

SENATE BILL No. 185

By Committee on Education

2-9

1 AN ACT concerning the Kansas department for children and families;
2 relating to the Kansas commission for the deaf and hard of hearing;
3 authorizing such commission to adopt rules and regulations for
4 interpreters and interpreter services; establishing a sign language
5 interpreter registration process and fees relating thereto; providing
6 guidelines for communication access services; amending K.S.A. 75-
7 4355a, 75-4355b, 75-5391, 75-5393 and 75-5397a and repealing the
8 existing sections.
9

10 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas:*

11 New Section 1. (a) A person seeking to interpret under K.S.A. 75-
12 4355a through 75-4355d, and amendments thereto, and section 1 through 5,
13 and amendments thereto, or to comply with any state or federal law or
14 rules and regulations shall obtain registration in accordance with this
15 section.

16 (b) To obtain registration as an interpreter, an applicant shall submit
17 an application on a form and in a manner prescribed by the commission
18 and shall pay the registration fee determined by the commission in rules
19 and regulations. The commission may grant registration to any person
20 who:

- 21 (1) Has obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent;
- 22 (2) is 18 years of age or older;
- 23 (3) has no other record of disqualifying conduct as determined by the
24 commission; and
- 25 (4) has obtained a certification or other appropriate credentials as
26 determined by the commission.

27 (c) (1) The commission may grant registration as an interpreter to an
28 applicant who has been duly licensed or registered as an interpreter by
29 examination under the laws of another state, territory or the District of
30 Columbia if, in the opinion of the commission, the applicant substantially
31 meets the qualifications for registration as an interpreter in this state. The
32 applicant shall provide satisfactory evidence of verification of the
33 applicant's licensure or registration from the original state of licensure or
34 registration.

35 (2) The commission may grant temporary registration to a
36 nonresident interpreter who holds a certificate or license in such

1 interpreter's state of residence. An interpreter granted a temporary
2 registration shall not interpret more than 20 separate days in a year in this
3 state.

4 (d) (1) Registrations issued under this section shall expire on the date
5 established by rules and regulations of the commission unless revoked
6 prior to that time. The commission shall send a notice for renewal of
7 registration to every interpreter at least 60 calendar days prior to the
8 expiration date of such person's registration.

9 (2) (A) A registered interpreter shall have a grace period of 30
10 calendar days after a registration has expired to renew such registration
11 without a late fee. The commission may charge a late fee for any renewal
12 application received after such grace period. The commission shall
13 determine the amount of the late fee in rules and regulations, but such fee
14 shall not exceed \$200.

15 (B) An interpreter whose registration has expired after failing to
16 submit a renewal application may renew registration upon payment of the
17 late fee and submission of satisfactory evidence of completion of
18 continuing education requirements established by the commission. For
19 renewals of expired registrations, the commission may require additional
20 testing, training or education to establish the interpreter's present ability to
21 perform the functions and responsibilities of an interpreter.

22 (3) An interpreter, as a condition for renewal of a registration, shall
23 attend not less than 30 hours of continuing education programming within
24 a two-year period. Upon receipt of such application, payment of fee and
25 evidence of satisfactory completion of the required continuing education,
26 the commission shall verify the accuracy of the application and grant
27 renewal of the registration.

28 (e) (1) The commission may require an applicant for registration as
29 an interpreter to be fingerprinted and to submit to a state and national
30 criminal history record check. The fingerprints shall be used to identify the
31 applicant and to determine whether the applicant has a record of criminal
32 history in this state or another jurisdiction. The commission is authorized
33 to submit the fingerprints to the Kansas bureau of investigation and the
34 federal bureau of investigation for a state and national criminal history
35 record check. The commission may use the information obtained from
36 fingerprinting and the applicant's criminal history for purposes of verifying
37 the identification of the applicant and making the official determination of
38 the qualifications and fitness of the application to be issued or maintain
39 registration.

