



Arizona Commission

for the deaf and the hard of hearing

100 N 15th Avenue □ Suite 104 □ Phoenix, AZ 85007
acdhh.org

**Minutes of the meeting of the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the
Hard of Hearing, Interpreter Licensing Committee(ILC).
Meeting held September 5, 2025 at 2:00pm.
Meeting was held remotely via Zoom and posted to the agency
YouTube page.**

Call to Order & Roll Call

Commissioner Swenson called the meeting to order at **2:04 PM**

Commissioners present via Zoom: Commissioner Cohen, Commissioner Swenson,
Commissioner Sienko

Commissioners absent: Commissioner Thompson

AAG Elise Phalen

Staff Present via Zoom: Carmen Green Smith, Ashley Martin, Nikki Soukup, Chyla
Dalton-Nava

Overview of new ILC Process

Commissioner Swenson began the meeting by explaining the new process for interpreter complaints. This new process is designed to assist the Board in addressing outstanding interpreter complaints. The Interpreter Licensure Committee will now provide recommendations to the full Board, which will then make final decisions on complaints.

Review/Approval of Sign Language Interpreter Applications

Commissioner Cohen moved to recommend the names below, to the Interim Executive Director for issuance of an Interpreter License. Motion seconded by Commissioner Sienko ; motion carried unanimously.

The following applicants are approved for licensure, based on education, examination and experience requirements.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alana Perez 2. Amanda Roberts 3. AmberColwell 4. Bruce King 5. Catzian Maris 6. Charee Goolia 7. Crescenciano Garcia 8. Cynthia L. Williams 9. Debbie Helms 10. Delynn Saunders 11. Dianne Nosch 12. Elizabeth Cipparone 13. Emily Beech 14. Hannah Rutherford 15. Heather Beck 16. James Virgilio 17. Jennifer Carver 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 18. Jennifer Sabori 19. Jessica Brown 20. Jonathan Van Heule 21. Karen Lewis-Ross 22. Karina Kessen 23. Kathleen Peters 24. Kendall Polonis 25. Kylie Solomon 26. Lauren Welch 27. Mary Covington 28. Michael Farner 29. Patrice Herring 30. Rebekah Embrey 31. Sara Munoz 32. Sheena Rice 33. Tiffanie Laird 34. Valerie Weimer
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Announcements

None.

Public Comments

The following individuals provided comments during today’s meeting:

- Kaitlin Brauch- written comments on the complaint filed against Linda Bove
- Linda Bove- live comments on the complaint filed against her
- Audrey Evans- live comments on the complaint filed against her
- Stacey DaSilva- written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
- Brianna Mahoney-written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
- Marlo Jefferson- written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
- Alphonso Potts- written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
- Joni Horn- written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
- Cassandra T Randolph- written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
- Bridgette Michel- written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
- Dashiel Jackson- written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
- Petra Marshall- written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
- Brenda Terry- written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
- Lizzie Grant- written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
- Jessica Chapman- written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
- Rhonda Broviak- written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
- Joanna Rittenhouse- written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans

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Kayla Torres- written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
Ventura Torres- written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
Alivia Toy- written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
Kathy Radden- written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
Hannah Wegert- written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
Petula Oster- written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
Rebecca Abeyta- written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
Erika Grijalva- written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
Connie Walton- written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
Donna Di Giovanna- video comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
Caleb Chapman- video comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
Soniya Tucker-written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans
Carla Parker- written comments on the complaint filed against Audrey Evans

