in charge. When in doubt, call the ISD office or, if after hours, the emergency contact number should be called.

Interpreters are expected to be flexible whenever possible regarding work required of them when on an assignment (i.e. the ERSP information states the job is a team meeting, but on-site the customer asks the interpreter to do a one-on-one meeting with the manager), especially within the scheduled time. If the interpreter is unable to accommodate, the ISD office should be called, or if after hours, the emergency contact number.

Interpreters are encouraged to review all assignment related information beforehand to avoid confusion regarding dates, times and/or location (this can be done on the chs.ersp.biz website.).

B. Late Arrivals

1. If the Interpreter is going to be late for an assignment, she/he must call the ISD office as soon as possible to report. ISD staff will then notify the appropriate consumers/team Interpreters/contact personnel. If the report of tardiness cannot be called into the ISD office or Emergency line prior to the assignment, the call must be made as soon as possible but not more than 24 hours after completion of the assignment.
2. The Interpreter shall consult with the ISD staff to determine if the Interpreter's invoice for that assignment should indicate a change in billable times due to their late arrival.

3. A pattern of tardiness will result in lowered eligibility or ineligibility of assignments through CHS.
4. Again, it is the Interpreter's professional responsibility to review and confirm all assignment related details prior to the actual assignment date to avoid confusion regarding date, time and/or location and thereby assist in arriving in a timely fashion.

C. Missing An Assignment

1. If an Interpreter is about to miss an assignment, the Interpreter must report this to the ISD immediately or as early as possible prior to the assignment.
2. If the assignment is after business hours, the Interpreter must notify the Emergency Coordinator by calling the Emergency number (224.623.7800) and leaving a message containing the phone number where they are calling from. You must then wait for your call to be returned by the Emergency Coordinator. Just leaving a message on voice mail is not sufficient since recordings are not always clear and the Coordinator will need to verify assignment related information in order to find a replacement.
3. If the Interpreter realizes she/he has missed an assignment after it was to have taken place, you must call as soon as possible to report your error.
4. Interpreters who knowingly fail to notify the ISD of a missed assignment or who miss two (2) assignments within a six (6) month period will become ineligible for future assignments on either a temporary or even a permanent basis. Such determination will be at the discretion of ISD Manager and Director of CHS.

D. Giving Back An Assignment

1. Giving back assignments with less than four (4) business days notice is especially frustrating for both the ISD Staff and consumers involved. Repeated 'give-backs' with short notice (less than 4 business days) will result in decreased eligibility for future assignments.
2. In the event that an Interpreter must give back an assignment, your personal effort in finding a substitute Interpreter would be greatly appreciated, and the 'give-back' would not be considered towards your eligibility for future assignments. However, all final Interpreter substitutions must be compliant with current Illinois Interpreter licensure law and approved by the ISD staff prior to the assignment.

E. On-Site Cancellations

When an assignment is cancelled after the Interpreter has arrived, the Interpreter should call the ISD from the site and also note the cancellation on their invoice.

F. Overtime – Notification Required Within 24 Hours

1. Overtime on an assignment may be completed by the Interpreter according to his/her schedule but is not guaranteed. Consumers are encouraged upon booking the appointment to allow enough time for the entire assignment. If the Interpreter has another CHS assignment that would be affected by an overtime situation, that second assignment has priority over the first assignment.

It is generally not acceptable practice to arrive late to an assignment due to a prior assignment running into overtime. Exceptions may be made in emergency or extenuating circumstances. The Interpreter is to consult with ISD staff as soon as possible in these situations.

2. Assignments worked past the contracted time, referred to as ‘overtime’, will be billed in the following manner: 0-9 minutes is unbillable, 10-30 minutes will be billed for 30 minutes overtime, 31-60 minutes will be billed for one hour over time, 61-90 minutes will be billed for 1.5 hours overtime, etc. Interpreters must notify the ISD of any **overtime within 24 hours** completing the assignment in order to guarantee payment. Please provide the ISD staff the name of the person who approved your overtime.

G. Consumers Who Fail to Appear (‘No-shows’)

1. In the case of a consumer who fails to appear and it is unknown if they are on their way to the appointment, the Interpreter will remain on site either until dismissed by an authorized person or until the end of the assigned time.
2. At public event platform interpreting assignments, the Interpreter(s) may be required to remain and possibly interpret for the entire contracted time at the request of the authorized person or their designee. This may be done for public relations, visibility and/or ADA compliance purposes. Contact ISD staff if you have any questions or concerns regarding this practice.
3. If a client fails to appear for an assignment, indicate this on your invoice.
4. Interpreters are encouraged to call the ISD after cancellations or ‘no-shows’, as there may be either additional information or a new last minute assignment needing to be filled. If the Interpreter accepts a last minute assignment during the same time of the ‘no-show’ assignment, the Interpreter will be paid for both the canceled and the new assignment.

