

THE IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11106, KNOWN AS THE "FILIPINO SIGN LANGUAGE ACT"

Pursuant to Section 13 of Republic Act No. 11106, An Act Declaring Filipino Sign Language as the National Sign Language of the Filipino Deaf and the Official Sign Language of Government in All Transactions involving the Deaf, and Mandating its Use in Schools, Broadcast Media, and Workplaces, the following Rules and Regulations are hereby promulgated:

ARTICLE I GENERAL PROVISIONS



Section 1. Title. These Rules and Regulations shall be known and cited as The Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 11106, otherwise known as the "Filipino Sign Language Act (FSL Act)."

Section 2. Purpose. These Rules and Regulations are hereby promulgated to prescribe the procedures and guidelines for the implementation of the Filipino Sign Language Act in order to facilitate the compliance therewith and to achieve the objectives thereof.

Section 3. Construction. Since FSL is core to both the linguistic and cultural identity of the Filipino Deaf community, and is also the **vehicle for full accessibility** to information and communication, these Rules and Regulations are liberally construed in favor of deaf Filipinos, but with a specific focus to respect, protect, and fulfill the rights of the Filipino Deaf as a linguistic and cultural minority, in order to attain the objectives of the Filipino Sign Language Act.

Section 4. Coverage. Implementation of these Rules and Regulations includes all concerned national government agencies (NGAs), bodies, instrumentalities, including government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs), local government units (LGUs), state universities and colleges (SUCs), and various entities in the public sector. The equivalent units in autonomous regions shall likewise be accountable to formulate, adapt, and implement similar Rules and Regulations.

Section 5. Declaration of Policy. The State shall, in compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, promote, protect, and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of persons with disabilities. Thus, national and local State agencies shall uphold respect for their inherent dignity, individual autonomy, and independence by guaranteeing accessibility and eliminating all forms of discrimination in all public interactions and transactions, thereby ensuring their full and effective participation and inclusion in society. The State shall also take all appropriate measures to ensure that the deaf Filipinos can exercise the right to expression and opinion. Accordingly, the State

recognizes and promotes the use of sign languages embodying the specific cultural and linguistic identity of the Filipino Deaf. Relevant cultural agencies are encouraged to undertake activities in recognizing Filipino Sign Language as the national sign language.

The State also furthers the vision taken with the Early Years Act (Republic Act No. 10410) and the Enhanced Basic Education Act (Republic Act No. 10533), which have already recognized Filipino Sign Language in the education of deaf learners from early childhood up to the secondary level.

This Act and these Implementing Rules and Regulations are also concrete measures in the fulfillment of State commitments to: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; and International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights; Convention on the Elimination on All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Section 6.

General Rules on Implementation

All state agencies, offices, and instrumentalities at all levels, and government-owned and -controlled corporations, are recommended to adopt all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for the recognition and support of the specific cultural and linguistic identity of the Filipino Deaf, as provided for in this Act.

A. National Information & Communication Policy for the Filipino Deaf and Filipino Sign Language

The KWF shall promote the creation of this National Information & Communication Policy for the Filipino Deaf and Filipino Sign Language which shall guide the implementation of the Act in Education, Justice, Health, All Workplaces, All other Public Services / Transactions / Facilities, and in Media.

This National policy critical to the implementation of this Act shall include minimum standards for the following:

1. instruction and training on, and about FSL in the civil service, including for Continuing Professional Development;
2. testing of FSL competency among both hearing and deaf prospective workers in the civil service, particularly prioritizing teachers in early and basic education, and as interpreters, translators and support staff in access to justice;
3. interpreting to and from FSL and spoken languages in general, as well as specific standards for technical specialized interpreting in legal / judicial, medical, broadcasting, educational / academic, and other domains;
4. interpreter insets in broadcasting
5. translation of FSL to print for documents, copyrighted materials;
6. development of materials in FSL including copyrighted materials;

B. Agency Information & Communication Policy for the Filipino Deaf and Filipino Sign Language

All government agencies, centers and instrumentalities, national and local, shall guarantee accessibility and nondiscrimination to deaf recipients of all their services, as well as ensure a barrier-free workplace for environment for all deaf employees. Due consideration shall also be given to the intersectionality of deafness with gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status and other pertinent factors.