40 (2) Local and state law enforcement officers and agencies shall assist
41 the commission in taking the fingerprints of applicants for registration.
42 Local and state law enforcement officers and agencies may charge a fee as
43 reimbursement for expenses incurred in taking and processing fingerprints

1 under this section. The Kansas bureau of investigation shall release all
2 records of an applicant's adult convictions to the commission.

3 (3) The commission may fix and collect a fee for fingerprinting and
4 conducting a state and national criminal history record check of applicants
5 or registrants as may be required by the commission in an amount equal to
6 the cost of fingerprinting and the criminal history record check.

7 (f) The commission may refuse to issue, renew or reinstate a
8 registration, may condition, limit, revoke or suspend the registration of any
9 individual if the applicant or registrant:

10 (1) Has been found incompetent or negligent in the practice of
11 interpreting;

12 (2) has been convicted of a felony offense or a misdemeanor against
13 persons and has not demonstrated to the commission's satisfaction that
14 such person has been sufficiently rehabilitated to merit the public trust;

15 (3) submits an application that contains false, misleading or
16 incomplete information;

17 (4) fails or refuses to provide any information requested by the
18 commission;

19 (5) fails or refuses to pay the required fees;

20 (6) is currently listed on a child abuse registry or an adult protective
21 services registry as the result of a substantiated finding of abuse or neglect
22 by any state agency, agency of another state or the United States, territory
23 of the United States or another country, and the applicant or registrant has
24 not demonstrated to the commission's satisfaction that such person has
25 been sufficiently rehabilitated to merit the public trust; or

26 (7) has had a license, registration or certificate to practice as an
27 interpreter revoked, suspended or limited, or has been the subject of other
28 disciplinary action, or an application for a license, registration or
29 certificate denied, by the proper regulatory authority of another state,
30 territory, District of Columbia, or other country, a certified copy of the
31 record of the action of the other jurisdiction being conclusive evidence
32 thereof.

33 (g) Administrative proceedings and disciplinary actions regarding
34 interpreter registration under sections 1 through 3, and amendments
35 thereto, shall be conducted in accordance with the Kansas administrative
36 procedure act. Judicial review and civil enforcement of agency actions
37 under sections 1 through 3, and amendments thereto, shall be in
38 accordance with the Kansas judicial review act.

39 (h) The executive director of the commission shall adopt rules and
40 regulations to effectuate the provisions of this section. Such rules and
41 regulations may include, but not be limited to:

42 (1) Fees, including, but not limited to, registration fees and late fees,
43 that are necessary to fund the expenses and operating costs incurred in the

1 administration and enforcement of this section;

2 (2) categories of interpreter certification and interpreter
3 endorsements, including necessary credentials or qualifications;

4 (3) continuing education requirements and programs for registered
5 interpreters;

6 (4) a code of professional conduct;

7 (5) a supervision and mentorship requirements and programs for
8 interpreters with provisional registration;

9 (6) suspension or revocation of interpreter registration; and

10 (7) any other matter deemed necessary by the executive director to
11 implement and administer this section.

12 New Sec. 2. (a) Except as provided in subsection (c), it shall be
13 unlawful for any person who is not registered with the commission, or
14 whose registration has been suspended or revoked, to:

15 (1) Practice as an interpreter;

16 (2) hold out to the public the intention, authority or skill to interpret;

17 (3) provide video remote interpreting services; or

18 (4) use any title or abbreviation to indicate the person is an interpreter
19 registered with the commission.

20 (b) Except as provided in subsection (c), it shall be unlawful to:

21 (1) Cause or permit a person to interpret in Kansas, either in-person
22 or remotely, with knowledge that such person is not a registered
23 interpreter;

24 (2) represent that a person is a registered interpreter, when the entity
25 knows or reasonably should know that such person is not a registered
26 interpreter;

27 (3) hold out to the public, on behalf of a person, the intention, skill or
28 authority to interpret, when the entity knows or reasonably should know
29 that such person is not a registered interpreter; or

30 (4) accept payment for securing an interpreter under the provisions of
31 K.S.A. 75-4355a through 75-4355d, and amendments thereto, when the
32 person provided by the entity to interpret is not a registered interpreter.