H. Team Interpreting

1. Team Interpreters will rotate from the 'active' to 'spell' positions approximately every 20-30 minutes according to a mutually agreed upon schedule or in a manner that is least disruptive to the assignment.
2. It is important for the Interpreter in the 'spell' position to remain professionally engaged at all times and be immediately available to back-up the 'active' Interpreter. They should be attentive to the message being conveyed to be able to assist the 'active' Interpreter when necessary and/or quickly substitute if needed.

The 'spell' Interpreter is expected to remain in the room and should refrain from leaving the room as much as possible, depending upon the assignment requirements. Personal activities (phone calls, checking emails, reading materials, etc.) should be limited to a professional measure while in either the 'active' or 'spell' position.

Both Interpreters are being paid for the entire assignment and the paying clients often don't understand why two (2) Interpreters are required for an assignment. It is thus very important that the Interpreting team present themselves in a professional manner and work as a 'team' and not merely 'relief' Interpreters.

I. Attire

1. Clothing should be appropriate for the setting and similar to that expected to be worn by the average participant at the assignment. A good guideline can be found in *Interpreting: An Introduction* by Nancy Frishberg, where she suggests that an Interpreter be more formally dressed than the least formally dressed person in the room and less formally dressed than the most formally dressed person in the room. Clothing should fit appropriately and cover the body appropriately.
2. Clothing worn by Interpreters should contrast with their skin color, so that their hands and face can be comfortably seen. Clothing and/or jewelry worn should not present a visual or aural distraction from their interpretation.
3. Jewelry and fragrance worn by the Interpreter should be kept to a minimum.

4. The Interpreters' grooming and appearance is expected to always be professional in nature. This includes but is not limited to purses, bags and briefcases.

IV. Billing for Services Rendered

A. Invoices

1. Interpreters are strongly encouraged to submit their invoices promptly, after completion of an assignment. Interpreters may use their own invoice format, which should include:
 - a. Interpreter name and licensure level
 - b. address where payment should be sent
 - c. method to contact them for further information
 - d. date of the assignment
 - e. job number as give by ISD
 - f. their hourly rate of pay per CHS
 - g. any additional fees (Emergency fee, Travel, etc.)
 - h. total amount due to the Interpreter
2. Invoices may be mailed, faxed, emailed or hand delivered to the ISD. The email address to be used is: **CHSinvoices@anixter.org**. You may wish to confirm receipt of your email by ISD staff.
3. Interpreters are guaranteed payment for promptly submitted, complete and correct invoices. In the case of a discrepancy, a call will be made to the Interpreter and payment may be delayed while the discrepancy is being resolved.
4. Payment for changes to the assignment, such as overtime, which have not been reported to the ISD in a timely manner (24 hours) cannot be guaranteed.

B. Late Submission of Invoices

Invoices received more than fifteen (15) days after the end of the fiscal year (June 30th) will not be paid. All invoices are to be in our offices by July 15th to guarantee payment.

C. Billing Questions From Clients

All billing questions directed to the Interpreter by the client should be directed to the ISD. The interpreter should never contact the client regarding the assignment – CHS will do this on behalf of the interpreter.

D. Assignment Confirmation

1. A request called in with less than two (2) full business days' notice will be considered 'confirmed' as soon as an Interpreter is contracted. Any cancellations thereafter will be considered last minute; the paying customer will be billed and the Interpreter will be paid (see Section V, B, 1-2).
2. A request that is made with more than two business days (48 hrs) notice will be considered "confirmed" with the Interpreter **when ISD confirms the assignment with the paying customer.**

Example: A request comes into the ISD on Monday for a job on Friday of that same week. On Thursday, an Interpreter indicates that she can do the assignment. Upon calling the paying client, they cancel the assignment. Since the assignment was not confirmed with the client, it is not billable or payable to the Interpreter. ISD will call the Interpreter within that same day to alert them of the cancellation. However, if we fail to attempt to contact the Interpreter with the cancellation during the same business day, the Interpreter may bill and CHS will pay for the assignment.

E. Travel Time – Notification Requirements

1. Interpreters accepting those requests called into the ISD with less than twenty-four (24) hours notice will bill an Emergency Fee and be eligible for travel time. Interpreters must then notify the ISD of their total travel time **within twenty-four (24) hours** in order to be guaranteed payment.
2. Travel time is computed by taking the time required to travel to and from the assignment (portal to portal), adding them together into half-hour (30 minute) increments and then adding that to the billable assignment time.

