

1. The Legislative Committee of Jurisdiction;

Health and Human Services Committee.

2. The occupation regulated;

American Sign Language Interpreters/Video Remote Interpreters

3. The year the occupation was created, the year it became actively regulated, and the year of a sunset date (if applicable);

Regulated - 2007

4. The name of the Occupational Board;

Interpreter Review Board/Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Full Board

5. A Contact Person;

Executive Director, John Wyvill [john.wyvill@nebraska.gov](mailto:john.wyvill@nebraska.gov) 402-471-3593

6. The public purpose and assumptions that underlie the creation of the license;

To protect and secure the rights of deaf and hard of hearing persons who cannot readily understand or communicate in spoken language and who consequently cannot equally participate in or benefit from proceedings, programs unless licensed interpreters are available to assist them. A licensed interpreter means a person who demonstrates proficiencies in interpretation or transliteration as required by the rules and regulations adopted and promulgated by the Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing pursuant to subsection (2) of section 20-150 and who holds a license issued by the commission pursuant to section 20-156.

7. The number of regulated professionals in Nebraska;

121 Interpreters; 12 VRI Businesses

8. Statutory authorization for the regulated occupation;

71-4728. (2) License interpreters and video remote interpreting providers under sections 20-150 to 20-159

9. The number of members of the Board, who appoints the Board, whether legislative approval is required, and the board member qualifications;

Full Commission Board

9 members

Appointed by the Governor

Senate approved

Requirements:

71-4720. Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing; created; members; appointment; qualifications.

Interpreter Review Board

8 members

Appointed by the Full Commission Board

Legislative approval not needed

Requirements:

71-4728.05. (2) Members of the Interpreter Review Board shall be as follows:

- (a) A representative of the Department of Health and Human Services and the executive director of the commission or his or her designee, both of whom shall serve continuously and without limitation;
- (b) One qualified interpreter, appointed for a term to expire on June 30, 2008;
- (c) One representative of local government, appointed for a term to expire on June 30, 2008;
- (d) One deaf or hard of hearing person, appointed for a term to expire on June 30, 2009;
- (e) One qualified interpreter, appointed for a term to expire on June 30, 2009;
- (f) One deaf or hard of hearing person, appointed for a term to expire on June 30, 2010; and
- (g) One representative of local government, appointed for a term to expire on June 30, 2010.

10. The number of required meetings for the past five years, and how many meetings were actually held;

4 meetings required per year; 20 meetings required in last 5 years; 19 of those meetings held (3 meetings held in 2016)

11. The number of support staff;

3/15 employees at NCDHH support activities related to this survey – Executive Director, Interpreter Program Coordinator and Licensing Specialist

12. Budget for the past five years;

2015 – \$1,340,731.61  
2016 – \$1,190,358.87  
2017 – \$1,076,682.61  
2018 – \$1,116,897.77  
2019 – \$1,067,727.63  
2020 – \$1,146,690.34

13. The number of certifications, licenses, or registrations the board has issued, denied, revoked, or levied penalties on for the past five years;

320 Licenses issued including renewals  
225 QAST certifications issued including renewals  
Revoked (suspended) licenses in past 5 years: 1  
Levied Penalties in past 5 years: 2

14. Explanations for denials, revocations, or penalizations on those licenses;

Revoked: 2019 - Licensee signed a Consent to Discipline document and voluntarily suspended (surrendered) their license from 1-24-19 to 6-6-19 with stipulation to complete 6 hours of Commission approved ethics training covering applicable Code of Professional Conduct tenets.

Levied Penalties: 2016 - Limit interpreters license for 1 year to exclude ability to interpret in medical and mental health settings and take 1.0 CEUs in specific tenets and provide plan to NCDHH for approval prior to training.

Levied Penalties: 2019 – Interpreter completed 1.0 CEUs to address alleged Code of Professional Conduct tenets and submitted reflection papers summarizing the information they learned from those trainings/workshops and how they will apply them to their interpreting practice.

15. A statement from your point of view about the effectiveness of the regulations overseen by the Board;

The effectiveness of the regulations overseen by the Board aligns with our agency's mission statement to advocate for Nebraskans who are Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of hearing and to achieve equality in aspects impacting their daily lives by enhancing and monitoring access to effective communication.

16. What the harm may be if the occupation is no longer licensed, certified, or regulated; and a comparison of how other states regulate the occupation.

Licensure makes it possible for states to establish minimum qualifications for interpreters to work in all kinds of settings that impact the daily lives of deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind people. Without licensure, interpreters could go into various situations without the proper qualifications. There would be no way to vet the qualifications of interpreters at jobs. Even though many interpreters are certified, other interpreters could volunteer without the appropriate qualifications for various situations such as legal matters, hospitals, mental health, academics, or one on one work. Licensure gives interpreters the same recognition of being a profession as is given to lawyers, doctors, and therapists. Those who rely on interpreters will be harmed by the use of an unqualified interpreter. Of the surrounding states, Iowa and Missouri require sign language interpreters to be licensed. Colorado, Kansas, South Dakota and Minnesota do not currently have licensure laws, but do keep registries of qualified sign language interpreters listing their certification(s).