Interpreter Complaint/Inquiries

Regarding Audrey Evans-Victoria Vaughn provided a summary of the complaint. This complaint was filed by Carmen Smith against interpreter Audrey Evans. It is an allegation of unprofessional conduct during a DeafBlind forum hosted by ACDHH in April of 2024. During the forum, Ms. Evans allegedly pushed Ashley Martin from a chair while switching interpreter positions. Carmen Smith observed Ms. Martin fall from the chair, and reach out to brace herself for impact. Following the incident, Ms. Smith met with Ms. Evans about her behavior to which she apologized explaining her actions were to avoid delaying the message for consumers. Victoria Vaughn addressed concerns about a possible conflict of interest in the investigation, as the complainant is Carmen Smith, and the alleged victim, Ashley Martin, is also an ACDHH staff member. She explained that ACDHH explored options for the investigation, and also discussed options with the agency's AAG, Elise Phalen. These options included potentially conducting an external investigation. However, this was deemed potentially inequitable due to the significantly harsher penalties an outside entity could impose compared to what the ACDHH Board is statutorily authorized to implement. She also explained that The investigator's role is to gather information from both sides and present it to the ILC which then makes a recommendation to the full Board for action. Internal ACDHH staff are not involved in the final decision-making. During the initial investigation, Ms. Evans' responses to questions were brief, often limited to yes/no answers, and offered minimal detail or context. Witness statements were also provided by Nikki Soukup, who stated that Audrey sat on the same chair as Ashley, pushing Ashley onto the floor during a team switch. Nikki also noted that Audrey apologized to Ashley after the incident. A statement was also taken from Ashley Martin, who explained that during the incident Audrey touched her left shoulder, causing her to fall from the chair. Ashley explained she felt overwhelmed during the assignment and needed support, suggesting Audrey's action was an attempt to take over. Ashley recalled a post-incident conversation where Carmen expressed disappointment and Audrey apologized, acknowledging her actions were inappropriate but not intended to cause harm. Ashley was emotional and overwhelmed during this debrief due to past uncomfortable experiences with Ms. Evans as her mentor. Ashley stated the physical act was a "hit to her pride." When Ashley was

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The mission of the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing is to ensure, in partnership with the public and private sectors, accessibility for the deaf, deaf-blind, hard of hearing, and persons with speech difficulties to improve their quality of life.

asked what she would like the outcome of this process, she suggested training on mentoring, ethics, and appropriate teaming as a beneficial outcome. After Ashley's interview was complete, the investigator received a letter from Ms. Evans requesting the complaint's dismissal, citing a conflict of interest due to ACDHH's dual role as complainant and investigator, which she argued undermined impartiality. She requested an external investigator if dismissal was denied. Ms. Evans was informed that the investigator lacked authority to dismiss the complaint but that her letter would be presented to the Board and ILC Committee. A second round of questions was submitted to Ms. Evans in an attempt to investigate further. In her responses to these questions, Ms. Evans denied any physical contact with Ashley Martin, stating there was no push, accidental bump, or any contact made. She maintained her intention was to follow industry protocol for interpreter rotation at the 15-minute mark to maintain service quality and interpreter stamina, denying any attempt to rush. Ms. Evans claimed Ashley did not fall but intentionally rolled off the chair and sat on the edge of the platform stage. She stated her immediate reaction was surprise, asking Ashley, "Why are you sitting there?" She only became aware of the pushing allegation after Carmen Smith approached her and Ashley on the day of the forum. The investigator concluded that there is a direct conflict between the accounts of the involved parties. The complaint and witness statements allege unprofessional behavior and physical contact by Audrey Evans, which she vehemently denies. Ms. Evans' account contradicts the complaint and witness statements, as she denies all physical contact and claims Ashley Martin intentionally rolled off the chair. The investigator recently became aware of three more potential witnesses. During the current discussion, the ILC is considering recommendations to the full Board, with the possibility of gathering statements from these new witnesses for the November meeting. A discussion followed. Commissioner Swenson asked for clarification on the recommendation to continue the investigation, whether this would allow more time to gather additional witness statements. Victoria Vaughn confirmed this would be the reason to continue the investigation. Commissioner Sienko expressed that she felt this situation was an honest mistake, and felt that imposing a \$100 fine did not seem appropriate. She felt that Ms. Evans should complete two hours of workshops for continuing education units instead. Commissioner Cohen agreed and recommended that the two hours of workshop or continuing education could potentially be in the area of teaming or team interpreting. Commissioner Swenson concurred with both Commissioners, noting the incident was likely overwhelming and embarrassing for Ashley, yet clearly unintentional. To ensure fairness, she supported the recommendation for a two-hour workshop on team interpreting. After a discussion to verify the committee's authority, **Commissioner Sienko moved that the ILC make a recommendation to the full Board that Audrey Evans complete two hours of continuing education in the area of working with a team of interpreters; Commissioner Cohen seconds, the motion carried unanimously.**

