

New Mexico  
Commission for Deaf & Hard of Hearing



Quarterly Report

FY20

Quarter 4



# FY20 Quarter 4 Board Report

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Thursday, September 10, 2020  
3:00 p.m.

The meeting will be held remotely via Zoom and the public can view the meeting livestream on YouTube with interpreters and captioning at this link: [https://youtu.be/J6rp\\_c89laE](https://youtu.be/J6rp_c89laE)

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**DRAFT AGENDA**

Posted: August 17, 2020

- I. Call to Order and Roll Call
- II. Approval of Agenda
- III. Approval of Minutes of May 7, 2020
- IV. Reports
  - A. Executive Director Report
  - B. Department Reports Q & A
- V. Action Items
- VI. New Business
- VII. Adjournment

*Personal attacks on Commission members, staff, interpreters, or other persons in attendance or absent will not be tolerated. Individuals engaging in this activity will be asked to leave the meeting immediately.*

Persons with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations by contacting the New Mexico Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing at 1-800-489-8536 with sufficient lead time to secure necessary services and equipment.





**STATE OF NEW MEXICO  
COMMISSION FOR DEAF & HARD OF HEARING**

*Quarterly Board Meeting  
Thursday, June 11, 2020  
3:00 p.m.*

*The meeting was held remotely via zoom and the public could view the meeting  
livestream on YouTube with interpreting and captioning at  
<https://youtu.be/sz2tNp-RYo>.*

***DRAFT – These minutes will be subject to another possible revision and approval by the  
commissioners at the next board meeting on September 10, 2020.***

**I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Chair Concha Dunwell called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m. Executive Director Nathan Gomme called roll call.

Present: Ms. Concha Dunwell  
Mr. Mark Apodaca, designee for NMSD Superintendent  
Dr. Michael O'Brien, designee for DVR Director  
Mr. Francis Vigil  
Mr. Johnny Robertson

Quorum was met.

Five staff members from NMCDHH were present via Zoom: Executive Director Nathan Gomme, Deborah Romero, Lisa Dignan, Corina Gutiérrez, and Jessica Eubank. Jessica Eubank interpreted the meeting along with Andrea Ginn and Rachelle Clifford. Assistant Attorney General Delilah Tenorio was also present.

**II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chair Concha Dunwell asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

**20.12**

Commissioner Mark Apodaca made a motion to approve the agenda.  
Commissioner Johnny Robertson seconded.  
Ms. Romero took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Dunwell – Yes	Commissioner Apodaca – Yes
Commissioner O'Brien – Yes	Commissioner Vigil -Yes
Commissioner Robertson – Yes	

Motion passed unanimously.

### **III. APPROVAL OF MAY 7, 2020 MINUTES**

Chair Dunwell asked if there were any changes to the minutes from May 7, 2020.

#### **20.13**

Commissioner Johnny Robertson made the motion to accept the minutes as written.  
Commissioner Francis Vigil seconded.

Commissioner Dunwell – Yes

Commissioner Apodaca – Yes

Commissioner O'Brien – Yes

Commissioner Vigil -Yes

Commissioner Robertson – Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

### **IV. REPORTS**

#### ***a. Executive Director Report***

Executive Director Nathan Gomme stated that the third quarter began with normal operating procedures. CDHH was proceeding with the budget planning for FY21 and was able to receive an increase in our general fund for services for Deaf-Blind, Deaf Plus and seniors. The focus was on SSP services and transportation. However, this now depends on the availability of general funds which is question due to the impact of COVID-19. COVID-19 has caused a decline in revenue from gas and oil prices as well as the collected revenue from GRT. With those funds depleting, we will need to see what will happen with the budget during the special session.

The City of Albuquerque passed the captioning ordinance successfully and it seems to be going well. Some rules need to be established, and a meeting was scheduled for stakeholders in March. Unfortunately, it had to be postponed since it coincided with the outbreak of COVID-19.

Executive Director Gomme discussed the relationship CDHH has developed with the Disability Emergency Planning and Advisory Council (DEPAC) and are in talks with them about a variety of different emergency situations that have barriers. One of those topics is the availability of Text to 911 across the state. Text to 911 is still being worked on so that the entire state will one day have it available. The discussions have been about fires and other emergent situations that can arise as well as the importance of a technology such as Text to 911.

CDHH hosted an FCC town hall in January. There were several deaf and hard of hearing community members there and they were able to ask questions of the FCC directly.

Just before COVID-19 hit we were able to add two new hires, Dennis Stidham and Myra Sandoval who are in Corina's department.

#### ***b. COVID-19 Deaf, Deaf-Blind, Hard of Hearing Report***

Executive Director Gomme stated that he sent the commissioners a summary of all CDHH actions that have taken place since COVID-19 became an issue. He felt it was important to expand on some topics that were addressed in that summary.

First, staff are primarily teleworking from their homes rather than the office space and will not return until there are established procedures that we can keep the staff and our consumers safe. This includes having enough personal protective equipment (PPE) and using transparent barriers.

CDHH is also working with the Access and Functional Needs group which is comprised of stakeholders from many agencies. The group meets on a weekly basis and sometimes a few times a week to discuss current issues related to COVID-19 such as access to press conferences, to the internet, and services such as food deliveries. The group has already made an impact.

The Commission did some reanalyzing of our Telecommunication Equipment Distribution Program (TEDP) because we realized that there are areas that need improvement with this pandemic. One of the issues is that there is a very significant lack of access to the internet in rural areas that needs improving. We need to focus on this in order for people to access the technology we provide. The Commission's vendor, Teltex, and CDHH were in discussions on how to address our rural and Native American communities. There was a lot of back and forth discussion on a plan of action for the future. One idea is that we would send tablets which include downloadable videos on the equipment so they can be delivered to areas where they are in need.

Relay New Mexico has had some large numbers due to this pandemic. In the last two weeks of March, there was a huge increase of numbers that amount to what we traditionally see during Christmastime. At Christmastime there generally is an increase in relay calls because people are home and that is when people are using relay services to make phone calls to their family and friends. Now businesses began to shut their doors to in-person traffic during the COVID-19 health emergency; people began calling places to access services which vastly increased the relay numbers. Relay operators nationally are not able to go to their workplace to the same level and are working from home, so there was a decline in time of answer. The FCC provided a waiver for speed of answering relay calls; this meant the possibility of longer waits to get an operator. There was also the issue of people calling with concerns about their rent or stimulus money which had long hold times this increased the minutes while relay operators were trying to reach these businesses and services. The numbers have been rising and we are seeing and will continue to see a huge increase.

Executive Director Gomme explained that meetings are changing as individuals and businesses are using Zoom, Adobe Connect, Cisco Webex, Google Meet and a variety of conferencing software. We at CDHH want to make sure they have access to captions and signed language interpreters. Some platforms don't have the same level of functionality and so there has been a lot of education and discussion on accessibility. Some platforms are just not as accessible for Deaf or Deaf-Blind users. Some Deaf-Blind users do have residual vision, so they require magnifiers to access content during teleconferences. Even when an individual is using a large monitor, the size of the individual caller becomes smaller when more people join, this means a lot of very small screens on the video call, and this is a barrier. Some platforms and systems are preset to reduce the size of the caller for the shared document, and you cannot manipulate the size; therefore, it does not provide an equivalent experience to the community.

There are also access limits to telehealth. A telehealth call must follow the rules of HIPAA and there is a lot of discussion about what you can or cannot do with telehealth. This is just one problem another for example is some telehealth programs can only be accessed on a smartphone or tablet for example, but not everyone has access to a smartphone or tablet. Some programs have captioning, but others do not. Some require a call-in list of approved participants which is fine for most but not interpreters, for example if there was a last-minute interpreter change, that interpreter would not be admitted to the phone call. There are so many challenges that will require significant education to the providers and the facilities.

