



**Date:** June 30, 2022

**To:** Special Education Directors

**From:** Heather Mueller, Ed.D., Commissioner *Heather Mueller, Ed.D.*

**Subject:** Minnesota Statutes, section 122A.31, American Sign Language/English Interpreters

**CC:** Robyn Widley, Director of Special Education

Aaron Barnes, Supervisor, Workforce and Low Incidence Disabilities

Mary Cashman-Bakken, Minnesota State Specialist: Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Due to shortages of American Sign Language Interpreters for students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing (D/HH) in Minnesota and the current practice only allowing new or recent graduates from interpreter training programs (ITP) to be eligible for a two-year provisional certificate, the Commissioner of Education's designee will grant an exemption starting July 1, 2022.

The exemption will allow the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) to grant a one-time, non-renewable two-year provisional certificate to interpreters who graduated from an ITP more than two years ago and do not currently meet certification requirements as defined in [Minnesota Statutes 2020, section 122A.31](#) and 1) did not go into educational interpreting upon graduation and/or 2) are from another state and desire to be an educational interpreter in a Minnesota K-12 school. All other provisions of the current statute (Minn. Stat. §122A.31, subd. 1, 3 [2000]) and related MDE memos regarding educational interpreting will still apply, including requirements for provisional interpreters to have a written educational plan, participate in mentoring, and become certified.

With this provisional certificate, the interpreter must take either the nationally recognized Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA) or the Registry Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) test before the end of the two-year provisional period. These interpreters must have a written educational plan and receive mentoring every seven days from the local education agency (LEA) or district of employment. Interpreters who do not achieve certification during their provisional period will also be eligible to apply for a one-time extension to their provisional certificate, including test results in their extension application. They must comply with all the other requirements of Minnesota Statutes 2020, section 122A.31.

To complete the process for initial certification or two-year provisional certification, applicants need to verify the following: 1) their certification status, level, and evaluation taken (including a copy of the certificate), 2) their understanding that an education plan must be developed and kept on file, including mentoring at least every seven days, 3) a copy of the applicant's interpreter training diploma if they graduated Spring 2000 or later, 4) a copy of the applicant's diploma if they have a bachelor's degree, 5) indication of whether their district requires assistance in finding a mentor, and 6) whether this application is for a non-renewable provisional two-year certificate.

Application forms for certifications, two-year provisional certifications, and extensions can be found with additional resources and references on the MDE website  
<https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/sped/cat/dhh/index.htm>.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact [Mary Cashman-Bakken](#) ([mary.cashman-bakken@state.mn.us](mailto:mary.cashman-bakken@state.mn.us)) at the Minnesota Department of Education.