

AN ACT concerning regulation.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 5. The Language Assistance Services Act is amended by changing Section 15 as follows:

(210 ILCS 87/15)

Sec. 15. Language assistance services.

(a) To insure access to health care information and services for limited-English-speaking or non-English-speaking residents and deaf residents, a health facility must do ~~one or more of~~ the following:

~~(1) Review existing policies regarding interpreters for patients with limited English proficiency and for patients who are deaf, including the availability of staff to act as interpreters.~~

(1) ~~(2)~~ Adopt and review annually a policy for providing language assistance services to patients with language or communication barriers. The policy shall include procedures for providing, to the extent possible as determined by the facility, the use of an interpreter whenever a language or communication barrier exists, except where the patient, after being informed of the availability of the interpreter service, chooses to use a

family member or friend who volunteers to interpret. The procedures shall be designed to maximize efficient use of interpreters and minimize delays in providing interpreters to patients. The procedures shall insure, to the extent possible as determined by the facility, that interpreters are available, either on the premises or accessible by telephone, 24 hours a day. The facility shall annually transmit to the Department of Public Health a copy of the updated policy and shall include a description of the facility's efforts to insure adequate and speedy communication between patients with language or communication barriers and staff.

(2) ~~(3)~~ Develop, and post in conspicuous locations, notices that advise patients and their families of the availability of interpreters, the procedure for obtaining an interpreter, and the telephone numbers to call for filing complaints concerning interpreter service problems, including, but not limited to, a TTY number for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing ~~T.D.D. number for the hearing impaired~~. The notices shall be posted, at a minimum, in the emergency room, the admitting area, the facility entrance, and the outpatient area. Notices shall inform patients that interpreter services are available on request, shall list the languages most commonly encountered at the facility for which interpreter services are available, and shall instruct patients to direct complaints regarding

interpreter services to the Department of Public Health, including the telephone numbers to call for that purpose.

~~(4) Identify and record a patient's primary language and dialect on one or more of the following: a patient medical chart, hospital bracelet, bedside notice, or nursing card.~~

~~(5) Prepare and maintain, as needed, a list of interpreters who have been identified as proficient in sign language and in the languages of the population of the geographical area served by the facility who have the ability to translate the names of body parts, injuries, and symptoms.~~

(3) ~~(6)~~ Notify the facility's employees of the language services available at the facility and train them on how to make those language services available to patients
~~facility's commitment to provide interpreters to all patients who request them.~~

(b) In addition, a health facility may do one or more of the following:

(1) Identify and record a patient's primary language and dialect on one or more of the following: a patient medical chart, hospital bracelet, bedside notice, or nursing card.

(2) Prepare and maintain, as needed, a list of interpreters who have been identified as proficient in sign language according to the Interpreters for the Deaf Act and

a list of the languages of the population of the geographical area served by the facility.

(3) ~~(7)~~ Review all standardized written forms, waivers, documents, and informational materials available to patients on admission to determine which to translate into languages other than English.

(4) ~~(8)~~ Consider providing its nonbilingual staff with standardized picture and phrase sheets for use in routine communications with patients who have language or communication barriers.

(5) ~~(9)~~ Develop community liaison groups to enable the facility and the limited-English-speaking, non-English-speaking, and deaf communities to insure the adequacy of the interpreter services.

(Source: P.A. 93-564, eff. 1-1-04.)

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon becoming law.