Executive Director Gomme asked if there were questions regarding his report and there were some concerns about the revenue and budget for the upcoming fiscal year. However, there are several factors at play. He and CFO Deborah Romero have had many conversations regarding the budget. They were looking at where they can move money within each budget category. Perhaps certain programs will need to be re-prioritized. For example, there has been a reduction of requests for our equipment. If we streamline that inventory, we can shift resources to cover other needs. The same with can be done with Outreach. The trainings for example can be done in various video formats which would save money normally used in travel expenses. There may be an opportunity to use Federal funds through the CARES Act, but that needs to be worked out. The budget will be tight, but Executive Director Gomme felt that the agency would be all right.

Another question was regarding the placards for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Drivers. Although this is an important tool for APD and the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, our priorities and the city's priorities have shifted during the pandemic as well as with the protests. CDHH has focused on access and relaying important information regarding health, safety, and changes during this time. Therefore, the placards are currently on hold.

Roger Robb has been very busy developing vlogs as things change in the COVID-19 world and sharing this critical information with the community. Both Ms. Dignan's and Ms. Gutiérrez's departments have been busy reaching out to State and local agencies to talk about accessibility needs and medical services. The entire staff is working very hard during this time.

Commissioner Francis Vigil made a few comments about groups he was concerned about that may be low-income and cannot afford mobile devices and the struggle of the Navajo Nation, hit hard by COVID-19 and in desperate to have communication access. At some point he would like to see an agenda item relating to how we can improve communication access for those groups.

Executive Director Gomme reiterated that one thing he is frequently bringing up with the Access and Functional Needs group is creating a place where there is access to the internet. It's an essential part of the Deaf, Deaf-Blind, Hard of Hearing community's world to be able to use video phones, mobile devices, and captioning on those mobile devices. New Mexico has such a vast rural area where there is no internet service available. They have acknowledged that there is a great need for that in rural, homeless, and tribal communities. One of the areas we need to focus on is providing equipment that has access to the internet and then the Commission could have more interaction with these populations and the senior citizens as well. The Access and Functional Needs group has addressed the need of access in all kinds of services such as hospice, food services, and long-term care. Executive Director Gomme did feel like the most urgent need was on Native lands; and that has been the first thing that was addressed.

**c. Department Reports Q & A**

Commissioner Mark Apodaca had a question for Ms. Gutiérrez's department about if they were collaborating with other Commission or agencies for the Deaf in other state. Ms. Gutiérrez referred the question to Executive Director Gomme a member of is the National Association of State Agencies for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NASADHH). He said that this national association has a base camp website. From that website members can continuously share information with each other. So, for example, a visual tool for telehealth was developed in Massachusetts, moved to Wisconsin, and has been adapted to fit the needs of New Mexico, Arizona, and Texas. The short answer is yes, CDHH does work with other state agencies on an ongoing basis.

**V. ACTION ITEMS**

There were no action items.

**VI. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

**20.14**

Commissioner Johnny Robertson made a motion to adjourn.

Commissioner Mark Apodaca seconded.

Ms. Romero took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Dunwell – Yes

Commissioner Apodaca – Yes

Commissioner O'Brien – Yes

Commissioner Vigil -Yes

Commissioner Robertson – Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:31 p.m.



# Executive Summary

*G. Nathan Gomme, Executive Director*

Commissioners and Community Members:

When we began the 2020 fiscal year, I along with several of members of our agency had several ideas of what our last quarter of the year would be; we did not envision where we are now. I do not think anyone could have quite predicted where we would end up and how different a position, we would be in by the end of FY20. Everyone here has made the best of our current situation and the fact that barriers we have traditionally addressed for our community have evolved. Our agency made several adjustments to our expectations for the upcoming year and spent a bulk of the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter learning about the new barriers that would become the norm during this pandemic. Our new normal includes funding concerns for the upcoming fiscal years, a totally different perspective on in person gatherings, masks, a growing use of traditional relay services, and a need to readdress our marginalized populations.

I want to first address a topic that several people want to hear about. When will we see a return to the “normalcy” of our operations? The answer to that is not a simple one, we do not know what the time frame is for this pandemic and the long-term impact we will see. What I can say is that we are changing to fit what we anticipate will be a slow and lengthy transition from telecommuting to in person interactions. First, I want to explain why the changes are slow and lengthy, safety needs to come first, and we are still learning about the impact of this virus. We have been considering several factors and the fall into the following concerns which are the result of this pandemic:

- COVID-19 is still prevalent as of July and can sometimes be carried by individuals who have no symptoms, a large number of our constituents are seniors and as a result fall into a high-risk population where the symptoms can be deadly. We do not want to put them at unnecessary risk for exposure when testing a phone.
- A portion of our legislative measures involve presentations to large groups and booths at events that have hundreds of attendees.
- Our state has certain areas where there is more risk and some areas where we have a lower risk of exposure.
- Information is still evolving and being shared.

Here are some things we are doing to address these concerns:

- Large amounts of PPE and cleaning equipment have been ordered. We have also ordered several plexiglass barriers for sit down meetings and also for testing equipment. We have also secured signage to explain social distancing requirements and to make sure people know that a mask must be worn. We have also ordered disposable PPE for people when they come to the office. Some of

these items arrived before the end of the fiscal year but we are still waiting for more equipment to arrive in FY21. Rules are still being developed and will be shared with the community when our offices reopen. I do not have a specific date as of July but expect we will be closer to a time frame come September.

- We will not be able to do presentations or booths the way we used to any time soon at all. This means we have to rethink how to make presentations and booths work in the new normal. Fortunately, we already had some tools on hand such as Zoom and video production software. We have also been working on converting our previously planned presentations into webinar presentations, we need to find areas where small groups can gather to view these presentations because we cannot expect internet access everywhere and the same applies to booths. We began exploring the possibility of hosting and partnering with shelters for virtual booths. This will allow us to work with our community while at the same time giving our interpreter apprentices opportunities to work and learn. Our agency is also working on plans for the next fiscal year for our new apprentices.
- COVID-19 is a risk no matter where we travel but some areas have had less cases than others. We will travel when necessary for example for contracts and other paperwork but right now the entire state is working on ways to operate via electronic means. When the state has managed the spread of the virus, we will begin to travel more freely but not before. As a result, we are working on a remote certification process for our TED program which will be preloaded on a tablet. These tablets will be limited in functionality and are only going to be used in rural areas at this time due to limitations and because this is the first time we have ever tried this approach. We have also been calling current and former clients to check in on them and to share information about what is happening.
- If you look at COVID-19 information that was being shared in March and the information from July, you can see a lot has changed, you might also see that we have been involved with the information sharing since March. Several staff members are involved in getting the details from agencies we did not have much collaboration within the past. Several members have also been very active at reaching out to the various levels of government about access, we have seen interpreters during press conferences and captions added to various videos as a result of our work so far. We are aware though that some people don't have computers or access to the news so because we are now able to get information directly from specific agencies, we have been able to use a phone tree method to share that information. Members of our community have told us they appreciate how we reach out to them to share these details. I have been interviewed a few times already regarding communication access in the age of COVID-19. Mr. Robb and Ms. Williams created a guide for masks and interactions with our

community, but we still need to see more education to our hearing community about the barriers of communicating with a mask on.

