

## Communication Access Services (CAS) – Program Report – 5/10/2023

Commission for Persons who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing

### Relay Nevada

T-Mobile is the current contractor for Relay Nevada. Its contract ends June 30, 2023. After competitive bidding, the state selected Hamilton Telecommunications, Inc. as its certified state relay provider for the next five-year FCC certification period (2023-28). Through contract, Hamilton will take over the provision of analog (711) relay for the State of Nevada on July 1, 2023. Hamilton will continue to provide all the analog relay services offered by Relay Nevada, including TTY relay and analog Captioned Telephone Service (CapTel). Aging and Disability Services Division (ADSD) will be working with Hamilton to ensure a smooth transition between relay providers.

Relay Nevada submitted its application for certification of its state telecommunications relay service Telecommunication Relay Services (TRS) program to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for the next five-year certification period and is still awaiting a decision on that application.

The FCC has stated its intent to “sunset” analog relay services within the next three to five years. The CAS program is collaborating with the Nevada Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program (NTEDP) and the Nevada Office of Science, Innovation and Technology (OSIT) (“Broadband Office”) to achieve a goal of 100% broadband relay in Nevada within three years. New relay users will be educated and encouraged to obtain internet-based equipment and services from the vendor of their choice (video relay service or internet captioned telephone service). Outreach materials have been developed with information regarding broadband discounts and equipment upgrades. The Nevada Relay Administrator will be traveling statewide this year to distribute this information and educate Relay Nevada users on the benefits of upgrading to digital technology.

### Communication Access Service Centers

ADSD released a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) in March 2023 for these services: telecommunication equipment distribution, language acquisition, and American Sign Language (ASL) instruction. The NOFO closed on April 21. ADSD is seeking volunteers to serve as outside reviewers to review the applications received. Anyone who wishes to volunteer as an outside reviewer may reach out to LaDonne Knighten at [lknighten@adsd.nv.gov](mailto:lknighten@adsd.nv.gov).

### CASC Data – Fiscal Year 23 – 3rd Quarter

Service	Number of People Served
Telecommunication Equipment	71
Access to Services for age 0-21	49
Access to Services for age 22+	160

Language Acquisition – Deaf Coaching	36
Language Acquisition – ASL Instruction	112

Below is the contact information to all CASC subrecipients:

- **Nevada Telecommunication Equipment Distribution Program (NTEDP): University of Nevada, Reno (UNR)** – (775) 784-4921 or [nced@unr.edu](mailto:nced@unr.edu)
- **Access to Services for age 0 – 21 and Deaf Coaching: Nevada Hands & Voices (NVHV)**- (775)-351-1959 or [info@nvhandsandvoices.org](mailto:info@nvhandsandvoices.org)
- **Access to Services for age 22+: Nevada Care Connection (NVCC)**- Dial 211/or text 898-211, contact information on NVCC’s 3 resource centers can be found here <https://www.nevadacareconnection.org/contact-us/>
- **ASL classes: Communication Service for the Deaf (CSD) Learns-** [learns@csd.org](mailto:learns@csd.org) or [Communication Service for the Deaf \(CSD\) - Contact Us](#)

## State Interpreters and Mentoring

The CAS interpreter mentors are charged with improving the quality of ASL-English interpreters in Nevada to meet the State Plan - Recommendation #3: Quality Interpreters. The CAS mentorship program includes one-on-one mentoring, certification study groups, school district professional development, and workshops.

### One-on-one Mentoring

Current total mentees: 13

### Certification Study Groups

A study group for the CASLI Generalist Knowledge Exam (CGKE) study group concluded at the beginning of March 2023. The CGKE is the written exam interpreters must pass in order to move toward the performance exam for National Interpreter Certification (NIC) or Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI) Certification. These exams are designed for community interpreters.

12 interpreters participated in the group. Most of the participants have either taken or scheduled their exams. Some have received their results, with most achieving passing scores.

