Nevada Commission on the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Speech Impaired

Emergency Response Interpreting Report

Kim Johnson, ADSD Staff Interpreter

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Goal

To have qualified and trained interpreters providing interpreting services in cases of emergency.

This includes having interpreters on TV during press briefings, at evacuation sites and shelters, in hospitals, and at the front lines where there may be people who need interpreting services.

Interpreter qualification and training

Interpreters who self-identify as being willing to provide services in cases of emergency must meet minimum qualifications to receive further training.

1. Minimum credential: Registered with the State of Nevada per NRS 656A as Community – Skilled, or Educational – Advanced (RID certified or EIPA 4.0 and passed the EIPA – Written Test)
2. Undergo a screening: EM screening for emotional preparedness, and interpreting screening to assess their skill level

Eligible interpreters will undergo an intensive Emergency Response Interpreting training. The Arizona Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing ([www.acdhh.org](http://www.acdhh.org)) has an ERI program that we would like to replicate here. Also, NorCal Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Center ([www.norcalcenter.org](http://www.norcalcenter.org)) , located in the Sacramento area, has a similar training we could use as a model as well.

Interpreter Referral agencies

ASL Communications and Preston Bass Interpreting Service (both based in Las Vegas) have expressed interest in maintaining the list(s) of Emergency Response Interpreters (ERI’s). Both agencies have established Master Service Agreements with the state and are based in the state. One or both agencies would serve as the real-time point(s) of contact in cases of emergency to get interpreters where they need to be.

State and County Emergency Management

The most crucial piece to ERI’s is the call out system. Kim is working with emergency managers at the state and county levels to get interpreters on the existing call out systems, as well as having interpreters attend EM drills to give feedback on where interpreters would be needed.

Kim will be a panelist for an “access and functional needs” discussion of the Deaf and blind communities along with a representative from DCN at the Nevada Emergency Preparedness Summit in Pahrump on February 8, 2018.

Preparedness efforts

DCN is working with Clark County Emergency Management to promote emergency preparedness within the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community.

Legislation

Kim is also researching the federal and state laws regarding access and functional needs during emergencies so that we may propose new or a change in legislation during the 2019 session to mandate the provision of sign language interpreters.

Please feel free to contact Kim with your comments, questions, or ideas regarding Emergency Response Interpreting.

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