During the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter we began to see the level of financial impact we will be seeing in FY22. Fortunately, we only saw a small decrease to our FY21 budget which included a decrease in the General Fund appropriation for Support Service Providers. The Sanding Bill during the special session reduced the general fund by \$20,000 but the total amount of funds available for Support Service Providers is still an increase over previous years. We were informed that we should expect additional reductions in the general fund. This is concerning with the revenue continuing to decline and the sudden increase in relay minutes. I have been working with our CFO, Deborah Romero, to get the most up to date revenue projections and highlight our concerns with the increasing relay usage. As you may recall letters were sent out regarding surcharge collections last year and there were discussions about an audit. We were also looking at the possibility of the surcharge amount being changed. At the time most everyone agreed that this would be the best approach, COVID-19 has changed that perspective. I am still working to explain how difficult our current situation is and that we have done everything to get this resolved within our current framework. Unfortunately, I am one of many agencies looking for additional support at this time. I will not stop, and I already have some meetings scheduled.

Relay services saw a large increase in usage during the pandemic and those numbers do not look like they will stop increasing. The increase is due to an increased usage for traditionally in person services that have become remote based services. This includes medical, legal, financial, etc. These services often require longer conversations due to their complexity which means that phone calls last longer. There is also the matter of people not being able to afford internet services. From January to July we saw a 36% usage increase in minutes for Captioned Telephone Services (CTS) and a 16% increase in Traditional Relay Services (TRS). In FY21 our per minutes cost will increase by \$.03 for CTS and \$.10 for TRS, because both our minutes are increasing and our costs are increasing we do have some concerns about the long term impact of COVID-19 on the relay industry. I recently heard a story in another state that they are using relay for schools to provide captioning. We have not seen that in our state, but relay will be a necessary tool during our current situation. This pandemic is not only having an impact on our relay services, it is also making VRS difficult as well. With the switch to Zoom, Google, WebEx, etc. Most of our community just calls in with VRS or CTS and that will not stop as long as COVID-19 is around.

At the time of this report we have completed a sole source contract for Support Service Providers (SSP). The sole source includes all of the previous services that were provided to our Deaf-Blind and Deaf Plus community. These services include SSP services that provide transportation, environmental support, and support in communicating visual information such as who they are talking with and what they are

purchasing. Case Management Services have also been traditionally a part of this contract. This year we added Senior services and asked that a plan be developed to address emergency services during forest fires, pandemics, and potential large-scale emergencies that our community needs additional supports during. The Deaf Senior services is in response to a growing need for Companion Care services that are unique to our Deaf Seniors. As many of you are aware, aging in place is a difficult process for most individuals. For our Deaf Seniors they often do not have the ability to adequately access supports specific to the population over 65 years of age and they are also often isolated not able to communicate with the community they are residing with. This creates higher instances of depression and also can impact overall health. These new services that were added to the contract will help address some of these barriers and hopefully provide a framework for improvements as our community ages. With regards to emergency situations, the agency will need to work with emergency managers and services to provide training and supports to our rural communities. As many of you are aware, we have periods of extreme heat and fire danger. We want to make sure our Deaf-Blind, Deaf Plus, and Deaf Senior community is able to get the supports they need when evacuations are necessary and if they should lose their home. The sole source will be done on a year to year basis and depends on if we have multiple agencies that can provide these services or not.

I continue to work with the Access and Functional Needs (AFN) group. This involvement has enabled us to set up meetings with the Legislative Services regarding communication access during committee hearings and during the upcoming session. We have already heard that the Legislative Health and Human Services committee has had interpreters provided for their virtual meetings. We are working to see what can be done in terms of captioning the upcoming session and committee hearings. This discussion was the result of dialogue that occurred during weekly meetings with all of the stakeholders. It is during these meetings that we have built a resource guide, a communication tool, and pushed the topic of internet access across the state. As I mentioned during the last meeting, we were able to connect interpreting agencies with the PPE distribution in the state to make sure our community interpreters were able to get PPE equipment. We are also working on webinars and trainings for the community. There are many topics we have and continue to need to address including the use of appropriate web based platforms such as Zoom during meetings, how to caption meetings on a specific platform, which platforms to avoid, what the best practices are when using a mask (we created a YouTube playlist on this subject) because the best practices with masks continues to evolve. The AFN group will start working on the after-action report and has already submitted a communication access letter to be sent to the governor. The letter provides some helpful guidance in regard to using interpreters and adding captions to various videos. This group has also given our agency the appropriate contacts to address issues when they occur including the attorney general's office and the emergency managers across the state.

By the time we meet for the board meeting we will have had another departure to announce. Sandra Williams who has been a stalwart advocate in our agency for several years has retired. Sandra leaves some big shoes to fill and probably worked as much as she ever has during the last few months of this fiscal year. I have to say everyone in this agency has worked very hard since COVID-19 hit. The sentiment that working from home is like a vacation could not be further from the truth. I have watched everyone step up and increase the amount of service they provide to our community. Our newest staff members dove into the work of addressing the communication barriers in each part of the state. Our TED program improved data collection and we are exploring an entirely new way of certifying people for equipment. Our interpreters and community engagement had to adjust to the world of virtual meetings making our meetings accessible and we became one of the models for the state. All of the year end stuff was addressed with commitment and dedication even without my being an office away. Everyone stepped up during a scary situation and a difficult time and we continue to evolve our services to serve the wide array of community members.

Thank you,

*G. Nathan Gomme*



# Community Advocacy

*Corina Gutierrez, Director of Community Advocacy*

The Department of Community Advocacy continues to work with our community to improve communication access.

## **Community Advocacy / Communication Access**

Due to the coronavirus, our advocacy department continues to primarily work from home to assist and support the Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing community regarding communication access. Our staff have been working to contact the community at large to ensure that they understand what is happening with the coronavirus in NM and to ensure that they are following the rules related to coronavirus. We have also reached out to the local stakeholders to share information with them so that they can then share with their individual communities. We continue our focus on keeping in touch with the Department of Health, the Governor's office, and local providers to improve access to the information they are sending out. In order to do this, we are working with the hearing community to educate them and to ensure that they understand their responsibility to provide communication access for our Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing community.

Our Director of Community Advocacy, Corina Gutiérrez, has been in contact with the hearing community regarding communication access this quarter because we want to ensure that they are aware of best practices as we continue to operate in this difficult situation. Ms. Gutiérrez worked with healthcare providers regarding communication access for any telemedicine/telehealth appointments and in person appointments, both require substantially different procedures and come with their own unique challenges. She continues to support providers by answering questions and providing information regarding communication access for our community related to coronavirus. For example, Ms. Gutiérrez worked with one of the healthcare providers to discuss clear masks for them to wear when they work with members of our community. More than once we received messages of frustration from our community when trying to communicate with their doctors who were wearing masks. The new experience of lipreading and understanding what their doctors were saying when masks are required in every interaction is difficult. This is the reason why the coordinator from the provider wanted Ms. Gutiérrez to work with him to see how wearing the clear masks would work. We know that the clear masks would not be medically effective in units that are caring for COVID-19 positive patients, but they could in other situations. Also, we encouraged them to use other tools to communicate with the community in those situations such as communication sheets, tablets with various apps, etc.

Ms. Gutiérrez worked with a non-profit organization, explaining that it is their responsibility to provide ASL interpreters for Deaf employees during new orientation training. Ms. Gutiérrez was also worked to educate staff who work for CYFD in southeast New Mexico about the need to provide sign language interpreters for intake interviews and home studies. We have some great contacts at CYFD, and we had many successful outcomes.

Our Community Advocacy Specialist, Dennis Stidham, worked with our Deaf and Hard of Hearing community regarding communication access with employers, community college, urgent care and dentist offices. Mr. Stidham worked with and educated the hearing community about providing appropriate accommodations in each individual setting explaining their responsibilities and how each situation was different. The employers understood that they are responsible to provide sign language interpreters for their meetings and interviews, and to provide clear masks where the Deaf and Hard of Hearing employees would be able to see and lipread other employees when they communicate with each other. Mr. Stidham also worked with the hearing community at the Community College about providing appropriate accommodations such as note takers and ASL interpreters for some Deaf students. They are now providing sign language interpreters for the students' meetings with their teachers through Zoom. The shift from in person education to online education was sudden and they had to make the necessary adjustments, but this is a largely positive outcome right now.