33 (c) This section shall not apply to a person:

34 (1) Interpreting during a religious event;

35 (2) interpreting as a volunteer without compensation after receiving
36 approval from the commission or the executive director;

37 (3) interpreting during an emergency, until the services of a registered
38 interpreter can be obtained; or

39 (4) a student who is enrolled in and pursuing a degree or credential in
40 interpreting or an interpreter training program or a provisional interpreter
41 with a supervision plan overseen by the commission, while such student or
42 provisional interpreter is under the supervision of a registered interpreter.

43 (d) When it appears to the commission that any person or entity is

1 violating this section, the commission may bring an action in the name of
2 the state of Kansas in a court of competent jurisdiction for an injunction
3 against such violation without regard to whether proceedings have been or
4 may be instituted before the commission or whether criminal proceedings
5 have been or may be instituted.

6 New Sec. 3. (a) The commission shall develop and administer a
7 program to provide guidelines for the utilization of communication
8 access services, communication access service providers and interpreter
9 service agencies. The executive director of the commission may adopt
10 rules and regulations to effectuate the provisions of this section. Such rules
11 and regulations may include, but not be limited to:

12 (1) Fees necessary to fund the expenses and operating costs incurred
13 in the administration and enforcement of this section;

14 (2) determination of the qualifications of communication access
15 service providers;

16 (3) minimum standards of training of communication access service
17 providers;

18 (4) registration of communication access service providers and
19 interpreter service agencies;

20 (5) a code of professional conduct governing communication access
21 service providers;

22 (6) standards for equipment or technology supporting communication
23 access services;

24 (7) a system of statewide coordination of communication access
25 services; and

26 (8) any other matter that the executive director deems necessary to
27 effectuate the provisions of this section.

28 (b) (1) The commission may require communication access service
29 providers to be fingerprinted and to submit to a state and national criminal
30 history record check. The fingerprints shall be used to identify the
31 applicant and to determine whether the applicant has a record of criminal
32 history in this state or another jurisdiction. The commission is authorized
33 to submit the fingerprints to the Kansas bureau of investigation and the
34 federal bureau of investigation for a state and national criminal history
35 record check. The commission may use the information obtained from
36 fingerprinting and the applicant's criminal history for purposes of verifying
37 the identification of any individual and in the official determination of the
38 qualifications and fitness of the individual to provide communication
39 access services.

40 (2) Local and state law enforcement officers and agencies shall assist
41 the commission in taking the fingerprints of individuals. Local and state
42 law enforcement officers and agencies may charge a fee as reimbursement
43 for expenses incurred in taking and processing fingerprints under this

1 section. The Kansas bureau of investigation shall release all records of an
2 individual's adult convictions to the commission.

3 (3) The commission may fix and collect a fee for fingerprinting and
4 conducting a state and national criminal history record check of
5 individuals pursuant to this section as may be required by the commission
6 in an amount equal to the cost of fingerprinting and the criminal history
7 record check.

8 New Sec. 4. (a) The commission shall remit all moneys received from
9 fees, charges or penalties under sections 1 through 3, and amendments
10 thereto, to the state treasurer in accordance with the provisions of K.S.A.
11 75-4215, and amendments thereto. Upon receipt of each such remittance,
12 the state treasurer shall deposit the entire amount into the state treasury to
13 the credit of the Kansas commission for the deaf and hard of hearing
14 registration fee fund.

15 (b) There is hereby created in the state treasury the commission for
16 deaf and hard of hearing registration fee fund. All moneys credited to the
17 fund shall be used to carry out the powers, duties and functions of the
18 commission. The fund shall be administered by the Kansas commission for
19 the deaf and hard of hearing. All expenditures from the fund shall be made
20 in accordance with appropriation acts upon warrants of the director of
21 accounts and reports issued pursuant to vouchers approved by the
22 executive director of the commission or the executive director's designee.

