

NMCDHH





FY26 Quarter 4 Board Report

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NMCDHH BOARD MEETING
Thursday, September 3 2026
3:00pm

The meeting will be virtual and hosted on Zoom. The public can view the meeting livestream on YouTube with interpreters and captioning at this link:

<https://youtube.com/live/EoLfvCPAILo>.

FINAL AGENDA

Posted: 8/31/2026

1. Call to order and Roll Call
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes – March 5, 2026 and June 4, 2026
4. Evaluation of the Executive Director
 - The Commission may recess to executive session pursuant to NMSA 1978, §10-15-1 (H) (2)
5. Presentation from Rolka Loube
6. Executive Director's Report
7. Department Reports
8. Adjournment



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

*Quarterly Board Meeting
Thursday, June 4, 2026
3:00pm*

*The meeting was virtual on Zoom and the public could view the meeting livestream on YouTube with interpreting and captioning at
[https://www.youtube.com/live/ SVbmJX52FA](https://www.youtube.com/live/SVbmJX52FA)*

DRAFT – These minutes will be subject to possible revision and approval by the commissioners at the next Board meeting on September 3, 2026.

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair John Hooper called the meeting to order at 3:11pm. Renee Bregar, Administrative Operations Specialist, conducted roll call.

Present: Mr. John Hooper – Chair
Mr. Ryan Means

Absent: Mr. Joseph Lopez, III
Dr. Norm Dawson
Dr. Jennifer Herbold
Dr. Stephon L. Scott
Ms. Tiffany Gallegos

Quorum was not met. Therefore, any action items requiring a vote were not addressed.

Seven staff members from NMCDHH were present: Executive Director, Nathan Gomme; Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Deborah Romero; Director of Community Advocacy, Corina Gutiérrez; Director of Community Engagement, Amy Bourque; Communication Development Specialist, Jessica Eubank; Community Engagement Specialist, Trevor Brennan; and Administrative Operations Specialist, Renee Bregar. Jessica Eubank, Rhonda Hall, Isabella Krooth and Alex Luce interpreted. Partners Interpreting LLC provided CART transcription. Mr. Eduardo Ugarte, from the New Mexico Department of Justice (NMDOJ), was also present.

II. FY25 FINAL AUDIT Presentation by Auditor Thad Porch

Mr. Porch mentioned this will be the final audit his organization will complete for NMCDHH, the term limit has been reached. He provided a high-level description of what an audit is; a review of financial statements to determine if they are materially correct. He described the three different types of opinions as related to errors found within the financial statements. For eight consecutive years, NMCDHH has received an unqualified, unmodified opinion, the best opinion an organization can receive.

Mr. Porch then discussed assets and liabilities and changes to each. He did, specifically, mention the telecommunication relay surcharge and noted the decline, which has been year over year. However, there was still a net increase indicating healthy revenue.

Mr. Porch then touched on the change in accounting practice, Gatsby 101, and how the change affects net position.

There was some discussion between Mr. Porch, Commissioner Hooper and Executive Director Gomme around inflation, the budget and an expected increase in taxes going forward.

III. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Gomme discussed the expansion of broadband services into some rural communities, TTY services, relay services and related costs, a meeting with and demonstration by Lotus, a company which provides rings used for accessibility. Director Gomme also mentioned some of the challenges of wearables such as glasses for accessibility; they require a username and a password, a smart phone and/or other technology, none of which is required to use rings. Director Gomme also confirmed that NMCDHH staff have completed 2 of 3 training sessions as related to the Americans with Disabilities Act which applies directly to accommodation and accessibility.

Commissioner Means asked about the potential of funding for broadband services for secure rural schools (SRS) and if the State of New Mexico has any plans to access funds. Director Gomme confirmed that information about the funds and where they will be used is publicly available in the Office of Broadband Expansion (OOBE) newsletter. He also confirmed that the goal for broadband access across the state is 2029, currently.

Director Gomme also mentioned that NMCDHH has implemented Google ads, which automatically directs to our new Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program (TEDP) online accessible application when typing “Deaf” and “New Mexico”. This leads to our expanding TEDP program.

In closing, Director Gomme announced the departure of Mx. Bourque and thanked them for their work within the agency.

IV. Department Reports

Commissioner Hooper complimented CDHH staff, specifically Mr. Robb, for his work with the Albuquerque Police Department.

Commissioners and Executive Director Gomme discussed the accessibility of tables in the quarterly report and how they will be handled in the future.

Commissioner Means, Executive Director Gomme, and Ms. Gutiérrez discussed Deaf Self-Advocacy Issues and resources within New Mexico, and nationwide.

Director Gomme briefly discussed the Lotus Ring pilot program to commence at PAH! Hiland Plaza. He confirmed that related funding is allocated for Deaf, including DeafBlind, and Speech-disabled individuals. There are 74 kits (multiple rings) available to be deployed.