Mr. Stidham educated the staff at an urgent care about the importance of keeping the battery life for the tablets charged. This was an issue in the past when staff forget to recharge the tablets after usage leaving the tablets unavailable for any Video Remote Interpreting needs. The community would go to receive care and be stuck waiting for the tablets to be recharged or for the staff to find a tablet that is charged. Mr. Stidham has reported that this issue has improved. Also, Mr. Stidham successfully worked with a dentist office to provide sign language interpreters for their Deaf patients.

Mr. Stidham began work with Clovis, Los Lunas, Socorro, Gallup, and Grants to ensure that they provide captions on videos related to coronavirus when they share them regardless if it is on social media or via other news sources. It is so important for our community to be aware of what is going on within their cities and we worked to educate them on the needs of our community in all areas across the state. Mr. Stidham successfully worked with Clovis who added captions to all of their videos. The other cities are still working on adding captions to their videos.

Our newest Community Advocacy Specialist, Myra Sandoval, continues to learn from the team about the expectations in our department as well as how to work for the state. Ms. Sandoval quickly got to work on coordinating a big project addressing the access to

public releases across the state. While Ms. Sandoval helped coordinate this project, she also took part checking to see if videos on the web were accessible with interpreters during live streaming, transcripts, and captions for our Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing community. This project has been challenging for Ms. Sandoval due to the learning curve a lot of our hearing community are facing in dealing with a pandemic that forces everyone to utilize the internet more, they aren't familiar with how to add captions on the videos. This project is an ongoing project.

Ms. Sandoval has also been working on individual communication barriers/access in medical settings. Our community has to learn how to use different telemedicine platforms and learn how to make requests for appropriate accommodations for their virtual medical appointments. This is also somewhat problematic with access when social distance is an issue when taking turns entering a facility for a medical appointment, it is not always known if a person is permitted to enter and how well the location is equipped to handle people who have a hearing loss. These cases are ongoing and hopefully they will be resolved by the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2021.

### **Community Education**

The COVID-19 pandemic and the order to telework from home had an impact on our ability to continue to do presentations on site and many companies were not willing to do them through video conferencing platforms such as Zoom, WebEx, and such. Because of these circumstances the Community Education Specialist, Roger Robb, had to cancel scheduled presentations for the remainder of the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter. However, he felt comfortable using the video conferencing platform and was able to do 11 presentations for this quarter.

Mr. Robb completed 11 presentations/trainings during the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2020.

This is the breakdown of the presentations that Mr. Robb completed:

- Introduction to ASL – 10
- Hearing Loss Sensitivity – Domestic Violence Staff – 1

The agencies/organizations/business that Mr. Robb provided presentations/trainings to were:

- La Casa, Inc (Las Cruces)
- UNM Signed Language Interpreter Program

### **Systemic Advocacy**

Mr. Robb has 6 new Systemic Advocacy cases that have been ongoing for the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2020. Mr. Robb, Ms. Gutiérrez, and Executive Director Gomme

all worked with our partners at the Department of Health to create Communication Access Forms to improve access to medical services in rural locations that may be necessary as a result of COVID-19. These forms were translated into some of the languages that are used in the state and also had a number of visual icons added to the forms. Mr. Robb and Mr. Gomme would often share concerns about the barriers in rural New Mexico when it comes to access to internet for resources. Mr. Robb encouraged the state agencies to download the videos and share them with the community members when they show up in need of services. We also encourage that different stakeholders get involved to push for widespread internet access across the state. Mr. Robb reiterated the importance of securing an interpreter instead of depending on VRS and VRI services even with COVID-19. Mr. Robb also worked with the Rail Runner to add language access for our signing community.

This is a summary of the cases that he focused on:

- Accessible Functional Needs Leadership
- Accessible Functional Needs All Agencies Coalition
- General Services Department
- Human Services Department
- N.M. Department of Transportation
- Rail Runner

## **Special Projects**

### COVID-19 Project

Mr. Robb has been very busy with vlogs. He worked on developing 13 different vlogs regarding COVID-19 during the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2020.

The vlog titles and their summaries are:

1. What to Do If You Have COVID-19:  
The vlog focuses primarily on how to self-advocate when going to an on-site testing facility to get tested. Also, we talked about what to expect when one is told they tested positive for COVID-19.
2. New Mexico Governor's May 1, 2020 Orders:  
The vlog focused on Governor Michelle Lujan-Grisham's remarks during her press conference on the extension of the Stay at Home Order and explained some changes to the restrictions to a previous order to allow retailers to operate only by curbside pick-up, etc. The video explained the Gallup lockdown and the rules imposed that stated no one would be allowed to enter Gallup over the weekend. That order includes people who reside in Cibola, McKinley, and San

Juan counties. The vlog was done in ASL so that people with hearing loss would have access to the information.

3. Gallup Lockdown Order Extended:

The vlog focused on the extension of the Gallup Lockdown Order and why it was issued.

4. New Mexico Governor's May 16, 2020 Order:

The vlog focused on extending the May 1, 2020 Order which was set to expire on May 15<sup>th</sup> to the end of May. The Order was modified to include requirements on wearing a face mask when out in the public. Retailers would be able to operate at 25% maximum occupancy. The Northwest counties would transfer into the preparation phase with curbside pick-up and such.

5. Face Mask Vlog

6. Face Mask Vlog – Helpful Tips & Tricks for the Hard of Hearing Community

7. Face Mask Vlog – Helpful Tips & Tricks for the Deaf-Blind Community

8. Face Mask Vlog – Helpful Tips & Tricks for the Deaf Community

9. Face Mask Vlog – More Helpful Tips & Tricks:

The Face Mask vlog is a combination of 5 different sections which focused on the barriers that the Hearing Loss community experience when a face mask is worn, and solutions are offered to remove the barriers.

10. New Mexico Governor's Two New Announcements:

The vlog focused on explaining two announcements – the first one regarding the soft re-opening of restaurants outdoors and the criteria they had to follow to do that and the second announcement explained the soft re-opening of restaurants providing indoor services. Other facilities such as gyms, salons, and such would be able to re-open at 25% occupancy of their maximum occupancy.

11. New Mexico Governor's Soft Re-opening of Breweries:

The vlog focused on the amending of an Emergency Public Health Order which would permit a limited re-opening for breweries with criteria that they have to follow in order to re-open.

12. New Mexico Transit's 15 Seconds PSA with ASL & Subtitles:

We partnered with Rail Runner to produce a video in ASL then added the ASL video using a picture in picture format onto their PSA video. We then added subtitles to the main video to ensure additional access.

13. New Mexico Governor's Announcement on the Status of Phase 2:

The video focused on the status of Phase 2 which was supposed to have a start date of July 1<sup>st</sup> but was put on hold for at least a week because the number of COVID-19 cases skyrocketed. The video explained how Phase 2 could proceed if some criteria were met, but if it wasn't met, then the limited and safe re-opening would be extended until things improved.

**Deaf-Blind and Deaf Plus Program**

The Community Outreach Program for the Deaf-NM Deaf-Blind or Deaf Plus (Deaf/Hard of Hearing with a significant disability) has maintained its strength and has served 52 clients in total to date – 32 of whom are Deaf-Blind and 20 of whom are Deaf Plus. These 52 New Mexicans live in 10 of New Mexico's 33 counties. We are thankful that COPD continues to provide trainings which include the Support Service Providers during this quarter.

