

SB 950 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Health Care

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Meeting Dates: 3/13, 4/1

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure modifies the licensing framework for sign language interpreters in Oregon by introducing new types of licenses, repealing specialty licenses, and modifying licensing regulations. Takes effect on the 91st day following adjournment sine die.

Detailed Summary:

Permits the State Board of Sign Language Interpreters (the Board) to establish new types of sign language interpreter licenses.

- Creates a supervisory sign language interpreter license and sign language interpreter license by endorsement for out-of-state interpreters.
 - Allows interpreters licensed in other states to obtain an Oregon license by endorsement if their credentials are substantially similar, they are in good standing in that state, they meet requirements established by the Board, and they pay licensing fees to the Board.
 - Allows interpreters licensed in other states to provide short-term services for a determined amount of time.
- Creates a sign language interpreter-in-training license.
 - Requires applicants to be 18 years or older and meet education and training requirements.
 - Requires language interpreters-in-training to only work under direct supervision of a licensed interpreter.

Repeals existing specialty licenses for legal and medical sign language interpretation. Modifies licensing and renewal processes.

- Extends licensing renewals from two years to three years.
- Directs The Board to set licensure and renewal fees.
- Permits existing licenses under repealed statutes to remain valid until expiration.

Becomes operative January 1, 2026. Permits the Health Licensing Office (HLO) and the Board to take actions prior to the operative date to make operative the measure. Takes effect on the 91st day following adjournment sine die.

Fiscal impact: Minimal fiscal impact

Revenue impact: No revenue impact

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 Removes the supervisory sign language interpreter license and sign language interpreter license by endorsement for out-of-state interpreters. Permits an interpreter licensed to provide sign language interpretation in another state to provide sign language interpretation without obtaining a license from the State Board of Sign Language (Board) if their license is from a state that the Board recognizes and if they can show that they are in good standing if asked. Sets the expiration date for specialty licenses as January 1, 2029.

BACKGROUND:

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[House Bill 2696](#) (2023) established the Oregon Board of Sign Language Interpreters (Board) under the Health Licensing Office (HLO). The Board regulates supervisory, generalist, provisional, medical, legal, and educational sign language interpreters. HB 2696 also required all individuals who perform sign language interpretation services to obtain licensure by January 1, 2024. HLO issues temporary licenses to sign language interpreters, and it is the responsibility of the Board to adopt rules and set permanent licensing requirements.

Senate Bill 950 modifies the licensing framework for sign language interpreters in Oregon by creating new types of licenses issued by the Board and HLO, repealing specialty licenses and their related statute, and modifying licensing regulations and fee structures.