

CHAPTER 256C

HANDICAPPED PERSONS

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256C.21 DEAF AND HARD-OF-HEARING SERVICES ACT; CITATION.

Sections 256C.21 to 256C.26 may be cited as the "Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Services Act."

History: 1999 c 159 s 54

256C.23 DEFINITIONS.

Subdivision 1. For the purposes of sections 256C.21 to 256C.26, the terms defined in this section shall have the meanings given them, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

[For text of subs 2 to 3, see M.S.1998]

History: 1999 c 159 s 55

256C.233 DUTIES OF STATE AGENCIES.

Subdivision 1. **Deaf and hard-of-hearing division.** The commissioners of human services, children, families, and learning, economic security, and health shall create a distinct and separate organizational unit to be known as the deaf and hard-of-hearing services division to address the developmental, social, educational, and occupational needs of deaf, deaf-blind, and hard-of-hearing persons through a statewide network of collaborative services and by coordinating the promulgation of public policies, regulations, legislation, and programs affecting deaf, deaf-blind, and hard-of-hearing persons. An interdepartmental management team shall supervise the activities of the deaf and hard-of-hearing services division. The commissioner of human services shall coordinate the work of the interagency management team and receive legislative appropriations for the division.

Subd. 2. **Responsibilities.** The deaf and hard-of-hearing services division shall:

(1) establish and maintain a statewide network of regional service centers for deaf, deaf-blind, and hard-of-hearing Minnesotans;

(2) assist the departments of human services, children, families, and learning, and economic security to coordinate the promulgation and implementation of public policies, regulations, legislation, programs, and services affecting deaf, deaf-blind, and hard-of-hearing persons; and

(3) provide a coordinated system of statewide interpreting or interpreter referral services.

[For text of subs 3 and 4, see M.S.1998]

History: 1999 c 149 s 2,3

256C.25 INTERPRETER SERVICES.

Subdivision 1. **Establishment.** The deaf and hard-of-hearing services division shall maintain and coordinate statewide interpreting or interpreter referral services for use by any public or private agency or individual in the state. The division shall directly coordinate these services but may contract with an appropriate agency to provide this service. The division may collect a \$3 fee per referral for interpreter referral services and the actual costs of interpreter services provided by department staff. Fees and payments collected shall be deposited in the general fund. The \$3 referral fee shall not be collected from state agencies or local units of government or deaf or hard-of-hearing consumers or interpreters.

Subd. 2. **Duties.** Interpreting or interpreter referral services must include:

- (a) statewide access to interpreter referral and direct interpreting services, coordinated with the regional service centers;
- (b) maintenance of a statewide directory of qualified interpreters;
- (c) assessment of the present and projected supply and demand for interpreter services statewide; and
- (d) coordination with the regional service centers on projects to train interpreters and advocate for and evaluate interpreter services.

History: 1999 c 149 s 4