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Renee F. Bregar

Renee Bregar
Administrative Operations Specialist

Executive Summary

G. Nathan Gomme, Executive Director

Commissioners and community members, I present the fourth quarter Executive Summary of Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) for the New Mexico Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NMCDHH). This report reflects the comprehensive work completed between April and June 2026, highlighting major program achievements, administrative milestones, fiscal year-end financial management, and ongoing statewide initiatives to expand and safeguard communication access across New Mexico.

During the fourth quarter, NMCDHH monitored and engaged in key state and federal developments impacting telecommunications and digital accessibility:

- **DOJ Web Accessibility Extension:** In late April 2026, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) announced a one-year extension (to 2027) for Title II Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) compliance. During the fourth quarter, I met with Mr. Brennan several times throughout April assuming we would be finalizing the compliance concerns on our website; we were able to achieve compliance in most every area due to NMCDHH proactively overhauling its digital assets. Mr. Brennan highlights some of the work done in the Department of Community Engagement (DCE) report.
- **Aira and Hamilton:** During the fourth quarter, Mr. Brennan, Mx. Bourque and I met with Aira, a company that developed an ASL-on-demand service that has been something this agency has been interested in for some time. During the meeting, we discussed the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in their platform, which is minimal, and how they have worked with other states to provide services. Our interest in companies such as Aira is only beginning to gain traction as we continue to look at the future of access with the upcoming changes from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). In addition to these meetings, I also attended the Hamilton State Relay Administrators' Meeting. During the

meeting, we discussed the FCC Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Hamilton's commitment to the states, and several state members speculated on the timeline for the future. While we remain unclear on what the next steps will be, Hamilton showed their commitment to working with the states.

- **National Relay & Equipment Partnerships:** As the Chair for the National Association for State Relay Administration (NASRA), I worked with our partner, the Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program Association (TEDPA), to set up the first joint conference in St. Louis advancing logistics and currently planning the agenda for the conference. This includes planning key presenters such as the FCC and our various partners in each organization.

Financial Work

NMCDHH closed FY26 with strong fiscal controls and transparent oversight across all state allotments and surcharge revenues.

FY27 OPBUD & Contracts:

We worked with our vendors to close out the remaining balances and provide deadlines for the last payments of the FY26 year this quarter. After reviewing the contracts that are not up for a Request for Proposal (RFP) in FY27, we worked to set up Purchase Orders sent out as well as a memo noting the 50/50 year this year for funds. I specifically had to meet with two of our vendors to discuss the upcoming fiscal year and budget needs. There were some questions about the rules related to the 50/50 year and questions about what to expect this year.

In operating budget discussions, agency leadership prioritized direct field interpreting resources for our team at the agency. We will also be working to bring in no-cost or State Personnel Office (SPO)-sponsored training for staff professional development in the future. We have already begun these trainings with three Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) refresher trainings, two of which have already been completed, and the third which is set to occur at the start of the new fiscal year. These trainings have been

provided by the Southwest ADA Center. Funding for FY27 CART and Professional Development Workshops for interpreters was also set aside.

In addition to the operations and budget, we wrapped up our Special Traditional Relay Service (TRS) Fund compliance audit alongside Rolka Loubé. A quick summary of the report is that several reviewed carriers failed to report a portion of their eligible in-state retail revenue, which resulted in underpaid TRS surcharge contributions to the state. Wireless carriers accounted for a majority of the underreported revenue and unpaid surcharges, whereas traditional carriers were found to be in substantial compliance, with some mixed results in other types of carriers.

Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program (TEDP) & Assistive Technology

- **Distribution Milestones:** TEDP distributed 876 pieces of equipment during Q4, culminating in a total of 1,642 devices distributed across FY26. This performance exceeded the annual legislative target of 1,320 units by 24.39% (124.39%).
- **Lotus Ring Wearable Pilot:** Deployed the Lotus Ring assistive technology pilot program at PAH! Hiland Plaza Apartments, testing infrared-enabled wearable rings that allow residents with dexterity limitations or co-occurring physical disabilities to operate devices and initiate/end calls without relying on secondary assistance.
- **Hardware & Market Trends:** The agency actively monitored rising device costs across manufacturers (Apple, Samsung, Alphabet/Google), driven by higher memory - Random Access Memory (RAM) - and onboard processing requirements for modern accessibility devices.

Community Advocacy & Special Projects

- **Individual and Systemic Advocacy:** Staff resolved communication access barriers, which included inappropriate remote solutions, across healthcare

networks, behavioral health walk-in clinics, municipal courts, and charter schools, ensuring the provision of on-site qualified ASL interpreters and DeafBlind accommodations.

- **APD Domestic Violence Resource Project:** In partnership with the Albuquerque Police Department (APD), NMCDHH completed the recording and production of accessible ASL vlog resources embedded into domestic violence and sexual assault (DVSA) victim packets via QR codes. The team shifted to in-person administrative reviews to finalize deliverables for early FY27 release.
- **Southern New Mexico Outreach:** The Las Cruces Satellite Office conducted 23 booth events across 15 southern New Mexico municipalities, engaging with 679 constituents at resource fairs, food pantries, senior centers, and veteran clinics. This was all the work of Susanna Santillan.