Examples: Fifteen (15) minutes each way would add a half-hour (30 minutes) of travel time; twenty (20) minutes each way would add one (1) hour travel time, etc.

Travel time is added to the contracted hours, not the actual hours.

NOTE: In fairness to the paying customer, we begin our search with the nearest qualified Interpreter available to these assignments and then work geographically outward.

3. For contractual and other reasons, there may be occasions when a pre-determined amount of travel time is negotiated with the consumer. In

such cases, the Interpreter will be informed and may accept or reject the amount of travel time offered.

4. All assignments with less than twenty-four (24) hours notice include a minimum of a half-hour (30) minutes travel time.
5. Maximum travel time is two (2) hours round trip unless specified. If an Interpreter expects travel time to exceed two (2) hours, the Interpreter must inform ISD staff at the time that the job is accepted. ISD staff will consider the circumstances and consult with the paying consumer and inform the Interpreter if travel time is approved in excess of two (2) hours. If it is not, the Interpreter may either accept the maximum offered or decline the assignment.

V. Payment of Interpreters

A. Pay Periods

1. Invoices received from Interpreters at the CHS office by the 15th of each month will be paid on the last day of the same month. Invoices received by the last day of the month will be paid on the 15th of the following month.
2. If the 15th or last day of the month fall on a weekend, invoices should be submitted on the following Monday.
3. Interpreters will be notified as soon as possible should the payment schedule change.

B. Cancelled Assignments

1. Once the assignment is confirmed (Section IV, D, 1-2), if the ISD cancels an Interpreter's assignment with less than two business days (48 hrs) prior to the time of the assignment, the Interpreter will bill and be paid for the entire length of the assignment.
2. If an assignment is cancelled more than two business days (48 hrs) *prior* to that assignment, CHS will not pay the Interpreter (assignment is not billable.) ISD will make every effort to contact the Interpreter in case of cancellations. The Interpreter will be considered notified upon a message being left, a page or text sent or live contact with any adult person at the Interpreter's phone number.
3. In case of an emergency assignment with travel being cancelled *prior* to the Interpreter going to the assignment, there will be no travel time charged, since no travel actually occurred.

C. Time-and-a-Half

1. In team interpreting situations where a second Interpreter is unavailable or cancels, the Interpreter will be given the option of declining the assignment or accepting it for pay at a time-and-a-half. ISD will negotiate with the paying consumers whenever possible.

Time-and-a-half must be specifically approved by ISD staff and negotiated in advance.

If a situation was assigned to one Interpreter and the assignment went overtime to the extent that it became a two Interpreter assignment, ISD will, at their discretion, attempt to negotiate for time-and-a-half when possible. However, time-and-a-half pay, after the fact, is not guaranteed in such cases. Interpreters are not expected to exceed safe working standards and should decline overtime that places them in danger of injury. In such situations, the ISD may be contacted by the Interpreter, the consumers or both to reconcile this as an 'on-site' issue.

2. In situations where one Interpreter consents to do an assignment usually requiring two Interpreters, the Interpreter is advised to advocate for on-site modifications such as increased frequency of breaks or length in order to protect themselves from fatigue or injury and thereby maintain quality of service. Interpreters are advised to contact ISD for advice, assistance or advocacy in specific circumstances when dealing with on-site personnel or consumers.

D. Videotaping

Interpreting for videotapes that will be used later by the consumer in lieu of re-hiring an Interpreter will be charged at a higher rate. Examples of this are a sales presentation or theatrical performance. Videotaping an Interpreter is subject to the Interpreter's consent. If the videotaping was not known to ISD or the Interpreter in advance, the Interpreter may instruct the requestor or contact person to call the ISD to determine if the higher rate applies or to explain that the taping is subject to the Interpreter's consent and charged at a higher rate. *Please note that this does not apply to situations like newsworthy events or weddings where taping may occur and the Interpreter may be intermittently 'caught' in the picture.*

E. Evening, Sunday and Holiday Rates

Interpreters will be paid a premium for assignments occurring between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m., on Mondays through Saturdays only. Sunday rate applies for the entire day and on selected holidays. Refer to the CHS ISD pay schedule.

F. Taxes

Interpreters must complete W-9 forms. Interpreters are responsible for their own taxes and government reporting. 1099 forms are issued to Interpreters who earn more than the amount designated by the Internal Revenue Service as the minimum taxable income (currently \$600).