23 New Sec. 5. As used in K.S.A 75-4355a through 75-4355d, and
24 amendments thereto, and sections 1 through 5, and amendments thereto:

25 (a) "Commission" means the Kansas commission for the deaf and
26 hard of hearing.

27 (b) "Communication access services" includes, but is not limited to:

28 (1) Communication access realtime translation services;

29 (2) notetakers;

30 (3) open and closed captioning services;

31 (4) support service providers for the deaf-blind; and

32 (5) any other effective method of making aurally delivered
33 information available to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

34 (c) "Communication access service provider" means an individual
35 who is trained to offer a communication access service to communicate
36 aurally delivered information to individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing
37 or have speech and language impairments;

38 (d) "Executive director" means the executive director for the Kansas
39 commission for the deaf and hard of hearing.

40 (e) "Interpreter" means an individual who engages in the practice of
41 interpreting.

42 (f) "Interpreter service agency" means an entity that contracts with or
43 employs registered interpreters to provide interpreter services, whether in

1 person or remotely, for a fee.

2 (g) "Interpreting" means the translating or transliterating of English
3 concepts to any communication modes of individuals who are deaf, hard
4 of hearing or have speech and language impairments or the translating or
5 transliterating of the communication modes of individuals who are deaf,
6 hard of hearing or have speech and language impairments to English
7 language concepts. Communication modes include, but are not limited to,
8 American sign language, English-based sign language, cued speech, oral
9 transliterating and information received tactually.

10 (h) "Video remote interpreter" means an interpreter who engages in
11 the practice of video remote interpreting.

12 (i) "Video remote interpreting" means the process that allows an
13 individual who is deaf or hard of hearing to communicate with a hearing
14 individual at the same location through an interpreter displayed through
15 videoconferencing or similar technology.

16 Sec. 6. K.S.A. 75-4355a is hereby amended to read as follows: 75-
17 4355a. ~~A qualified~~ *An interpreter registered with the Kansas commission*
18 *for the deaf and hard of hearing* shall be secured for any person who is
19 deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired in any grand jury, court or jury
20 proceeding whether such person is a plaintiff, defendant, juror or witness
21 in such action, and the interpreter shall interpret throughout the actual trial
22 and during the time that the jury is sequestered or engaged in its
23 deliberations.

24 Sec. 7. K.S.A. 75-4355b is hereby amended to read as follows: 75-
25 4355b. (a) All interpreters for the deaf, hard of hearing and ~~speech-~~
26 ~~impaired~~ *individuals that have speech and language impairments*, secured
27 under the provisions of K.S.A. 75-4355a through 75-4355d, *and*
28 *amendments thereto, or in compliance with any state or federal law or*
29 *rules and regulations*, shall be ~~certified by or~~ registered with the Kansas
30 commission for the deaf and hard of hearing or an agency designated by
31 the commission. The chairperson of the governmental committee or
32 commission, ~~or~~ the head of the *governmental* agency or other entity, or the
33 court is responsible for assuring the procurement of the interpreter.

34 (b) The commission shall recommend reasonable fees for the services
35 of the interpreter. At no time shall the fees for interpreter services be
36 assessed against the person who is deaf, hard of hearing or ~~speech-~~
37 ~~impaired~~ *has speech and language impairments*.

38 (c) No person shall serve as an interpreter if such interpreter is
39 married to that person, related to that person or is otherwise interested in
40 the outcome of the proceeding. Exceptions can be made in extreme
41 conditions, subject to the approval of the commission.