Support Service Provider (SSP) & Communication Facilitator (CF) Programs

- **Service Delivery:** Vancro continued delivering a high level of SSP services and CF services throughout the fourth quarter. We received no complaints as an agency but also wanted to ensure that we were addressing any concerns that Vancro has. One of the concerns was that their Case Manager was getting to the point that they were overworked. A part of this was due to the fact that the office provided a direct line of communication to the PAH! Hiland Plaza users of Vancro services. This would often mean unplanned meetings and interruptions. One of the proposals was hiring a second case manager which we will be looking at in FY27; the other was also the planned move by Vancro, which would reduce the proximity issues that were creating scheduling barriers.
- **Facility Transition:** With the lease at PAH! Hiland Plaza ending on June 30, 2026, Vancro began discussing a possible move to another location. Vancro shared their concerns with the Commission which highlighted the limited space, challenges for their case manager, and changes to how Vancro was able to use

the space. Vancro was interested in a space that allowed their SSP's and CF's to meet for training, their case manager to have a more controlled environment, and the space to grow. The space they found was suitable for all of these factors and they will transition into their new office location in Q1 of the next fiscal year.

Community Engagement & Interpreter Professional Development

- **Workforce & Apprenticeship:** Coordinated interpreting hours in Q4, delivered an interpreter training workshop on Sight Translation (20 attendees), and engaged graduating students at the UNM Senior Practicum panel. A CDHH team conducted interviews and selected three new apprentice candidates for the FY27 cohort.

HR Restructuring: Completed formal offboarding for the departed Director of Community Engagement, realigned departmental workflows (transferring the Community Engagement specialist functions under CFO supervision and our Communication Development Specialist to our Director of Community Advocacy, temporarily), and transitioned human resources operations to SPO shared-services liaison model. We are working with SPO to set up an interpreting process that ensures all of our staff at the agency have the ability to work with SPO and we will be working with them to fill the vacancies which have had some significant impact on our performance numbers.

4. Looking Forward to FY27

As NMCDHH enters Fiscal Year 2027, the Commission will prioritize:

1. **Infrastructure & Digital Modernization:** Upgrading agency internet connectivity to support our newly procured hardware, which allows for seamless hybrid operations, robust backups, and multi-factor authentication compliance. With the individual hardware purchased, we will be working on upgrading our internet connection speeds, we noted the hardware was no longer being supported and

was becoming increasingly unreliable. We started work on implementing the update in Q1 and will continue in Q2 of the fiscal year FY27.

2. **Accessible Information Delivery:** Producing supplementary video guides for the online TEDP application portal and completing WCAG compliance for Fact Sheets.
3. **Revenue Protection:** Finalizing carrier compliance audits with the Taxation and Revenue Department (TRD) and Rolka Loubé to protect future surcharge revenue stability. We will be presenting our findings in September and incorporating the suggestions into our plans for the future.
4. **Public Safety Training Expansion:** Formalizing hearing loss sensitivity training partnerships with Albuquerque Fire & Rescue (AFR) and finalizing APD video series distributions.
5. **Filing the two vacant positions;** first, the Director of Community Engagement, followed by the Las Cruces Advocacy position.

Through these initiatives, NMCDHH maintains its commitment to advancing full, unhindered communication access and equity for all Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing, and Speech Disabled New Mexicans.

G. Nathan Gomme

Executive Director

New Mexico Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Community Advocacy

Corina Gutiérrez, Director of Community Advocacy

Individual/System Advocacy & Public Policy

The Department of Community Advocacy (DCA) continued to work with members of the Hearing Loss community, which includes individuals who are Deaf, DeafBlind, Hard of Hearing, Deaf with Additional Disabilities and Speech Disabled, to address communication barriers that they encounter in their daily lives. These communication barriers prevent access to services on both a systemic and individual level.

During the fourth quarter of FY26, the Director of Community Advocacy, Ms. Corina Gutiérrez, along with Community Advocacy Specialists Mr. Dennis Stidham and Ms. Myra Sandoval, focused on addressing communication barriers within state agencies, clinics, healthcare providers, schools, behavioral health and non-profit organizations. In this report, we outline our department's work, achievements, and priorities related to communication access.

Non-Profit Organization Advocacy: We advocated for a Deaf individual to receive ASL interpreters to ensure effective communication during interviews involving the individual's family with a community organization and a public school. We worked with both entities to encourage the use of an interpreter referral agency. As a result, the organization established a contract with an interpreter referral agency and provided ASL interpreters for these interviews.

We advocated on behalf of a Deaf individual and their family to secure communication access at a nonprofit organization. The individual attends training at the facility, but the organization initially declined to provide an ASL interpreter. As a result of our advocacy work, the organization agreed to provide an ASL interpreter for the individual's training sessions.

Education Advocacy: We provided advocacy assistance to a Deaf parent seeking an ASL interpreter for a charter school tour during the enrollment process for their child. The charter school was initially unaware of its obligation under the ADA to provide effective communication. We educated school staff on their ADA responsibilities, and as a result, the school contracted with an interpreter referral agency and provided a qualified ASL interpreter for the tour.