The Support Service Providers provide support to Deaf-Blind and Deaf Plus clients when they want to participate in community events. The SSPs provide support to Deaf-Blind and Deaf Plus clients at activities and events. However, due to COVID-19, there were no community social activities planned/conducted (i.e., Deaf Senior Citizens and Zia Deaf-Blind Club).

# Outreach & Telecommunications

## **Telecommunications Equipment Distribution (TED) Program**

The Telecommunication Equipment Distribution (TED) Program lends telecommunication devices at no cost to qualifying New Mexico residents who need assistance in communicating via telephone. Equipment includes amplified telephones, iPads, speech assistive devices, notification systems, loud ringers, and assistive listening with neckloops.

## **Equipment**

The Telecommunication Equipment Distribution Specialist, Mr. Jason Siergey, continues to communicate with applicants who are interested in equipment from our program. For the fourth quarter we continued our policy of suspending in-person communication. To do our work we have made every effort to provide as much information and support as we can through electronic means such as videophones, video relay services, emails, and text messaging and through our website.

We wanted to take a moment to explain our steps in moving to an entirely no contact process during this pandemic. In an effort to streamline and reduce contact in TED, we moved to allow all individuals to provide information and documents necessary to apply for our program through a virtual process when a person is able. This means individuals will be able to fill out the application and provide documents for the application without coming into the office; they can share scans, faxes, or photos of their documents for processing. For the most part scans and photos have made the process a lot more fluid allowing Mr. Siergey to process the applications from home. However, in circumstances where a person cannot do so and traditional mail must be sent to and from the office, various staff members have been taking turns going into the office to assist in this process. During office visits, any mail and/or faxes that were received are scanned to a digital file which allows Mr. Siergey to process the applications as well as store the documents digitally. Traditionally we store older files in a digital format in order to conserve space, now however, we must be able to access all of the TED files via a virtual process in order to address any repair requests or updates.

In general, applications are coming in slowly for traditional assistive technology due to the uncertainty of safety with COVID-19 and the individuals desire to do in person visits. As a result, the number of traditional amplified phone orders has declined, however we were very busy with iPad orders both new and for individuals who wanted updated iPads. We believe that people are now more than ever looking for ways to access telecommunication services as well as access the news which has resulted in the increased iPad orders. We are also working to prepare for in-person services once it is safe to do so. Teltex has already added extra cleaning precautions to the equipment and we are working with Teltex to make sure we can create a safe environment for testing equipment. We are working to improve access to those seeking TED services during these challenging times.

From the start of the teleworking to now, Mr. Siergey has remained in contact with many of our clients in Telecommunication Equipment Distribution program to ensure that they are doing well during with the Public Health Orders in effect and to ensure that they have access to working equipment that will allow them to communicate with others. We offer assistance if the devices are or were not working which includes shipping for repairs which is covered under the contract with our vendor. We also informed emergency shelters and health officials of our program in case there were people who brought equipment with them to the hospital or during emergency evacuations.

We will begin working on ways to remotely certify individuals in the beginning of the next fiscal year. Mr. Siergey will need to update and test all the equipment and ensure that everything is ready for the remote certification process. Mr. Siergey and Ms. Gutiérrez are already reviewing and wrapping up the updates.

Equipment distributed for the fourth quarter is as follows:

<b>Phone</b>	<b>Total items distributed</b>
Clarity Alto	0
Clarity Alto Plus	4
Clarity BT914	0
Clarity D704	0
Clarity D714	0
Clarity JV35	0
Clarity XLC2+	4
Clarity XLC7BT	4
ClearSounds A1600BT	0
ClearSounds CSC600ER	0
Panasonic KX-TGM430B	0
Panasonic KX-TGM450S	0
Geemarc Ampli550	0
CapTel 840	6
<b>iPad</b>	
Deaf Package	27
Hard of Hearing Package	54
Speech Package	27
Deaf-Blind Package	0
<b>iPad mini</b>	
Deaf Package	9
Hard of Hearing Package	9
Speech Package	9
Deaf-Blind Package	0
<b>Total Phone/iPad Equipment Distributed Count:</b>	<b>153</b>

<b>Accessories</b>	<b>Total items distributed</b>
Amplicom NL100 Neckloop	0
Bellman Mino with Neckloop	0
Bellman High Powered Neckloop (no device)	0
Clarity CE50 Bluetooth Neckloop	0
Clarity SR100 Super Phone Ringer	0
Clarity HA40 In-line Telephone Amplifier	0
ClearSounds Quattro Pro	0
ClearSounds ANS3000 Answering Machine	3
ClearSounds CS-CR200 Phone Ringer	0
ClearSounds CS-WIL95 Amplifier	0
Comfort Audio Duett Neckloop	15
Geemarc LH10PK Neckloop	0
Griffin Labs SolaTone	0
Griffin Labs SolaTone Plus	0
Griffin Labs EMOTE	0
Krown RA 05 Amplified Ringer with Strobe	0
Serene Innovations CentralAlert CA360	10
Serene Innovations CentralAlert CA380	0
Serene Innovations RF-200 Alerting System	0
Serene Innovations SA-40 Cell Phone Amplifier	0
Serene Innovations CentralAlert™ SS-201	0
Serene Innovations UA-45 Universal Phone Amplifier	0
Silent Call Medallion Kit	0
SonicAlert HA360MKBR	9
SonicAlert HA360BRK	0
Surge Protector (Phones and accessories)	8
<b>Total Accessories Equipment Distributed Count:</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Total Overall Equipment Distributed Count:</b>	<b>198</b>

### **Relay New Mexico (RNM) and NMCDHH Outreach**

As a result of COVID-19 both Relay New Mexico (RNM) under Hamilton Relay and the New Mexico Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing have been unable to attend any Outreach events in person. Both Relay New Mexico as well as Mr. Dennis Stidham and Susana Santillan from NMCDHH, have been exploring alternative means to do outreach events. Mr. Sena from Relay New Mexico has been able to do some events via Webinar. Our agency is all looking at doing some events via the internet while at the same time collaborating with the different agencies and locations to see how we can

provide outreach to the rural areas where internet is not always available except in congregate settings. We are still working out the logistics of virtual platforms, so it is difficult to get accurate numbers of visitors at this time.

Virtual Booths conducted include:

<b>Events</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Visitors</b>
United Way of Central New Mexico	Albuquerque	5/21/2020	Virtual
Luna Community College Accessibility Support Services	Las Vegas	6/30/2020	Virtual
		<b>Total:</b>	Virtual

# Las Cruces Satellite Office

*Sandra Williams, Las Cruces Office Coordinator*

*Susana Santillan, Las Cruces Community Advocacy Specialist*

## **Individual Advocacy and Service Coordination**

For the last quarter in fiscal year 2020, the NMCDHH Las Cruces Office Staff added 8 more individual cases while teleworking from home. They continued to provide advocacy, coordinating services and providing information and referrals as necessary to remove communication barriers at the individuals' homes, employment settings, state and local agencies, and public/commercial facilities. As always, the Las Cruces staff followed up and made sure the needed resources were attained. Their advocacy and service coordination resulted over 466 communication barriers for traditional barriers but had an extra 1,070 COVID-19 communication barriers addressed this quarter, creating a total of 1,569 communication barriers removed this quarter.

## **Las Cruces Staff Accomplishments**

Below are just a few examples of individual advocacy services required due to public entities that lacked appropriate communication access.