42 (d) No person shall serve as an interpreter pursuant to K.S.A. 75-
43 4355a through 75-4355d, *and amendments thereto*, unless the commission

1 makes the determination that the person is qualified to interpret. The
 2 commission may designate the executive director of the commission or a
 3 local agency to make such determination and approval under the
 4 provisions of K.S.A. 75-4355a through 75-4355d, *and amendments*
 5 *thereto*. A person is qualified to interpret if such person is able to interpret
 6 effectively, accurately and impartially, both receptively and expressively,
 7 using any necessary specialized vocabulary.

8 (e) If preferred by the deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired person
 9 and if feasible, other ~~modes of communication, such as notetakers, open-~~
 10 ~~captioning equipment, assistive listening devices~~ *access services* or other
 11 technology may be used in place of an interpreter.

12 Sec. 8. K.S.A. 75-5391 is hereby amended to read as follows: 75-
 13 5391. (a) There is hereby established within the Kansas department for
 14 children and families the Kansas commission for the deaf and hard of
 15 hearing. The commission shall:

16 (1) Advocate services affecting the deaf and hard of hearing in the
 17 areas of public services, health care, educational, vocational and
 18 employment opportunity;

19 (2) act as a bureau of information for the deaf and hard of hearing to
 20 state agencies and public institutions providing general health and mental
 21 health care, employment, vocational, and educational services, and to local
 22 agencies and programs;

23 (3) collect facts and statistics and other special studies of conditions
 24 affecting the health and welfare of the deaf and hard of hearing in this
 25 state;

26 (4) provide for a mutual exchange of ideas and information on the
 27 national, state and local levels;

28 (5) provide public education ~~of prenatal and postnatal warning signs~~
 29 ~~of conditions which may lead to deafness or hearing impairment in the~~
 30 ~~fetus or newborn child:~~

31 (A) *Regarding best practices in language acquisition development in*
 32 *deaf and hard of hearing children and aural rehabilitation options; and*

33 (B) *to promote the eradication of ignorance and discrimination*
 34 *toward deaf and hard of hearing people in schools and employment;*

35 (6) encourage and assist local governments in the development of
 36 programs for the deaf and hard of hearing;

37 (7) cooperate with public and private agencies and units of local, state
 38 and federal governments in promoting coordination in programs for the
 39 deaf and hard of hearing;

40 (8) provide for the social, emotional, educational and vocational
 41 needs of the deaf and hard of hearing and their families;

42 (9) serve as an advisory board to the governor *and legislature* on the
 43 needs of the deaf and hard of hearing by preparing an annual report ~~which~~

1 *that* reviews the status of all state services to the deaf and hard of hearing
2 within Kansas, and to recommend priorities ~~to the governor~~ for the
3 development and coordination of services to the deaf and hard of hearing;

4 (10) make recommendations for needed improvements, and serve as
5 an advisory board in regard to new legislation affecting the deaf and hard
6 of hearing.

7 (b) *The commission may:*

8 (1) *Develop and oversee programs concerning interpreters,*
9 *interpreter service agencies, and communication access services;*

10 (2) *become a member of or affiliate with any professional*
11 *organization related to the powers, duties and functions of the*
12 *commission; and*

13 (3) *undertake any and all other acts as may be necessary for the*
14 *performance of the commission's powers, duties and functions in the*
15 *administration of K.S.A. 75-4355a through 75-4355d, and amendments*
16 *thereto, and sections 1 through 5, and amendments thereto.*

17 (c) Except as otherwise provided by this act, all budgeting,
18 purchasing and related management functions of the Kansas commission
19 for the deaf and hard of hearing shall be administered ~~under the direction~~
20 ~~and supervision of~~ by the secretary for children and families. Within the
21 limitations of available appropriations, the secretary for children and
22 families shall provide additional clerical and other assistance as may be
23 required for the commission. *The Kansas commission for the deaf and*
24 *hard of hearing shall report directly to the deputy secretary or secretary.*

25 Sec. 9. K.S.A. 75-5393 is hereby amended to read as follows: 75-
26 5393. (a) The Kansas commission for the deaf and hard of hearing shall
27 employ an executive director and shall fix the duties, responsibilities and
28 qualifications thereof. The executive director shall be a full-time employee
29 of the commission who shall be in the unclassified service under the
30 Kansas civil service act and shall receive an annual salary to be fixed by
31 the commission, *and such salary shall be comparable to the salaries of*
32 *executive directors of other commissions.* The executive director shall
33 receive actual and necessary expenses incurred while in the discharge of
34 official duties.