Healthcare Provider Advocacy: We advocated for a Deaf individual to receive on-site ASL interpreting for a billing meeting with a healthcare provider's insurance department. The individual requested an in-person interpreter instead of using Video Relay Service (VRS). As a result, the healthcare provider arranged for an on-site, qualified ASL interpreter, ensuring effective communication during the meeting.

We also advocated for a DeafBlind individual to receive an on-site ASL interpreter, instead of using Video Remote Interpreting (VRI), for a healthcare appointment. We educated the healthcare provider on the communication needs of DeafBlind individuals and explained why VRI was not an effective accommodation due to the individual's limited vision. As a result, the provider arranged for an on-site ASL interpreter, ensuring effective communication during the appointment.

We provided ongoing advocacy for a Deaf with Additional Disabilities individual who experienced repeated barriers in obtaining an ASL interpreter for medical appointments. When discussions with clinic staff were unsuccessful, we escalated the matter to their Director of Language access. The clinic resolved the issue and ensured that ASL interpreters were provided for the individual's appointments.

Behavioral Health Advocacy: We successfully advocated for DeafBlind individuals to receive on-site interpreters instead of VRI during walk-in healthcare visits. The facility's standard practice was to use VRI for walk-in appointments. We educated staff on the communication needs of DeafBlind individuals and explained why VRI was not an effective way to provide accommodation due to their vision loss. Following these

discussions, the facility coordinated with its management team to provide on-site ASL interpreters.

Court Advocacy: We worked with the court to ensure effective communication for a DeafBlind individual during court hearings. The court arranged for two ASL interpreters to accommodate the DeafBlind individual's communication needs and provided a third interpreter to ensure communication access for Deaf individuals attending the hearings in the gallery. The accommodation was successfully implemented, resulting in effective communication for all participants.

Special Project: The Albuquerque Police Department (APD), in collaboration with the Domestic Violence Coalition, the City of Albuquerque, Bernalillo County, and other community partners, developed resource packets for individuals involved in domestic violence calls. The packets include information and resources related to domestic violence and sexual assault and has been translated into multiple languages; Spanish, Korean, Arabic, Vietnamese, and others. QR codes were incorporated to allow individuals to access the information in their preferred language. APD requested NMCDHH's assistance in developing the ASL version of the resource packets. The project was assigned to Community Advocacy Specialist, Ms. Myra Sandoval, who worked with APD's Language Access Director to develop the project plan and produce a series of ASL vlogs. Work on the project began during the second quarter and continued throughout the fourth quarter. The project will be finalized during the first quarter of FY27.

Committees: The Director of Community Advocacy, Ms. Corina Gutiérrez, continued to actively participate in the New Mexico DeafBlind Task Force and the City of Albuquerque's American with Disabilities Act Advisory Council (ADAAC) meetings.

As mentioned in the DCE report, the resignation of Mx. Bourque resulted in Ms. Gutiérrez now supervising Ms. Eubank as well as the DCA staff. With the addition of one new staff member to her team, while also having a vacant position in Las Cruces, Ms. Gutiérrez had to focus more on the supervisory part of her role in addition to closing out the interpreter services invoices for the fiscal year. With this shift in focus and

lacking a second staff member to address communication barriers in southern New Mexico, the Community Advocacy Department and the other departments were not able to meet the target goal of 21,500 Communication Barriers addressed. We achieved 83.63% of this goal by addressing 17,980 barriers across the state.

Community Education

NMCDHH staff and vendors provided a total of twenty-one presentations and training sessions during the fourth quarter.

Mr. Robb gave 10 presentations during the 4th Quarter. Presentations included different aspects of Hearing Loss Sensitivity, Deaf Culture, NMCDHH Overview to name several. The audiences came from APD cadets, the American Sign Language Academy (ASLA), the University of New Mexico (UNM), and other organizations. One major presentation Mr. Robb did was for participants who attended the NM Public Education Department – Office of Special Education event. He provided the “Advocating for Children Who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing in Variety of Contexts” presentation.

Mr. Brennan provided a presentation on “Making Word and PowerPoint Documents WCAG Accessible” to the New Mexico Economic Development Department.

Ms. Santillan provided the NMCDHH Overview presentation to America’s Job Center Group – SW NM Partner during one of their meetings, which was conducted through Zoom.

Mr. Stidham provided the “Understanding Behavior across the Continuum: When Behavior is the Language: Communication & Sensory Needs” to nurses, social workers, counselors and case managers through the UNM Health and Science Continuum of Care, which was conducted through zoom.

The Community Engagement Department presented one workshop on sight translation.

Executive Director Gomme provided four presentations, three presentations were to the state CoLab group addressing communication and website content accessibility. Several topics included walkthroughs on how to properly remediate documents before they were converted to PDF formats. In addition to these three presentations, Executive Director Gomme was also part of a panel speaking at the statewide emergency managers' conference on access and functional needs. Topics included best practices in emergency situations for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community.