- Sandra Williams and Susana Santillan assisted the city of Las Cruces in getting their live stream City Council Meetings captioned. After a few weeks of educating and pooling resources they were successful.
- Ms. Williams assisted an individual with a discrimination case when a restaurant did not hire him due to his disability. Ms. Williams received confirmation from that this case has been settled.
- Ms. Santillan provided ongoing advocacy services to a Hard of Hearing student at New Mexico State University (NMSU). The student was taking a course in a specific field and the program coordinator was going to have her drop the course due to barriers with accommodations. The student felt she was not provided reasonable accommodations but if she were, she would be able to complete the course. They were able to make significant headway after several months of dialog via telephone calls, emails, and video meeting with NMSU's Student Accessibility Services Interim Director, NMSU staff and Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) regarding effective communication and reasonable accommodations that the student requested. This resulted in a positive outcome with the accommodation that the student requested being provided by the department. The situation ended with the individual feeling confident that the accommodations will help her succeed in the program.
- Ms. Williams continues to check in with rural towns to see if their websites are accessible. Ms. Williams provided resources for filing a complaint with Department of Justice when a representative from one town refused to acknowledge that they are not accessible.

## COVID-19

- Ms. Williams and Ms. Santillan assisted several members of our community who had questions regarding the pandemic, including the mandated Stay at Home orders, restrictions, the use of masks, social distancing, how to find out about their stimulus checks, and if the checks affect their Social Security benefits. Also, they often asked follow-up questions on what the Governor said on her live streamed messages.
- Ms. Williams provided various resources and information to the following:
  - Two School Districts with Deaf and Hard of Hearing students
  - A representative from a state agency requested information on captioning their website.
  - A local hospital was provided information that might be helpful when it involves telehealth-communication and recommendations during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Rural, frontier, and tribal communities often have the most significant barriers to access. Some healthcare services are not readily delivered, such as routine immunizations, treatment for chronic conditions, and treatment and support for substance abuse which is worse without communication access.
  - To NMSU for CART services for on-line classes
- Several members of our community asked questions about Black Lives Matter and Juneteenth, why the on-going violence is happening and so forth.
- We also received some questions about what was happening at Gallaudet University.
- Some asked why onsite governmental agencies are still closed.
- Ms. Santillan reached out to the Expanded COVID-19 Resources Local Network of Care website support to discuss hearing loss accessibility. With the collaboration of the Trilogy Network of Care Vice President and BHPC Program Manager they made multiple upgrades to the Network of Care to make it as accessible as possible to the Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Deaf-Blind community. The website currently meets all ADA requirements and multiple recommendations for accessibility. On their expanded coronavirus (COVID-19) section, they are working to include as many of the CDC's ASL videos as possible. They have also built the website to be accessible to computer screen-reader software and posted the NMCDHH resources as well. .
- The Las Cruces staff worked on a Southern NM COVID-19 Project. Ms. Santillan looked up Deming, Lordsburg, Silver City, and T or C city websites and noticed that their videos, mainly on their Facebook pages and City Council Meetings via Zoom or GoToMeeting are not accessible to the hearing loss community. She contacted the City Clerk of each city and spoke with the Mayor of Silver City at one of his Meetings with the Mayor to provide guidance and resources regarding reasonable accommodations for the Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and Hard of Hearing NM community. She will continue to check if their websites and their meetings are accessible throughout this crisis and beyond.
- Ms. Santillan participated in the COVID-19: Mental Health Challenges & Resilience Webinar April 3rd; the Q&A Session on NM Eviction Moratorium

April 7th via Zoom, the Best Practices in Adoption of Telehealth: COVID 19 and Beyond Miniseries Virtual Visits May 27th to network, outreach, provide guidance, and resources regarding reasonable accommodations for the Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and Hard of Hearing community of New Mexico.

### **System Advocacy**

- Las Cruces staff met with an Independent Living Resource Center via Zoom and exchanged information about the mission of NMCDHH. The goal was to collaborate to share with the community what NMCDHH has to offer, and for our organizations to make connections and build bridges with each other..
- Ms. Williams participated in the NAD Early Childhood intervention webinar.
- Ms. Williams participated in the quarterly New Mexico Disability Emergency Planning Advisory Council (NMDEPAC) meeting.
- Ms. Santillan continues to serve on four Committees: Behavioral Health Local Collaborative 3 Member, City of Las Cruces Americans with Disabilities Act Advisory Committee/elected Secretary for FY2020-2021, and NM Workforce Connection Disabilities and Monitoring Committees.
- Ms. Santillan joins the following monthly meetings to network and outreach: Adult/Substance Abuse/Medicaid Sub-Committee Meeting, Behavioral Health Local Collaborative 3 Meeting, Creative Aging Advisory Committee Meeting, Doña Ana Communities United Meeting, Inter-Agency Networking Meeting, Sierra Health Council Meeting, Southern New Mexico Diabetes Meeting, and Unified Prevention Coalition Meeting, Luna County Health Council, and Resilience Leaders Meeting either via Zoom, Google Meet or Microsoft Teams. During each meeting she provided a summary of NMCDHH services and answered questions regarding hearing loss. She informed them that, due to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, all NMCDHH Staff are teleworking until further notice. We are still available to serve our community via phone, video phone, email, and videoconferencing, but our physical offices in Albuquerque and Las Cruces are closed to protect our staff and constituents from the spread of the virus until the further notice. She will continue to participate and provide guidance regarding hearing loss accessibility.
- Ms. Santillan assisted the following entities:  
The Children's Garden in Las Cruces with providing the NMCDHH Factsheet "How to find a Sign Language Interpreter".  
Families & Youth, Inc. by providing the NMCDHH Fact Sheet Financial "Assistance for Hearing Aids".  
Southern New Mexico Diabetes Outreach by providing the NMCHH Factsheet "Realtime Captioning Resources".
- Ms. Santillan was contacted by a Grant Writer Contractor for the City of Las Cruces Fire Department about how many deaf and hard of hearing are living in Las Cruces. They are working on a grant for a Smoke Alarm Insulation and Education Campaign. They would like to collaborate with the NMCDHH Las Cruces Office for future assistance regarding disseminating information on the

Smoke Alarm Insulation and Education Campaign to the hearing loss community once the program begins.

**Community Collaboration:**

The Las Cruces Staff collaborated with several agencies, including, but not limited to:

- Adult/Substance Abuse/Medicaid Sub-Committee
- Behavioral Health Planning Council
- Behavioral Health Services Division
- City of Las Cruces Senior Programs
- Creative Aging Advisory Committee
- Doña Ana Communities United
- Doña Ana County ADA Coordinator
- Families & Youth, Inc.
- Little Creek Behavioral Health
- Luna County Health Council Meeting
- National Alliance on Mental Illness, Southern New Mexico
- New Mexico Commission for the Blind
- New Mexico Ideal Options
- New Mexico Network of Care Websites
- New Mexico State University Office of Institutional Equity
- New Mexico State University Student Accessibility Services
- New Mexico Technology Assistance Program
- Office of the New Mexico Attorney General
- PRIDE Industries Inc.
- Sierra Health Council
- Southern New Mexico Diabetes
- Southern New Mexico Society for Human Resource Management
- Southwestern Area Workforce Developmental Board Disabilities Committee
- Southwestern Area Workforce Developmental Board Monitoring/Performance Committee
- Trilogy/Network of Care
- Unified Prevention Coalition Meeting
- WESST Las Cruces Region
- WESST Roswell Region

**Monthly-ongoing basis collaborations:**

- ADA Celebration Committee to include representatives from Doña Ana County, Las Cruces City, NM State DD, Disability Rights New Mexico
- Aging & Long-Term Services Department, APS Caseworkers
- Behavioral Health Local Collaborative 3
- Bridges 2 Wellness, Certified Peer Support Worker
- Celestial Hearing Solutions
- City of Las Cruces ADA
- Concilio CDS Inc.