Those who meet the criteria to be considered having sufficiently participated throughout the study group are eligible to have their exams paid for by CAS. This is done to incentivize interpreters to pursue national certification, reduce financial barriers, and increase the number of in-state interpreters who meet the requirements for registration in the Community classification.

CAS mentors are developing a similar study group for those who are preparing to take the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA) written exam, in which interpreters are assessed on their knowledge of interpreting in K-12 settings.

Plans are set for two study groups this summer:

May 24 – September 13, 2023

Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA) written exam study group

June 6 – August 15, 2023

Accelerated CASLI Generalist Knowledge Exam (CGKE) study group

Plans are also underway for a CASLI Generalist Performance Exam (CGPE) in fall 2023. After successfully passing the CGKE, this is the exam in which interpreters demonstrate their interpreting skill in general community settings.

### **School District Professional Development**

Washoe County School District: 3/13/2023

Discourse Mapping: Practical Applications (6 hours)

### **Past Workshops**

Interpreting Vocational Rehabilitation: Service Provision (3 hours)

In partnership with Vocational Rehabilitation, DHH team

2/4/2023, Online, 49 participants

Be the CEO of Your Own Business: Best Business Practices for Freelance Interpreters (2 hours)

2/21/2023, Online, 60 participants

Interpreting Vocational Rehabilitation: Closure & Post-Employment Services (3 hours)

In partnership with Vocational Rehabilitation, DHH team

3/4/2023, Online, 51

Interpreting Vocational Rehabilitation: Comparative Ethics (3 hours)

In partnership with Vocational Rehabilitation, DHH team

4/1/2023, Online, 179 participants

This workshop was the last in a four-part series on interpreting in Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) settings, taught in collaboration with the Nevada Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Deaf/Hard of Hearing team. The focus was on how the codes of ethics in the field of interpreting and in the field of rehabilitation counseling align, diverge, or outright conflict. The number of participants was roughly an even split between interpreters and rehabilitation counseling professionals. This led to rich discussions among participants and presenters, revealing interesting differences in ethical frameworks, much of which revolved around ethical decisions that center the autonomy and agency of DHH VR clients. Many participants reported having few opportunities like this and hope for more in the future.

## Registry

Types of Registrations	Registrations
Community Registration	435
Educational Registration	129
Dual Registration	86
In state Registration	184
Out of state Registration	301
<b>Total number of individual interpreters in the database</b>	<b>485</b>

### Additional Information

The CAS program is happy to announce the selection of Kim Johnson as the new Social Services Program Specialist II. In her new role, she will manage the Nevada Interpreter/CART Registry, including managing the registry database and conducting education and outreach. Any questions about the Registry can be directed to Kim at [InterpreterRegistry@adsd.nv.gov](mailto:InterpreterRegistry@adsd.nv.gov).

The Registry is currently being updated to align with the new law and regulation requirements to meet the effective date of August 1, 2023. On Monday, June 5, we will provide a workshop for interpreters to learn about the new requirements and how each person will be impacted. The Registry numbers will be reported a bit differently for subsequent commission meetings due to the structural changes of the new requirements.

The Sign Language Interpreter and Mentor position with CAS is currently open for recruitment. Deaf and hearing interpreters are encouraged to apply. More information regarding the position can be found at [Sign Language Interpreter and Mentor Position \(nv.gov\)](#).

It is with heartfelt gratitude that the CAS program announces the retirement of Kalen Beck on June 2, 2023. Kalen has been an interpreter mentor with the program since June of 2018. Her knowledge, experience, and care have shaped the CAS program into what it is today. The program would not have been able to achieve so much in such a short time had it not been for Kalen's dedication and wishes the best in her well-deserved retirement.

As we will soon have two interpreter mentor vacancies, the monthly PITS workshops will be put on hold and all the new mentorship applications will be placed on a wait list.

If anyone wants to subscribe to CAS mailing list for latest information and updates, please see link: [Communication Access Services Program Mailing List](#)