Mr. Thomas Sena provided three presentations in Las Cruces, Albuquerque, and Santa Fe regarding New Mexico Relay and better business relay calls.

NMCDHH provided 111 workshops in FY26, achieving 79.29% of goal. Due to the investment in creating some complex Vlogs for different agencies and the many complex systemic advocacy issues that were addressed by the department this year, which required extensive discussions and collaboration, we were not able to provide as many presentations overall. We anticipate this will not continue to be a trend moving forward as Mr. Robb has already begun working on setting up new workshop partners and looking into other methods of providing presentations to the community.

Systemic Advocacy

Mr. Robb reached out to Albuquerque Fire & Rescue (AFR) about the possibility of partnering to provide hearing loss sensitivity training to their firefighters & emergency medical technicians, and to see how the hearing loss community & AFR can learn from each other. AFR is very interested in doing this. We will be pursuing this further during the 2027 Fiscal Year.

The Coffee with Cops event occurred in April. With wonderful partnership among APD, Vancro, RGC Access (RGCA), the UNM Sign Language Interpreting Program (SLIP), and NMCDHH. The event was a success, with over 30 constituents from our hearing loss community joining to learn more. The community was able to meet with different, specialized APD units such as K-9, Crime Scene Investigation (CSI), Armored Vehicles,

and more! APD was able to get several people from the community to test these organizations' VRI services at this event, and they were able to provide APD with constructive feedback and suggestions.

Mr. Robb invited several people from APD to check out the induction loop system and Google Live Transcribe (GLT) tablet to provide them with ideas in making their substations more accessible for people with hearing loss. This meeting was a direct result of the fostered collaboration during the Coffee with Cops event.

Mr. Robb completed 4 vlogs for APD during the 4th quarter. Based on their satisfaction with the first vlog, APD gave their blessing to continue with the project. Mr. Robb will complete 10 additional vlogs before the end of the calendar year.

Las Cruces Satellite Office

Individual Advocacy and Service Coordination

Ms. Susana Santillan, Community Advocacy Specialist in Southern New Mexico, continued to assist with eliminating communication barriers for the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing community by advocating for effective communication in Southern New Mexico.

NMCDDH still has a vacant position for a Community Advocacy Specialist in Southern New Mexico, and will be working to post and fill the position in FY27.

Individual Advocacy

Legal Advocacy: Ms. Santillan worked with legal counsel to advocate on behalf of a Deaf individual regarding disputed invoice charges related to communication access. She informed the law firm of its obligation to provide a qualified ASL interpreter to ensure effective communication during meetings with the Deaf individual, to discuss the disputed charges. She also helped ensure the individual's concerns were fully understood throughout the process and advocated for an equitable resolution. Through these advocacy efforts, the law firm agreed to refund the individual, bringing the matter to a practical resolution.

Systemic Advocacy & Special Projects

Ms. Santillan continued to accept notifications from constituents regarding lack of access to city information, then worked with the city involved to ensure that information posted is captioned, allowing access to the hearing loss community in Southern New Mexico. She also continued to serve on nine committees and provide hearing loss awareness and share resources.

Booths and Presentations

Ms. Santillan participated in 23 booth events throughout Southern New Mexico, in Las Cruces, Silver City, Alamogordo, Mesquite, La Mesa, Vado, Columbus, Tortugas, Butterfield, Chaparral, Doña Ana, Radium Springs, Berino, Tularosa, and Anthony. She participated in the Senior Centers, VA Clinic, Heroes Hiring Heroes Agency Wellness and Resource Fairs, and attended Food Pantries to provide NMCDHH resource information and increase her outreach efforts. She had 679 visitors in her booth efforts.

Support Service Provider Program

As Reported by Vancro Integrated Interpreting Services

Executive Summary

During the fourth quarter (Q4) of FY26, the New Mexico Support Service Provider, Communication Facilitator, Case Management, and Outreach programs continued to strengthen access, independence, and community participation for DeafBlind, DeafPlus, and Deaf Senior Citizens throughout New Mexico. The quarter combined a high volume of direct services with individualized advocacy, community outreach, workforce development, partnership building, and operational planning.

During Q4, the Support Service Provider program fulfilled 860 assignments totaling 2,745.50 service hours. The Communication Facilitator program fulfilled 120 assignments totaling 253.50 service hours with over 96 people served.

Vancro participated in 3 outreach and recruitment events that reached at least 117 people, hosted 2 Support Service Provider trainings, supported 2 consumer-led Haptics workshops, and continued coordination with state, higher education, and community partners. No participant complaints were reported in April, May, or June.

The lease at the PAH Hiland Plaza location ended on June 30, 2026. Vancro will be transitioning to a new office space scheduled to open August 1, 2026.

Program Progress and Service Delivery

Vancro delivered 2,999.00 combined Support Service Provider and Communication Facilitator service hours through 980 service assignments this quarter.