From the aforementioned National policy, each agency shall then formulate and implement its respective Agency Information & Communication Policy for the Filipino Deaf and Filipino Sign Language to ensure the inclusion of FSL and deaf Filipinos in all aspects of its policies, operations and practices:

1. declare FSL as the national, and official sign language for all transactions, services, and facilities involving the deaf, without prejudice to individual preference;
2. assess and categorize the specific needs for information and communication within its operations according to: a) urgency, b) complexity, c) duration of interaction, and d) predictability of frequency; all in the context of the deaf client's / beneficiaries' profile and preferences, together with relevant considerations such as gender, age, SES, and other;
3. equip all its employees with a fundamental understanding of deafness, manual communication, Deaf culture, FSL, interpreting, and accessibility;
4. identify the level of competency in FSL required of its various personnel, then plan appropriate training for decision-making skills in the provision of reasonable accommodation, or the appropriate accessibility to deaf clients;
5. publish online in FSL : (a) Frequently Asked Questions regarding the Agency's primary / frontline services, programs, forms and other information, particularly for critical or urgent situations such as emergencies or crises in disaster, medical problems, safety and protection from violence, and the like; and (b) most commonly used /typical sentences in their primary / frontline services for easy reference online;
6. determine the financing and resources needed to carry out their Agency policy; and
7. other relevant actions and activities within its Agency mandate.

C. Inclusive governance

In the context of the Philippine Development Plan and the Sustainable Development Goals, each Agency is also encouraged to:

1. review and eliminate all discriminatory policies and practices against the deaf, and introduce policy reforms which eliminate marginalization resulting from barriers in information and communication;
2. continuously gather statistics pertinent to this Act, according to its mandate as service provider, i.e., demographics of use of sign communication, interpreters, and materials in accessible formats; regularly consolidating these as bases for long term targets of ideal service provider-to-deaf client ratios;
3. institutionalize the participation of the Filipino Deaf in all operations and ensure accessibility of information and communication thru the provision of materials in accessible formats, and through interpreting;
4. undertake to the maximum of its available resources and, where needed, tapping international cooperation, achieving progressively the full realization of the rights of the deaf as provided for in this Act;
5. carry out the implementation of this Act in the context of other related legislation such as, but not limited to: R.A. 10533 (Enhanced Basic Education Act), R.A. 10410 (Early Year Act); R.A. 7277 (Magna Carta for Persons with Disabilities); R.A. 10524 (Expanding the Positions Reserved for Persons with Disabilities, amending RA 7277); R.A. 10354 (Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act); Republic Act 8505 (Rape Victim Assistance and Protection Act); R.A. 8504 (AIDS Prevention and Control Act); Republic Act 9184 (Government Procurement Reform Act); R.A. 7160 (Local Government Code); as well as other issuances including Department of Education policies on Mother Tongue Based-Multilingual Education; Policies, Standards and Guidelines for Bachelor of Special Needs Education (BSNEd), CHED Memorandum Order 77, s. 2017; Executive Order 417 (Economic Independence Program for Persons with Disabilities); BP 881 (Omnibus Election Code); Supreme Court Memorandum 59-2004, and Circular 104-2007, and others; and introducing amendments if needed.

D. Coordination across Agencies

It is recommended that Agencies with related mandates in: education, justice, health, work, media, and other, plan and coordinate with each other in clusters.

Section 7.

Definition of Terms. For purposes of this Act, the following terms shall mean:

- a. **accessible formats / accessible materials** – alternatives to print which address communication needs of persons with disabilities; for the deaf, these include interpretation in sign language, texts written in plain or easy to understand language, and others;
- b. **deaf** – in this Act, used as an adjective describing individuals who are unable to fully use their hearing to process information. They may or may not be signers or identify themselves with the community of other persons with hearing loss. Non-signers may include some individuals who are hard of hearing, older persons, orally schooled individuals, persons with cochlear implants, and others, who use other modes or means of communications, e.g., speech, and speech-reading. Persons with hearing loss who are isolated and use gestural non-standard signs are also included under this term;
- c. **Deaf** – in this Act, used as a noun to indicate a subset of deaf Filipinos: those individuals with hearing loss who use the natural visual language of the community and support its goals and values as a linguistic and cultural minority. Thus, the Deaf in the Philippines are those deaf Filipinos who collectively identify as a linguistic and cultural community which uses Filipino Sign Language and actively supports its goals and values. All Filipino Deaf are deaf, while not all deaf Filipinos are Deaf;
- d. **Deaf community** – a group of Deaf individuals who share a culture and language: interest, value systems, rules of behavior, and norms. The Filipino Deaf community is thus the group of Deaf Filipinos who share Filipino Sign Language and the culture associated with it: the interest and vision, value systems, rules of behavior, and norms;
- e. **Deaf Relay Interpreter** – an interpreter who is Deaf and relays information (together with a hearing interpreter) between a linguistically isolated deaf person and hearing non-signers;
- f. **deaf people's organization** – an association comprised of and run autonomously by deaf individuals;
- g. **Filipino Sign Language (FSL)** – the term used by Deaf Filipinos to refer to their visual language which has evolved naturally through the centuries since hypothesized beginnings in the 1590s in Dulac, Leyte. It is distinct from spoken Filipino. Like other sign languages, it is a visual-spatial language, with no orthographic system (as different from spoken languages), and is rule-governed at the structural levels of phonology, morphology, syntax, and discourse. It belongs to the branch of visual languages influenced by American Sign Language, but has been documented in sign linguistics research to be a