- Disability Rights New Mexico
- Doña Ana County Health and Human Services Department
- Hidalgo Medical Services
- Las Cruces Central Public Health Office
- Las Cruces Commission for the Blind, Blind Skills Instructor
- Las Cruces DVR
- Las Cruces Interagency Monthly meetings
- Las Cruces National Alliance on Mental Illness
- Las Cruces NMSU
- Las Cruces VA Clinic
- Local Emergency Planning Committees
- Mobile Integrated Healthcare
- National Federation of the Blind
- NM Workforce Connection
- Silver City Woman's Club
- T or C Housing Authority
- Tender Care Home Health
- Tresco Inc.
- Western New Mexico University
- ZVRS/Purple

### **Booths and Presentations**

The Las Cruces staff did not host any in person booths nor provide any in-person presentations this quarter due to the Public Health Emergency. They will be working with Dennis Stidham in the Albuquerque Office and the agency to see what can be done virtually.



# Community Engagement

*Lisa Dignan, M.Ed., CI and CT, Director of Community Engagement*

## **Director of Community Engagement Highlights**

- All participants successfully completed the Spring 2020 session of New Mexico Mentoring with only slight extensions to the schedule. The COVID-19 public health emergency prevented face-to-face meetings, but everyone moved to virtual meetings successfully.
- Applications are being accepted for the Fall 2020 session that will begin in August and will be conducted remotely.
- The Signed Language Interpreting Practices Board has not met since January due to the public health emergency but continues to issue licenses while staff are working remotely.
- A vast amount of my time has been spent on Community Education related to the COVID-19 pandemic. I created a COVID-19 Resources page on the NMCDHH website and continue to add resources. I am also sharing information and resources on the NMCDHH social media accounts and email newsletter with much-appreciated assistance from Lori Neubauer, the Administrative Operations Specialist.
- As Chair of the Council for Purchasing from Persons with Disabilities, I guided the Council's transition to remote meetings via Zoom in compliance with the Open Meetings Act.
- I attended several Zoom training webinars and successfully learned how to provide closed captioning on Zoom meetings, how to live stream them to YouTube, how to show the captions on the live stream, and how to administer the meetings while also participating in my manager role. This was implemented for two NMCDHH Board Meetings during the quarter.
- I worked with several entities to provide guidance on issues related to communication access including:
  - The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
  - The Regulation and Licensing Department
  - William McBride Law Group
  - San Juan College
  - Alamogordo Public Schools
  - Rocky Mountain Youth Corps
  - Santa Fe District Attorney's Office
  - Law Office of the Public Defender
  - Albuquerque Sign Language Academy
  - Las Cruces Public Schools
  - University of New Mexico Hospital
  - Other individuals and private businesses

## **Communication Development Specialist and Apprentice Program Highlights**

Ms. Eubank transitioned very well to teleworking, and has effectively worked on several projects:

- Providing ongoing virtual Apprentice sessions in Supervision and Reflective Practice including sessions focused on ethical decision making and preparing for the NIC Performance Exam.
- Developed and presented three virtual workshops focused on the Demand Control Schema and its application to interpreting work. Two workshops were for UNM students who are beginning their practicum year in the Sign Language Interpreting Program. One workshop was open to the local interpreting community.
- Attended 12 professional development workshops and trainings, many of which were focused on best practices for video remote interpreting or providing feedback to interpreting students in virtual environments.
- NMCDHH provided 81.5 hours of interpreting services in the fourth quarter.
- Unfortunately, 124 hours of interpreting services were cancelled due to the public health emergency.
- Referral agencies were not used at all this quarter.
- There were no unfilled interpreting requests.

#### The Apprentice Interpreter Program:

- Apprentices engaged in 67.5 hours of observation, interpreting, and professional development work in the quarter. We also had 21 hours of apprentice work cancelled due to the public health emergency.
- The three FY20 Apprentice Interpreters successfully completed their year as Apprentices with NMCDHH. All three have agreed to provide contract interpreting services for us in the coming fiscal year.
- We had seven applicants for the Apprentice Program for FY21. We interviewed all seven applicants and chose four to whom we extended offers to join the Apprentice Program. All four accepted, but one later decided to decline due to a time conflict with other employment.

#### **Human Resources**

The fourth quarter was busy with HR activities – particularly while teleworking:

- Employee and manager evaluations were completed and entered in SHARE prior to the June 30 deadline.
- Personnel files were updated and prepared for the FY20 Audit.
- Implemented further policies and procedures related to the COVID-19 public health emergency while the entire agency is teleworking.
- Worked on further policy updates as required by the State Personnel Office.
- Attended several Human Resources Council meetings and training webinars hosted by SPO and the Employee Benefit Bureau.

#### **NMCDHH Library**

- At the end of the fourth quarter, the library is still effectively closed due to the public health emergency. We have made special allowances for a few of our contractors to borrow items when we could do so safely.
- The “NMCDHH Library Item of the Month” feature in our email newsletters has been suspended until the library re-opens.

- The online library can be accessed at <https://NMCDHH.librarika.com>, where people can view all of our library materials, reserve items, and review their loan history.
- Currently 101 people have registered for access to the database.

<b>Library Usage - FY 2020</b>					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Patrons	11	5	5	3	24
Items Loaned	18	8	7	7	40



# Administration & Finance

*Deborah Romero, Director of Administrative Services*

FY20 - 4th Quarter Board Report - Administrative Services @ June 30, 2020						
Category	2020 Budget	Expenditures	Encumbered	Remaining Budget	% Expended	
200 PERSONNEL SERVICES	1,196,000.00	908,147.50		287,852.50	75.93%	
300 CONTRACTUAL SERVICES	1,720,300.00	749,612.35	287,525.23	683,162.42	43.57%	
400 OTHER	282,100.00	214,580.50	10,023.70	57,495.80	76.07%	
500 OTHER FINANCING USES	116,500.00	116,500.00		0.00	100.00%	
Total	3,314,900.00	1,988,840.35	297,548.93	1,028,510.72	60.00%	
CDHH Monthly Revenue						
Month	General Fund Allotment		TRS Revenue			
Subtotal	\$327,400.00		\$1,535,603.04			



# Data & Statistics

*As required by Legislative Performance Measures*

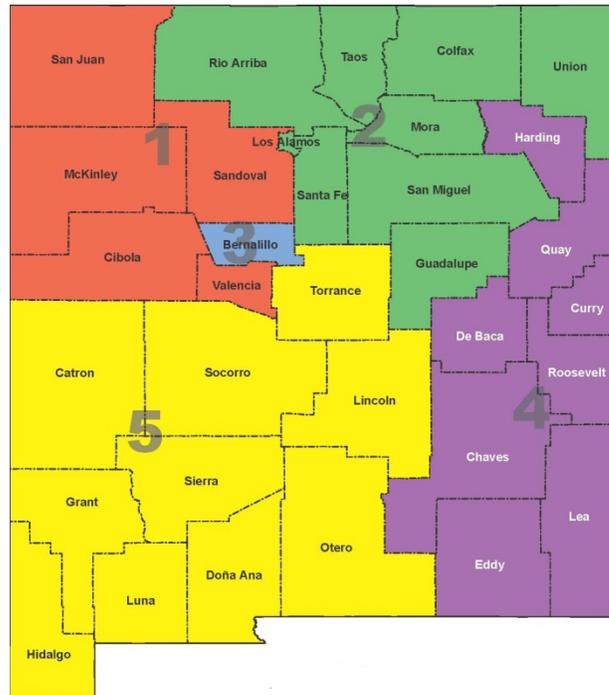
## **Fiscal Year 2020**

<b>Legislative Performance Measure</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Year to Date</b>	<b>YTD % of Goal Met</b>
Number of workshops & training sessions conducted	135	80	59%
Number of outreach events coordinated	122	101	83%
Average number of relay minutes per month	10,000	9567	96%
Number of accessible technology distributions	1070	1674	156%
Number of communication barriers addressed	20,000	13,057	65%
Number of interpreters in CDHH sponsored professional development	200	77	39%