Case Management and Consumer Support

Direct advocacy included intensive support for a consumer navigating an active legal matter. Case Management coordinated with legal resources, NMCDHH community partners, and appropriate communication-access providers to support the consumer's understanding and participation in the court process. Case Management also assisted a consumer with significant visual access barriers by submitting Support Service Provider requests when the consumer could not independently access the videophone system.

NMCDHH Activities During Q4 FY26





NMCDHH staff attended 28 booths in the fourth quarter in 19 communities across the state.





Over 30 members of our community joined our Coffee with a Cop event.



NMCDHH and Lotus Technology partnered with PAH! Hiland for a pilot project related to Assitive Technology in the home. See our TEDP report for more information.





Mr. Brennan, with Ms. Eubank interpreting, provided a virtual presentation to the state Economic Development Department on WCAG accessibility, and Mr. Gomme was part of a panel speaking at the statewide emergency managers conference on access and functional needs.



Outreach & Telecommunications

The Telecommunication Equipment Distribution Program (TEDP) lends telecommunication devices, at no cost, to qualifying New Mexico residents who need assistance with communicating via telephone. Equipment options include: amplified telephones, iPads, speech assistive devices, notification systems, loud ringers, and neck loops for assistive listening.

Increasing Equipment Costs: Several manufacturing companies, such as Samsung, Alphabet or Google, and Apple, announced they would be increasing costs for their products. Most of these products center around devices such as mobile phones, tablets, and computers. These products have recently adopted AI features which enable the devices to accomplish other tasks. To do this effectively these devices need increased Random Access Memory or RAM which enables their hardware to keep up with the software without needing to connect to the internet. This allows these devices to do many things on device without needing to access the internet or a data center to operate the AI; this is why, for example, a tablet can run Google Live Transcribe without the internet if it has a high level of RAM, but the same tablet with less Ram requires the internet. RAM also helps AI data centers do this work and coordinate with our devices when a request is complicated. These AI data centers need the RAM and have been purchasing it in large quantities, creating an increased demand which, in turn, has created an increased cost for RAM. As a result of the changing market, manufactures have increased the cost of the devices that use RAM, and as such, we are seeing that cost impact our program. It is a significant cost increase for us as well, being that the iPad is the most common equipment distributed by TEDP to our clients.

Assistive Technology (AT) Wearable Rollout: As the testing completed with AT Rings provided by Lotus Rings, Mr. Gomme and Mr. Sinderholm believed that it may hold significant value for the disabled community, as Mr. Gomme had indicated after he met with Lotus in the 3rd quarter. NMCDHH had been discussing a partnership with the PAH! Hiland Plaza Apartments to provide their residents with the AT Ring. Part of the reasoning for working with PAH! Hiland Plaza was that they have a huge percentage of people with hearing loss who also have additional disabilities. It is NMCDHH's goal to

determine the viability of rings such as these in our community before we move forward with them in our program. Keep in mind that several members of our community use ASL and have co-occurring disabilities. If the rings prove too bulky or uncomfortable the likelihood of someone using the rings consistently would be low, especially in a location such as Pah! Hiland Plaza. We will be working with constituents in the preliminary pilot to collect data on the use of the ring. This data may show us that we have a device that can potentially be used to trigger a phone call or end a call for a user who has dexterity issues, for example, but still wants to use relay services without someone else involved. We are actively working with the manufacturer and our vendor to see if such a possibility exists, but in order to commit to this we must see if the use case is there. So, in order to start this process, we had Lotus and Teltex come to Albuquerque and meet with the staff at the facility. As a result of the meeting in May, we began a staggered release process. This would allow Mr. Sinderholm and Lotus to meet with the residents to hand out the rings and teach each resident how to use the technology. PAH residents provided positive feedback following the AT Ring roll-out. One resident is delighted to have this equipment to minimize the pain from their chronic conditions.

Fourth Quarter Metrics

Equipment Distributed: The program distributed a total of 876 pieces of equipment during the reporting period. These items included iPads, Android phones, the BeHear SMARTO, Lotus Pilot Kits and other equipment. The program distributed a total of 1,642 pieces of equipment during FY26, exceeding our goal for the year.

Outreach: During the fourth quarter, Mr. Sinderholm and Mr. Brennan hosted six booth events and continued outreach to spread awareness about TEDP and NMCDHH's services within the Albuquerque and Santa Fe areas, reaching a total of 489 constituents. The events included Language Access Month of Action, La Vida Felicidad Senior Expo, and the National Association of Social Workers New Mexico (NASW-NM) Annual Conference.

