

**QAA DIRECTIVE RESPONSE: PROCEDURES FOR  
EVALUATING COMMUNICATION ASSISTANTS**

(March 2011)

**BACKGROUND:**

Communication Assistants are non-certified interpreters who assist consumers who are deaf or hard of hearing when Registry of Interpreters (RID) certified interpreters are not available.

Communication Assistants are Individual Service Providers (ISPs) approved in compliance with RAM Chapter 29, Exhibit A, Section 230. Communication Assistants are to be used only after it is determined there are no RID-certified interpreters available.

With the exception of Level I, Communication Assistants must successfully complete the Quality Assurance Appraisal (QAA) conducted by the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Section (DHHS) to be approved as an ISP. The QAA is an evaluation that assesses basic sign language interpreting skills that are substandard to a certified sign language interpreter. The QAA is not a professional level interpreter certification such as the RID certification and does not qualify the individual as an interpreter outside the Department.

The QAA requirement is waived for candidates that have successfully passed the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment with a score of 3.0 or higher.

**POLICY/PROCEDURE:**

District Administrators, Rehabilitation Counselors for the Deaf (RCDs), and their Rehabilitation Supervisors must determine the interpreter needs in their districts. The determination should include contacting RID-certified interpreters through this website (<http://www.RID.org>), interpreter agencies, programs, schools, colleges, and universities to determine the number of available certified interpreters in the area. Districts can contact the DHHS for assistance in locating possible interpreter resources. Should this

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determination prove that there are insufficient numbers of certified interpreters in the area, and that a QAA is necessary, the District Administrator will send a memo requesting a QAA to the DHHS Program Manager. The DHHS Program Manager or its assigned staff will contact the person designated as the district liaison (i.e., Rehabilitation Supervisor or RCD) to schedule a date and time for the QAA. The district liaison is responsible for sending out notices to the candidates, confirming their attendance, and obtaining a meeting room with a television, VCR, and an audio tape player. The travel expenses of the evaluation team will be assumed by DHHS.

The QAA typically requires two (2) days. The first day (late afternoon) is used for a workshop to prepare the candidates for the QAA evaluation. The second day is used to evaluate the candidates' skill level. The QAA is conducted by a panel team of evaluators comprised of two RCDs and the Chair of the QAA. Evaluations are done on an individual basis. Up to a maximum of seven (7) candidates per day may be evaluated but a minimum of four (4) is required for DHHS to conduct the QAA.

Candidates who participate in the workshop and successfully pass the evaluation are eligible to be approved as Communication Assistants at the level and rate determined by the QAA panel. Each successful candidate receives a QAA certificate letter from DHHS indicating the level achieved. Refer to RAM Chapter 29, Exhibit A, Section 230 for the skill levels and type of assignments they may be qualified for, and the Exhibit B: Quick-View for corresponding pay levels.