



# Missouri Department of Mental Health Office of Deaf and Linguistic Support Services Minimum Competencies for Interpreters in Mental Health Settings



This document refers to four levels of knowledge: exposure; awareness; familiarity; and understanding.

- Exposure is having some knowledge of a field's existence and its place in the setting and, possibly, some of the vocabulary used in the field.
- Familiarity is having actual experience with a field and/or practitioners in that field.
- Awareness goes beyond familiarity in that it also includes beginning to internalize the information regarding a field and to have begun thinking through how it affects one's professional and personal behavior although it does not necessarily include having resolved issues raised.
- Understanding is having sufficient knowledge of a field to be able to explain the discipline, including its limits and its relationship to other disciplines.

Commensurate levels of competency are: exposure; familiarity; awareness; and demonstration (or compliance).

## **1. PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES/KNOWLEDGE**

### **1.1. Understanding of Missouri Interpreter Certification System Requirements**

(For Sign Language Interpreters only)

- 1.1.1. Understand requisite skill levels and their rationale
- 1.1.2. Hold MICS Intermediate Certification or higher
- 1.1.3. Understand Mentoring and Supervision

### **1.2. Demonstrate Interpreting Methods and Appropriate Use**

#### **1.2.1. Simultaneous Interpreting**

- 1.2.1.1. *First Person*
- 1.2.1.2. *Third Person*

#### **1.2.2. Consecutive Interpreting**

- 1.2.2.1. *First Person*
- 1.2.2.2. *Third Person*

#### **1.2.3. Narrative Interpreting (Third Person)**

### **1.3. Familiarity with Mental Health Issues**

#### **1.3.1. Psychiatric Services / Mental Illness**

- 1.3.1.1. *Awareness of Psychopathologies*
- 1.3.1.2. *Familiarity with Assessment Methods*
  - 1.3.1.2.1. Understand Impact of Signing on Assessment
  - 1.3.1.2.2. Understand Impact of Culture on Assessment
- 1.3.1.3. *Exposure to Treatment Approaches*

#### **1.3.2. Addiction Services**

- 1.3.2.1. *Familiarity with Addictions*
- 1.3.2.2. *Familiarity with Assessment Methods*
- 1.3.2.3. *Exposure to Treatment Approaches*
  - 1.3.2.3.1. Inpatient
  - 1.3.2.3.2. Outpatient
    - 1.3.2.3.2.1. *Self-help and Support groups*

#### **1.3.3. Dual Diagnosis**

- 1.3.3.1. *Exposure to Mental Retardation and Developmental Disability*
- 1.3.3.2. *Awareness of the difference between Interpreting and . Communication Assisting/Language Intervention*

**1.4. Familiarity with Mental Health Systems**

- 1.4.1. Ability to Identify Care Providers
  - 1.4.1.1. *Identify Mental Health Disciplines*
  - 1.4.1.2. *Familiarity with Milieus and Settings*

**1.5. Understand Role of Professional Consultant**

- 1.5.1. Understand Professional Boundaries of Interpreters
- 1.5.2. Awareness of Confidentiality and Privilege, including at a minimum: Abuse Reporting, Duty to Warn, and Protections Specific to MO Statute.

**2. CULTURAL COMPETENCIES/KNOWLEDGE**

**2.1. Demonstrate Cross-Cultural Competencies**

- 2.1.1. Understand Impact of Stereotypes
- 2.1.2. Awareness of Constructs of Deafness
  - 2.1.2.1. *Majority/Minority Cultures*
  - 2.1.2.2. *Pathological Models*
- 2.1.3. Understand Cultural Views of Mental Illness, Mental Retardation/Developmental Delay and Addiction

**2.2. Understand Impact of the Interpreter in the Milieu**

- 2.2.1. Understand Sociological Impact
- 2.2.2. Understand Impact on Treatment Dyad

**3. CONDUCT COMPETENCIES/KNOWLEDGE**

**3.1. Understanding of Personal Safety Issues**

- 3.1.1. Understanding of At-Risk Conduct
- 3.1.2. Understanding of Personal Boundaries
- 3.1.3. Awareness of De-escalation Techniques
- 3.1.4. Awareness of Universal Precautions

**3.2. Demonstrate Professional Boundaries and Judgment**

- 3.2.1. Demonstrate Professional Collaboration in Pre- and Post-Conferencing

**3.3. Demonstrate Ability to Assess Effectiveness of Communication**

- 3.3.1. Demonstrate Ability to Appropriately Match Interpreting Method with Client and Setting
  - 3.3.1.1. *Understand Impact of Emotionally Charged Language*
- 3.3.2. Demonstrate Ability to Discuss Unusual or Changed Signing
  - 3.3.2.1. *Demonstrate Ability to Convey Information Without Alteration*
  - 3.3.2.2. *Demonstrate Ability to Convey Emotional Language Without Escalation*
  - 3.3.2.3. *Demonstrate Ability to Convey Ambiguous, Emotionless Language*
  - 3.3.2.4. *Demonstrate Ability to Isolate Peculiar Features of Eccentric Language Use*

**3.4. Demonstrate Ability to Read and Record Documentation**

- 3.4.1. Awareness of Protection of Confidentiality
- 3.4.2. Awareness of Personal Records as compared with Records Shared with Other Interpreters and Other Professionals

**3.5. Awareness of Personal Mental Health Issues and Maintenance**

- 3.5.1. Understand Personal Issues Impacting on Interpreting Process
- 3.5.2. Awareness of Countertransference in the Interpreter
- 3.5.3. Familiarity with Transference to the Clinician or to the Interpreter