Community Engagement

Professional Development Q4:

Total participants - 20

Interpreter Coordinating

- As detailed in the Community Advocacy report, Coffee with the Cops event occurred in Q4. The Community Engagement Department coordinated interpreter access for this event.
- There were three ADA training sessions provided by Julie Ballinger of the Southwest ADA Center for which interpreters were coordinated. All three were originally scheduled for Q4, but the final presentation had to be moved to Q1 FY27 due to a number of factors.
- There was a more-than-typical number of fiscal year-end interpreting requests in the month of June. These required special attention to interpreter rates and purchase order balances in addition to availability to coordinate; we had limited funds remaining on contractors' purchase orders. Through strategic planning and some shuffling of assignments, we were able to fully cover all assignments.
- Ms. Jessica Eubank worked with an individual interpreter to provide information and resources regarding the RID Alternative Pathway and how it affects testing and timelines for licensure in New Mexico.
- Staff represented NMCDHH at the University of New Mexico Panel Presentations for two sessions on April 14th and 16th. Staff visited the UNM Senior Practicum class to invite applications from graduating students for our Apprentice Interpreter Program. We were able to answer questions about the Commission as a State agency, about the Apprentice Interpreter Program specifically, and about how to get started in the field of interpreting, in general.

- NMCDHH provided a workshop on Sight Translation on May 9th for 20 participating interpreters.

Apprentice Program

- Apprentices played a key role this quarter in providing communication access for the Coffee with the Cops event.

- Apprentices expressed interest in taking the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA) and were supported with supplemental materials from the NMCDHH Library for test preparation.

- We successfully conducted the application and interview process for apprentices for FY27. Three were selected for FY27.

As was reported in previous quarters, Mr. Brennan worked with Ms. Romero and Mr. Gomme to obtain funding to upgrade the computer infrastructure of the agency. Many of our laptops and desktops were nearing the end of service life. This new equipment allows our employees to work more efficiently, without waiting for a technical process to catch up to their workflow.

Just before the April 26, 2026 deadline for WCAG compliance was to take effect, the DOJ issued an extension of compliance for one year, to 2027. Before this announcement, NMCDHH had already made sure that its website was near compliance. Currently, most sections of the website are compliant, and we are working diligently to update information, revamp our external resource links, and complete compliance with the remaining sections, early in FY27. We also reviewed all images on our website for relevance, and to make sure that all had alt text included. The largest part of this work is a re-examination of our Fact Sheets section, and how to make these more accessible going forward.

Mr. Brennan and Mr. Gomme continued to provide presentations to different state entities such as the State Accessibility Collaboration, and the Economic Development

Council, on how to make materials WCAG compliant. These presentations have been positively received, and we are looking forward to the opportunity to collaborate with other entities in FY27 to ensure equitable digital access for people with disabilities.

Our social media continues to experience growth, and reach more residents of New Mexico, in all four corners of the state. Our social media has experienced approximately 6% growth in followers/subscribers in FY26 across various platforms such as Facebook, X, Instagram, YouTube, and our biweekly newsletter.

Mr. Brennan, Community Advocacy, and the Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program are exploring ways to provide more accessible content, such as additional YouTube videos, to explain our programs and services, and the online application portal for TEDP.

We continue to explore ways to ensure that NMCDHH staff are able to work remotely when needed, that information we have is not only available, but also protected via backups and security measures. In FY27, we will be examining ways to further enhance these features by working with the state Department of Information Technology (DoIT) regarding appropriate Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA), AI use, and Information Technology (IT) services. We have noticed that our internet speeds are impacting our ability to serve our constituents with consistent quality. By upgrading our internet speeds, after upgrading our hardware, we believe we will be at the forefront of digital leadership for organizations serving those with disabilities in New Mexico.

Mr. Brennan and Mr. Gomme are working with DoIT, which has begun to formally address the role of AI in the workplace. As AI is a still-developing technology, the state must take great care to ensure that all information it has is protected and used appropriately. Part of this process involves testing the preliminary AI model and ensuring its safety and compatibility with NMCDHH systems.

Mr. Gomme, Mx. Bourque, and Mr. Brennan met with Aira, a company that developed an ASL-on-demand service, something this agency has been interested in for some

time. During the meeting, we discussed the use of AI in their platform, which is minimal, and how they have worked with other states to provide services. Our interest in companies such as Aira is only beginning to gain traction as we continue to look at the future of access, with the upcoming changes from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). We will continue to monitor the development of ASL-on-demand services and how they can best support our community.

Mx. Bourque resigned from the Commission in June. With their resignation, the department has been temporarily re-aligned, with Mr. Trevor Brennan moving to the Administrative Services Department under Ms. Deborah Romero, and Ms. Jessica Eubank supervised by Ms. Corina Gutiérrez.

Ms. Gutiérrez is working with Ms. Eubank to ensure that interpreting services and professional development work done by the agency continues.

Ms. Romero and Ms. Gutiérrez have supported both Mr. Brennan and Ms. Eubank during this transition, and their extensive experience with the state has been beneficial in helping Mr. Brennan and Ms. Eubank prepare for a successful FY27 that will still meet the objectives and roles of the Community Engagement Department. After a review of the Director of Community Engagement position, we anticipate filling it in FY27.

We provided professional development to 83 interpreters during FY26, 66.40% of our goal. In FY27, we are transitioning to a new measure, measuring hours of interpreting professional development provided; we believe that better shows the work done with our interpreting community and will be a more accurate assessment of the benefit we provide to the interpreting community.