Regarding Linda Bove- Victoria Vaughn provided a summary of the complaint. This complaint was filed by interpreter Kaitlin Brauch against Certified Deaf interpreter Linda Bove. Ms. Brauch, the hearing interpreter on the team, claims Ms. Bove was uncivil, disrespectful, and created a harassing environment. Specific incidents include Ms. Bove rolling her eyes, giving looks of disgust, and undermining Ms. Brauch to the Deaf client.

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Ms. Brauch states that Ms. Bove frequently interrupted her, not for clarification but to criticize her interpreting. These disruptions were not discreet and hindered effective communication. For instance, when Ms. Brauch narrated situations for the hearing consumer's inclusion or to ensure the therapist didn't miss communication, Ms. Bove allegedly told her to stop speaking. Furthermore, Ms. Brauch claims Ms. Bove often began interpreting before the therapist finished a question or before Ms. Brauch finished signing, which skewed the message for the Deaf client. When Ms. Brauch sought clarification, Ms. Bove explicitly blamed her for miscommunications. Ms. Brauch recalls asking for clarification on a signed word like "runaway" due to the setting, and Ms. Bove's response was condescending, providing three different ASL versions and expressing annoyance. Ms. Brauch also noted that she had worked with Ms. Bove four or five times previously, and each interaction had involved negative behavior, despite Ms. Bove not remembering her. Ms. Bove described her experience teaming with Ms. Brauch on that day as frustrating. She stated that a hearing-Deaf interpreter team is expected to follow a consecutive interpreting protocol using the demand-control schema. Ms. Bove claimed that Ms. Brauch performed simultaneous interpreting, which caused confusion and interfered with the workflow. When asked if she told Ms. Brauch to "stop speaking," Ms. Bove was unsure of the term's meaning and suggested Ms. Brauch misunderstood. She explained that in team interpreting, if multiple people are talking, it's normal protocol to ask them to pause to complete an interpretation or manage multiple conversations using the demand-control schema. Regarding comments about Ms. Brauch's work to consumers, Ms. Bove stated she did not recall making any. When asked if she demanded Ms. Brauch hurry up or criticized her for being too slow, Ms. Bove denied it, stating it doesn't sound like something she would say, as she prefers a slower pace and taking turns to ensure effective communication. The investigator concludes that the accounts of the two interpreters differ significantly. Ms. Bove denies telling Ms. Brauch to hurry up or criticizing her. However, both agree it was not an ideal situation and experienced frustrating times. Crucially, both agreed that their frustrations did not negatively affect the client or consumers. Interpersonal issues existed between them during the assignment. When asked about an ideal solution, Ms. Brauch expressed a desire for acknowledgment and respect as a fellow professional ASL interpreter. She believes filing this complaint will encourage Ms. Bove to be kinder and more respectful in future team interpreting interactions. Victoria explained options for resolution, which include requesting Ms. Bove complete two hours of continuing education courses related to effective teaming, the committee also is able to consider other options on the fee guideline, or they can opt to recommend to the full board to dismiss the complaint. A discussion followed. Commissioner Cohen expressed concern regarding the age of this complaint, noting the difficulty for individuals to recall details, often resulting in "he said/she said" situations. Based on the provided information, the Commissioner found no significant allegations, suggesting the issue was simply a poor team fit. **Commissioner Cohen moves to recommend the dismissal of the complaint against Linda Bove to the full board; Commissioner Sienko seconds, the motion carried unanimously.**

Adjournment

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**Commissioner Sienko moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:28 pm.
Commissioner Cohen seconded; the motion carried unanimously.**

Dated this 10th day of September 2025, Lisa Swenson, Committee Chair

The undersigned certifies that a copy of the attached notice was duly posted this 10th day of September, 2025 at 5:00 pm by Chyla Dalton-Nava, Assistant to the Executive Director.