## **Fiscal Year 2019**

<b>Legislative Performance Measure</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Year to Date</b>	<b>YTD % of Goal Met</b>
Number of workshops & training sessions conducted	135	136	101%
Number of outreach events coordinated	122	126	103%
Average number of relay minutes per month	6,000	9213	154%
Number of accessible technology distributions	1070	815	76%
Number of communication barriers addressed	20,000	9404	47%
Number of interpreters in CDHH sponsored professional development	200	424	212%

## Clients by Region



	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter	Year to Date
Region 1	5	8	16		29
Region 2	18	3	19		40
Region 3	52	37	109		198
Region 4	14	10	8		32
Region 5	114	39	38		191
<b>Total Clients by Quarter</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>190</b>		<b>490</b>

## Clients by Self-Identified Disability

	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter	Year to Date
Deaf	81	34	44		159
Hard of Hearing	76	38	45		159
Deaf-Blind	9	4	6		19
Speech Disabled	3	3	3		9
Hearing	34	18	92		144
<b>Total Clients by Quarter</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>190</b>		<b>490</b>



Date: July 15, 2020

To: Nathan Gomme – Executive Director – New Mexico Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

From: Reyes Gonzales and Christine Fuller –Field Operations Director and Statewide Supported Employment and Deaf & Hard of Hearing Coordinator for New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (NMDVR).

Re: MOU Goals and Performance – Report for Fourth Quarter SFY2020 **April 1, 2020 – June 30, 2020.**

**New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation  
NMDVR Performance Measures SFY 20  
Fourth Quarter SFY2020 April 1, 2020 – June 30, 2020)**

**NMDVR Liaisons**

**New Mexico Association for the Deaf** – Is vacant at this time.

**NM Chapter – Hearing Loss Association of America** – Christine Fuller Statewide Supported Employment and Deaf & Hard of Hearing Coordinator.

**NMDVR Service Provision:**

**Order of Selection** – NMDVR is currently under active Order of Selection. Currently, the Most Significantly Disabled (MSD) category is open and individuals who are MSD are being served. All other categories are put on a wait list until resources (staff and funding) become available. The categories identified under order of selection are: Most Significantly Disabled (MSD), Significantly Disabled (SD), and All Other Eligible Participants (AOEP). NMDVR has been releasing names off the waitlist, as resources permit. The releases are based on 1) those individuals who are in the Significantly Disabled (SD) category and then 2) date of application. All applicants are provided Information and Referral services when they are added to the wait list. On June 19, 2020, DVR released 304 names off the waitlist.

**Information and Referral-** A list of places within the community the applicant may be able to get assistance while on the wait list.

**Counseling and Guidance** – Counseling and Guidance is available to all DVR eligible individuals receiving services under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

**Other Hearing Impediments-** This is a category within the DVR AWARE database: It includes individuals who have: Tinnitus, Meniere's etc.

**Performance Measures** – All statistics are for this quarter only.

**Sign Language Interpreting:** Four (4) individuals have received sign language Interpreter services. A total of **\$3,466.32** has been authorized and expended for this service.

**Hearing Aids and /or other hearing devices:** Eighteen (18) individuals received hearing aids and/or other devices. A total of **\$ 78,163.78** has been authorized and expended for this service.

**Closed Successfully Rehabilitated (employed):**

Nine (9) individuals who are Deaf have been closed successfully rehabilitated. Eighteen (18) individuals who are Hard of Hearing have been closed successfully rehabilitated.

Seven (7) individuals who have Other Hearing Impediments have been closed successfully rehabilitated.

**Employment Information**

Average number of hours worked for individuals who are Deaf/Deaf-Blind/Hard of Hearing or Other Hearing Impediments is 30.68 hours per week. Average wage at closure is \$15.10 per hour.

**Caseload Activity**

Two Hundred forty-two (232) individuals who are Deaf/Deaf-Blind have been opened and/or opened and closed.

Two hundred ninety-eight (298) individuals who are Hard of Hearing and/or Other Hearing Impediments have been opened and/or opened and closed.

Six hundred sixty (660) individuals who are Deaf/Deaf-Blind/Hard of Hearing and or Other Hearing Impediments have been opened and/or opened and closed.

**Ineligible for VR Services**

Zero (0) individuals who are Deaf/Deaf-Blind, Hard of Hearing or Other Hearing Impediments have been determined as ineligible for VR services.

## **Transition Services**

Ninety-Three (**93**) individuals who are Deaf/Deaf-Blind, Hard of Hearing or Other Hearing Impediments have been identified as receiving Pre-ETS and/or Transition services.

### **This is how DVR is providing services during COVID 19;**

- All DVR offices are closed to the public until further notice.
- We are sending one person a day to the check mail.
- All DVR staff are working from home.
- We are only working via the phone and internet.
- Bus passes and direct checks will be sent via mail.
- Individuals with disabilities can apply electronically via our web page at [www.dvr.state.nm.us](http://www.dvr.state.nm.us)
- These individuals will be called by staff to schedule an initial interview via phone or computer.
- Current DVR participants, vendors, etc. can call the 1-800 number attached for the office they want to reach. Individual office phones are being forwarded to the staff.

Respectfully Submitted:

Reyes Gonzales  
Field Operations Director

Christine Fuller  
Supported Employment/Deaf Hard of Hearing Coordinator





## Collaborating Agency Quarterly Report

Agency Name: Signed Language Interpreting Practice Board, RLD  
 Report By: Theresa Montoya, Board Administrator  
 Expiration Date: June 30, 2020

Quarter Reported:

1<sup>st</sup> (July-Sept) \_\_\_\_ 2<sup>nd</sup> (Oct-Dec) \_\_\_\_ 3<sup>rd</sup> (Jan-Mar) \_\_\_\_ 4<sup>th</sup> (Apr-June) X

### Memorandum of Understanding:

New Mexico Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing will:

- A. Transfer \$25,000 as appropriated in the General Appropriation Act of 2020 to the Signed Language Interpreting Practices Board for purposes of carrying out the provisions of the Signed Language Interpreting Practices Act at NMSA 1978, Section 61-34-1 to 17.

Regulation and Licensing Department will:

- A. Deposit the transfer of \$25,000 with Signed Language Interpreting Practices Fund and use the funds only for purposes of carrying out the provisions of the Signed Language Interpreting Practices Act per NMSA 1978, Section 61-34-13.
- B. Provide quarterly reports to the NMCDHH Director of Community Engagement including:
  - a. Number of licenses issued
  - b. Dates of Signed Language Interpreting Practices Act Board Meetings
  - c. Number of complaints
  - d. Number of license denials, suspensions, and revocations
- C. Provide budget reports for the Signed Language Interpreting Practices Fund upon request with appropriate advance notice.

### Performance Report

<i>Category</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Licenses Issued	12	3 Community; 9 Provisional
Complaints	0	
License denials, suspensions, and revocations	1	

### Dates of Signed Language Interpreting Practices Board Meetings:

Last meeting: January 13, 2020. The scheduled April 13, 2020 was postponed due to the public health emergency.

Next meeting: To be determined.

Agendas and draft minutes are available at the Board website:

[www.rld.state.nm.us/boards/Signed\\_Language\\_Interpreting\\_Practices\\_Members\\_and\\_Meetings.aspx](http://www.rld.state.nm.us/boards/Signed_Language_Interpreting_Practices_Members_and_Meetings.aspx)