



**Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Michigan Interpreter Testing Update
Frequently Asked Questions
July 2009**

- 1. Q: Has the Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DODHH) developed or purchased a new test for credentialing sign language interpreters in Michigan?**
A: Yes, the DODHH has secured a valid and reliable testing system for Michigan interpreters.
- 2. Q: When will the DODHH resume testing of sign language interpreters?**
A: The DODHH hopes to resume testing in fall 2009.
- 3. Q: Why will it take so long to resume testing?**
A: Purchasing a test requires departmental coordination of all of the elements required to begin testing including but not limited to: contract development, DODHH staff training, recruiting and training of test raters, development of testing documents, policies and procedures.
- 4. Q: Can we begin applying for the new test now?**
A: No, please continue to check the DODHH website at www.mcdc-dodhh.org for test resumption updates and applications. However if a candidate had completed and passed their written Quality Assurance (QA) test at the time the QA was suspended, see #26.
- 5. Q: Will the new test be called the Michigan QA test?**
A: The name of the new test has yet to be determined but credentials will still be issued on a three-tier system with some changes to the testing structure.
- 6. Q: Will there continue to be a renewal fee and continuing educational units required yearly?**
A: Yes, there will continue to be renewal fees and continuing education units required. The information will be available in the new testing information packet when complete and available through the DODHH.
- 7. Q: The old QA was on a four-year cycle if all fees were paid yearly and education units collected, what will the new cycle be?**
A: The expiration cycle and education unit requirement has yet to be determined. This information will be available when the new test information packet is available through the DODHH.



**Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Michigan Interpreter Testing Update
Frequently Asked Questions
July 2009**

8. Q: Will interpreters be tested on the same skill sets as in the past?

A: Yes, with one addition. Individuals will be tested, as before, on their skills to interpret in ASL, to Transliterate and Voice (Receptive Skills). The additional skill set tested will be the candidate's ability to translate/interpret a written English document into ASL.

9. Q: Where will I be able to take my performance test?

A: DODHH will offer the performance test in Detroit, Gaylord, Lansing and Grand Rapids. Travel for testing in the Upper Peninsula will require a minimum of three candidate requests for testing dates to proceed.

10. Q: Will there be a written component to the test? Is it a timed test?

A: Yes, there is an English proficiency test. Yes, it will be a timed test. Specifics on the written test will be available from DODHH when state testing resumes.

11. Q: Where will I be able to take my written English proficiency test?

A: The details of written testing locations will be available through DODHH when testing resumes. Continue to check the DODHH website for updates at www.mcddc-dodhh.org.

12. Q: Will I have to pass the written test before I can apply for the performance test?

A: Yes, you must pass the English proficiency test prior to taking your performance test.

13. Q: Will I be required to take and pass the new English written test prior to my current QA expiration before I am able to sit for the new test?

A: Yes, all interpreters holding the previous QA credentials will be required to transition to the new testing system. This includes taking and passing the new English written exam prior to scheduling your performance test. **Reminder:** you should schedule your written and performance test prior to your four-year cycle or extension ending to ensure that your credentials do not lapse and you remain qualified to work in Michigan.



**Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Michigan Interpreter Testing Update
Frequently Asked Questions
July 2009**

14. Q: If my old QA lapses before I take the new written and performance test can I still legally work in Michigan?

A: No, you are legally required to hold a current credential to interpret in Michigan. Should you be reaching the end of your current four-year QA cycle, you should contact DODHH immediately to receive information regarding a temporary extension while waiting for testing to resume. Working without a current credential in Michigan, subjects you to possible penalties under the law.

15. Q: How will I know the fees related to taking the new test?

A: The new application, when available, will list all required testing fees.

16. Q: Is the new test rating structured like the previous QA testing system with percentages determining the level granted?

A: No, each candidate, if previously credentialed can choose a test level to take one, two or three. The test is pass/fail. You will not be granted the lower level credential if you fail a higher-level test.

17. Q: How long is the new performance test?

A: Testing time may vary between forty-five minutes to one hour depending on the testing level taken.

18. Q: If I have never taken or held a QA level in the past can I take any test level that I wish to take?

A: No, the DODHH requires that you begin with the first level of testing if you have never held an interpreting credential. The test is pass/fail. You will not be granted a lower level credential if you fail a higher-level test.

19. Q: If I hold a current interpreting credential from another state, can I test for any level I wish to take?

A: You may test for level one or two. However, the DODHH strongly recommends that you start at level one. The test is pass/fail. You will not be granted a lower level credential if you fail a higher-level test.



**Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Michigan Interpreter Testing Update
Frequently Asked Questions
July 2009**

- 20. Q: If I hold a national interpreting credential, am I required to take the Michigan interpreting test?**
A: No, if you hold a current national interpreting certification recognized by the DODHH you are not required to hold the Michigan credential. **However**, the law requires all nationally certified interpreters to register and pay a fee to the DODHH to work in Michigan. The registration form is available on the DODHH website at www.mcde-dodhh.org.
- 21. Q: If I take the new performance test, fail and do not hold a credential, how long am I required to wait before retesting?**
A: DODHH requires a wait of six months before setting up another performance test at the same level. You are not required to wait six months if you wish to sit for a test level lower than the one you failed.
- 22. Q: If I successfully pass a level of certification how long am I required to wait prior to testing for a higher level?**
A: DODHH strongly recommends that all candidates wait six months prior to testing for a new level of certification.
- 23. Q: If I take the new test and do not pass a level, will I lose my current QA credential?**
A: No, you will maintain your current QA credential until the time of its four-year expiration. Candidates should apply for the new test prior to their four-year expiration to avoid a lapse in credentials. A person is subject to penalties under the law should they continue to work as an interpreter without a current and valid credential.
- 24. Q: If I take the new test and receive a level, will I lose my level if I fail when retesting for a higher level?**
A: No, you will not lose your current credential if you fail a higher-level test.
- 25. Q: If I was in the middle of my QA testing and had passed the prior QA written exam, will I be required to take the new written test before my performance test?**
A: Yes, all candidates for the new test will be required to pass the new written exam prior to sitting for the new performance test.



**Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Michigan Interpreter Testing Update
Frequently Asked Questions
July 2009**

26. Q: If I passed the QA written test prior to the QA suspension, will I receive a priority for testing dates when testing resumes?

A: Yes, individuals who passed their written test prior to suspension of the QA will receive correspondence from DODHH and be offered dates for testing upon resumption of the test. Please note that you must pass the new written test and an application will be required before a candidate can secure testing dates.

27. Q: If I am a recent ITP graduate, can I work as a sign language interpreter in Michigan without having a credential?

A: No, state law requires that you hold a current national or state issued credential to work in Michigan. Until the time you can test and receive credentials, you are not legally able to work as a sign language interpreter in Michigan and are subject to penalties under the law.

28. Q: Will DODHH continue to provide interpreter test preparedness training?

A: Yes, the DODHH will continue to provide interpreter training and skill development opportunities as well as continue to collaborate with other organizations who host interpreter training. However, seeking continued skill development and educational opportunities is an essential part of your professional development responsibility.

29. Q: How will I get all the information for the new test and know what the testing procedures and requirements will be? Will there be testing and evaluation information available?

A: When the test becomes available, a detailed testing information packet including the application, testing and evaluation procedures will be available for download or via US mail from the DODHH. Please continue to check the DODHH website for test updates and information at www.mcde-dodhh.org.