35 (b) The executive director, with the advice and consent of the
36 commission shall:

37 (1) Within the limitations of available appropriations, plan and
38 oversee the establishment of service centers for the deaf and hard of
39 hearing in areas where the commission deems they are needed and in
40 concurrence with the secretary for children and families and in
41 consultation with local boards of directors of community service centers
42 and local groups promoting or providing services to the deaf or hard of
43 hearing, or both;

1 (2) promote accessibility of all governmental services to deaf and
2 hard of hearing citizens in Kansas including those deaf and hard of hearing
3 persons with multiple disabilities;

4 (3) identify agencies, both public and private ~~which~~ *that* provide
5 community services, evaluate the extent to which they make services
6 available to deaf and hard of hearing people and their families, and
7 cooperate with the agencies in coordinating and extending these services;

8 (4) provide for the mutual exchange of ideas and information on
9 services for deaf and hard of hearing people between federal, state and
10 local governmental agencies and private organizations and individuals;

11 (5) survey the needs of the deaf and hard of hearing population in
12 Kansas and assist the commission in the preparation of its report to the
13 governor;

14 (6) maintain a listing of persons qualified in various types of
15 interpreting and ~~aural rehabilitation~~ *communication access services* for the
16 deaf and make this information available to local, state, federal and private
17 organizations and to individuals;

18 (7) promote the training of interpreters for the deaf and hard of
19 hearing;

20 (8) serve as an advocate for the rights of deaf and hard of hearing
21 people and perform such other duties as may be required by law;

22 (9) provide interpreter services for the deaf and hard of hearing to be
23 funded from ~~user~~ *fees collected pursuant to K.S.A. 75-5397a, and*
24 *amendments thereto*;

25 (10) provide a telecommunication message relay service for the deaf
26 and hard of hearing;

27 (11) provide for a program of ~~regulation and certification~~ *registration*
28 *of interpreters; and*

29 (12) *provide for a program of statewide coordination for*
30 *communication access services and service providers; and*

31 (13) employ such persons as may be needed from time to time, in the
32 judgment of the executive director, to carry out the director's
33 responsibilities under paragraphs (9), (10) ~~and, (11) of this subsection~~ *and*
34 *(12)*. Such employees shall be in the unclassified civil service and shall
35 receive an annual salary to be fixed by the commission.

36 (c) In selecting an executive director, the commission shall select an
37 individual who is fluent in the American sign language of the deaf and
38 shall give consideration and priority to qualified applicants who are deaf or
39 hard of hearing. *The commission shall supervise and evaluate the*
40 *executive director.*

41 Sec. 10. K.S.A. 75-5397a is hereby amended to read as follows: 75-
42 5397a. (a) The Kansas commission for the deaf and hard of hearing may
43 fix, charge and collect reasonable fees for providing interpreter services,

1 interpreter-~~certification~~ *registration, communication access services* and
2 sign language instruction.

3 (b) The secretary for children and families shall remit all moneys
4 received by the commission for-~~such~~ *providing interpreter services,*
5 *communication access services and sign language instruction* to the state
6 treasurer in accordance with the provisions of K.S.A. 75-4215, and
7 amendments thereto. Upon receipt of each such remittance, the state
8 treasurer shall deposit the entire amount in the state treasury to the credit
9 of the Kansas department for children and families enterprise fund.

10 Sec. 11. K.S.A. 75-4355a, 75-4355b, 75-5391, 75-5393 and 75-5397a
11 are hereby repealed.

12 Sec. 12. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its
13 publication in the statute book.