Administration & Finance

Deborah Romero, Director of Administrative Services

The fourth-quarter budget report reflects a total budget of \$3,649,000. Overall expenses to date are \$2,830,212 (77.56% of the budget). Within this, personnel services expenses are \$1,431,440, representing approximately 88.12% of the total budget. Contract expenses are \$1,050,201 (64.54% of the budget). Other category expenses total \$232,072 (82.65% of the budget). Combined expenses total \$2,830,212 - 77.56% of the budget, leaving a remaining balance of \$818,788.21 (22.4%) at the close of the fiscal year.

FY26 Collected Revenue (as of June 30, 2026)

Subtotal — General Fund Allotment: \$ 2,165,300

Subtotal — TRS Revenue: \$1,018,782

Note to General fund – included in the total is special general fund for a special audit and replacement of IT equipment.

Data & Statistics

As required by Legislative Performance Measures

Fiscal Year 2026

Legislative Performance Measure	Target	Year to Date	YTD % of Goal Met
Number of workshops & training sessions conducted	140	111	79.29%
Number of outreach events coordinated	150	163	108.67%
Average number of relay minutes per month	8,000	1864.65	23.31%
Number of accessible technology distributions	1,320	1,642	124.39%
Number of communication barriers addressed	21,500	17,980	83.63%
Number of interpreters in CDHH sponsored professional development	125	83	66.40%

Fiscal Year 2025

Legislative Performance Measure	Target	Year to Date	YTD % of Goal Met
Number of workshops & training sessions conducted	135	155	115%
Number of outreach events coordinated	122	140	115%
Average number of relay minutes per month	10,000	2851.65	29%
Number of accessible technology distributions	1,070	1,279	120%
Number of communication barriers addressed	21,000	22,928	110%
Number of interpreters in CDHH sponsored professional development	200	88	44%

Community Members by Region



	1 st Quarter	2 nd Quarter	3 rd Quarter	4 th Quarter	Year to Date
Region 1	16	6	8	3	33
Region 2	5	10	7	3	25
Region 3	54	51	40	50	195
Region 4	6	2	4	0	12
Region 5	55	35	22	26	138
Total Members by Quarter	136	104	81	82	403

Individuals by Self-Identified Disability

	1 st Quarter	2 nd Quarter	3 rd Quarter	4 th Quarter	Year to Date
Deaf	70	24	28	16	138
Hard of Hearing	43	35	24	26	128
DeafBlind	13	4	5	2	24
Speech Disabled	0	0	1	2	3
Hearing	10	41	23	36	110
Total Individuals by Quarter	136	104	81	82	403



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

From: Jeanette Padilla-Tapia, DVR Deaf and HH Program Coord

Date: 8/3/2026

Re: HAFC/H 2 and 3, aa

COMMISSION FOR DEAF AND HARD-OF-HEARING PERSONS:

The internal service funds/interagency transfers appropriation to the deaf and hard-of-hearing program of the commission for deaf and hard-of-hearing persons in the other financing uses category includes ninety-one thousand five hundred dollars (\$91,500) to transfer to the rehabilitation services program of the vocational rehabilitation division to match with federal funds to provide deaf and hard-of-hearing rehabilitation services and

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION DIVISION:

The internal service funds/interagency transfers appropriation to the rehabilitation services program of the vocational rehabilitation division in the other category includes ninety-one thousand five hundred dollars (\$91,500) to match with federal funds to support and enhance deaf and hard-of hearing rehabilitation services.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION DIVISION:

Report

(April 2026-June 2026)

- Sign Language Interpreting: \$16,582.59
- Hearing Aids or Other Hearing Devices: \$255,281.50.
- Serving 373 Participants

- 34 Rehabilitated Closures

(July 2025-September 2025)

- Sign Language Interpreting: \$23,788.01
- Hearing Aids or Other Hearing Devices: \$216,229.11.
- Serving 433 Participants
- 44 Rehabilitated Closures

(October 2025-December 2025)

- Sign Language Interpreting: \$21,878.97
- Hearing Aids or Other Hearing Devices: \$186,919.91
- Serving 402 Participants
- 35 Rehabilitated Closures

(January 2026-March 2026)

- Sign Language Interpreting: \$7331.13
- Hearing Aids or Other Hearing Devices: \$145,525.29
- Serving 383 Participants
- 34 Rehabilitated Closures



Collaborating Agency Quarterly Report

Agency Name: Signed Language Interpreting Practice Board, RLD

Report By: Jennifer Orozco

Quarter Reported:

1st (July-Sept) __ 2nd (Oct-Dec) __ 3rd (Jan-Mar) __ 4th (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 2025 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	18	5 Community, 2 Educational, 11 Provisional
Complaints	0	
License denials, suspensions, and revocations	0	

Agendas and draft minutes are available on the Signed Language Interpreting Practices Board website:

<https://www.rld.nm.gov/boards-and-commissions/individual-boards-and-commissions/signed-language-interpreting-practices/board-information/signed-language-interpreting-practices-board-meetings/>.