VI. Professional Principles – Business Ethics

A. Request Protocol

1. All requests must be coordinated by the ISD. CHS cannot honor or pay for any Interpreter assignments that are privately arranged or accepted by the Interpreter without our prior knowledge. All requests for interpreting services must be made to ISD by the paying party or the eligible party. However, the assignment cannot be confirmed by the ISD until the request becomes official. The Interpreter who holds that time without confirmation does so at his/her own risk.
2. When on an assignment, attempts made by clients to request follow-up services directly through the Interpreter should instead be referred to ISD. Interpreters will be furnished CHS ISD business cards, on which they can write their own names and present to the client. Every effort will be made to insure that the Interpreter requested will be assigned to the job. The Interpreter may inform the consumers of their available times and dates *at the consumers' request*. The Interpreter is not to initiate a request for the parties to change their desired times to accommodate the Interpreter's schedule. Interpreters may call the ISD and inform the coordinator that a follow-up date is 'in the works' and whether the Interpreter is available.
3. In the event that an Interpreter is called directly for a CHS assignment because his/her name is on an older CHS list that has been distributed to consumers in the past or consumers have been able to locate the Interpreters contact information, the Interpreter should call the ISD or emergency coordinator immediately so we can initiate a formal request and obtain the appropriate billing information. CHS will not be responsible for assignments unless we can verify the actual request, billing and credit information before the assignment occurs.
4. While it is understood that Interpreters work as independent contractors and not as employees of CHS, it is considered an unethical business practice to recruit contacts made from and/or during CHS assignments. Such practices will result in a written notice of warning of breach of policy to the Interpreter involved and may cause the termination of any working relationship between CHS and the Interpreter.

Example A: Interpreter Mary accepts a CHS job at XYZ Corporation. At the assignment, she is asked for and gives them her personal cell phone number. Two months later, they call her directly for another assignment.

In order to continue her working relationship with CHS, Mary must refer them back to CHS but can advise them if she would be available for the assignment and ask them to ask for her with CHS.

In this case, the second *contact flowed* directly from the original CHS assignment – it would have been an *unethical business decision* for Mary to accept the second assignment independently from the XYZ Corporation.

Example B: Two months after the original appointment, XYZ Corporation contacts a different Interpreter independently for a new appointment. This Interpreter is not available, but refers them to Mary and gives them her phone number. Mary accepts the job.

This would not be considered an unethical business practice by CHS because the contact did not flow from the original assignment and the Interpreter did not personally solicit XYZ in any way.

Any interpreter who gives personal information to a customer of CHS, while on a CHS job, or obtains a contract of a CHS customer, could result in legal action and/or fine. Any sharing of job-related information in an inappropriate manner could also result in legal action. Please contact the ISD should you need further clarification.

5. CHS firmly believes in the idea of Interpreter mentoring. Should you be contacted by an Interpreting Student who is looking for Observation or Interpreting hours for their classwork, please contact the CHS ISD before making any agreements. For those working Interpreters who are seeking Mentoring as they work towards national certification or seek more experience in a specialized setting, CHS proudly offers the CHS Mary Mulcrone Mentoring Program. Please contact the ISD for more information.

B. Personal Expenses

All business related expenses incurred by the Interpreter (*parking, gas, clothing, insurance, tolls, fares, etc.*) are the Interpreter's personal and financial responsibility.

C. Professional Affiliations

1. Interpreters are expected to keep all certifications and licensure with the State of Illinois current. Failure to do so will affect their ability to work through CHS.

2. CHS strongly encourages all Interpreters to attend conventions, workshops, training programs, classes and Deaf community events as a means of improving their interpreting and cultural skills, expand knowledge and provide an opportunity for peer contact and professional networking.
3. CHS supports and encourages membership with the *Illinois Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (IRID)* and the *Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID)* for those without national certification. Membership in these organizations indicates a commitment toward professionalism and access to continued workshop opportunities, contributing to an Interpreter's eligibility to work in a variety of settings.

D. Feedback and Observation

1. Feedback forms and follow-up phone calls by the ISD to consumers are designed to assist in monitoring and improving interpreter services and may be used on a random basis or when there is cause for concern with a particular Interpreter.
2. All Interpreter files and feedback information are confidential and may be reviewed only by the ISD staff or the Interpreter by appointment. Every effort will be made to share both positive and negative feedback with the Interpreter in the interest of improving the Interpreter's professionalism and skills and ability to use appropriate discretion in accepting future assignments.

E. Insurance

As an independent contract interpreter, you are not covered by CHS's professional liability insurance (unless you are a staff interpreter). We encourage you to carry your own professional liability insurance.

VII. Conclusion

It is the Chicago Hearing Society Interpreting Service Department's sincere hope that these policies and procedures will help facilitate an already excellent working relationship between the ISD and freelance Interpreters. Interpreters will be responsible for complying with these policies and procedures.

Please contact the Manager of the Interpreter Services Department should you have any questions related to this Handbook.

I have read, understood and received a copy of Chicago Hearing Society's Interpreter Policy and Procedures 2019.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____