

Interpreter Town Hall Meeting 01.28.25 Summary:

- **Introduction:**
 - Amy Sue Guinn; Staff Interpreter Introduced herself and explained her role at MCDHH for those that did not already know her.
- **Purpose of the Town Hall meetings:**
 - The Purpose of the Town Hall meetings is to have a designated time for the interpreting community to come together to discuss current issues in the profession and the status of the profession in the State of Missouri. These meetings are being established quarterly throughout the 2025 year per request of interpreters in 2024.

- **Current Status of testing:**

- **BEI-** remains on hold in the State of Missouri due to contractual issues with the State of Texas. Missouri has submitted all corrections requested by Texas and has received little to no response from Texas on what else is needed. MCDHH has requested the assistance of their Attorney General Council, who has met with Texas once to follow up.

In December, MCDHH lost their AG representative, and a new one was appointed. The new representative is being filled in on all things related to the BEI exam and will have a second follow up with Texas soon.

Follow up has been made with the new Executive Director of the Texas Human Services Office, but no further assistance in remediating the contractual issues has been given.

Missouri residents continue to go to other BEI proctoring sites and try to secure a testing slot if they can. Illinois is now booked out to October 2025 and is covering over 40 testing slots for Missouri testers alone. Several are also being covered in Wisconsin.

- **RID-** MCDHH has been approved to be a testing site for RID. All financial paperwork is in progress of being reviewed and approved. The next steps include sending mock testing videos for their approval.
- **EIPA-** MCDHH has been approved to be a testing site for EIPA. All paperwork is being completed and software programming is being review for compliance purposes.
- **QAST-** The former MICS test, also known as QAST, was requested by multiple parties to be proctored again at MCDHH; however, the Commissioners were not in support of this due to the question of validity in results. MCDHH will not proctor this exam again but does recognize this exam for conversion purposes if taken in another state. There are currently two states actively proctoring the exam: Arkansas, and Oklahoma. Each state has their own requirements for application. Reciprocity of testing content is currently being reviewed in hopes that currently certified MICS interpreters can have advanced standing when testing and not be required to start back at the BASIC level.
- **Commission Meeting Review:** Staff Interpreter was not present for the Commission meeting due to being out on vacation. However, all the above information regarding testing was shared. The

Commissioners are in support as well for a skill level standard update via an emergency rule, and also for MCDHH to continue researching the development of our own standardized testing system.

- **Current Projects for MCDHH:** MCDHH continues to work on the following projects for interpreters:
 - Educational Interpreter Guideline Book
 - Emergency Rule Skill Level Standards language change. An example was shown while on the virtual meeting of what changes were being requested.
 - Researching testing options and starting dialogue with other states about their systems.
 - Staff Interpreter requested for all attendees to complete their “homework,” by writing a letter regarding how the lack of BEI testing has impacted them, our communities, and our state. Letter writing is open to all parties; Deaf, Hard of Hearing, DeafBlind, businesses, students, interpreters etc. A vlog is to be done by Executive Director, Becky Davis. All letters need to be sent to MCDHH and will then be given to the Attorney General’s Office for follow up with the State of Texas accordingly.
- **Open floor for discussion**
- **Questions (were asked throughout the meeting):**
 - Received about testing opportunities and wait times for testing.
 - RID: 11 month waiting period for performance
 - EIPA: Over one year
 - BEI: 60-90 days
 - Clarification about letter writing and what to include.
 - How are Town Hall meetings different than Commission Meetings or other Town Halls?
 - Commission meetings are not able to be attended by all due to length of time during a day, and no virtual option. These meetings discuss all things MCDHH and reports by staff, whereas the Interpreter Town Halls are focused on interpreter matters and issues.
 - What is the MICS system, and which test should one take if they are interested in becoming an interpreter?
 - MICS stands for MO Interpreter Certification System. This was also the name of our former test. The current interpreting exams available to Interpreters to take are RID, EIPA, BEI and QAST. Which test one should take is dependent on their goals for interpreting. If you have specific questions regarding this, please contact the MCDHH office for more information.