language distinct from the latter;

- h. interpreting – the process of producing / rendering a message from a source language to a target language; for this Act, it shall mean the process of producing / rendering a message to and from FSL, or non-standard manual communication based on FSL principles;
- i. sign language competency – for this Act, the ability to use language receptively (visually) and expressively (signing)
- j. manual communication – various forms of visual-spatial communication utilizing the hands; this includes the spectrum of true visual languages to artificial sign systems;
- k. national sign language - the sign language of a country duly recognized by the State to be used in all communications;
- l. official sign language - the sign language used in official functions of the government;
- m. qualified sign language interpreter - an interpreter who is competent to deliver the interpreting skills needed and/or preferred by a deaf client
- n. sign language interpreter – typically a hearing person who produces / renders a message from spoken language into a natural sign language and / or vice versa;
- o. translation – for this Act, transmission / rendering of a message from FSL to written English, Filipino or other Philippine language, such as in legal affidavits;
- p. Universal Design – (from UNCRPD Article 2) the design of products, environments, programmes, and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. “Universal Design” shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed;
- q. Visual Communication Assessment for the Deaf (VCAD) - a tool to determine the communication features and preferences of a deaf person involved in a case, conducted one-on-one by a Deaf administrator, and recommendations of which are submitted to the trial court or relevant agency. This instrument was developed by sign language linguist Dr. Liza Martinez of the Philippine Deaf Resource Center, and has been used since 2005 on at least 78 deaf parties

ARTICLE II INTERPRETING IN FILIPINO SIGN LANGUAGE

Section 7. Standards for Filipino Sign Language Interpreting. As the national sign language of the Philippines, FSL shall be recognized, promoted, and supported as the

medium of official communication in all transactions involving the deaf. Thus, it shall also be the official language of interpreting, without prejudice to the use of other forms of communication depending on individual choice or preference.

Pursuant to Section 5 of the FSL Act, after the adoption of these Rules and Regulations, the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino, with the involvement of the Deaf community and other stakeholders, including the Department of Social Welfare and Development (specifically in its task to implement Republic Act No. 7277, An Act Providing for the Self-Development and Self-Reliance of Disabled Persons and Their Integration into the Mainstream of Society and For Other Purposes, on the provision of "qualified sign language interpreters" as part of Auxiliary Aids & Services/Auxiliary Social Services), shall commence establishing a national system of standards, accreditations, and procedures for FSL interpreting, including the following components, as soon as possible, and complete this within three years:

- Training, continuing education, and professional development;
- Assessment and accreditation of individual non-professional and professional interpreters; and
- Policies on practice of interpreting as a profession, such as, compensation rates and benefits, working conditions, procedures for grievances, code of ethics.

These standards shall also cover Deaf Relay Interpreting, which are based on FSL principles.

The implementation of this provision shall be without prejudice to other forms of communication according to individual preference.

The University of the Philippines, together with the SUCs, is encouraged to carry out continuing research on this national system of standards for FSL interpreting.

ARTICLE III FILIPINO SIGN LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION

Pursuant to Section 4 of the FSL Act, the Department of Education (DepEd), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), and all other national and local government agencies involved in the education of the deaf shall use, and coordinate with each other on the use of FSL as the medium of instruction in deaf education.

Section 8. For deaf learners in Early Education

1. Following RA 10410, the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Council in coordination with DepEd shall issue an Agency Information and Communication Policy for the Filipino Deaf and FSL which:
 - a. adapts FSL as the visual language and medium of instruction in early education;

- b. ensures inclusion of children with disabilities including the deaf, in all early education frameworks, policies, guidelines, standards, curricula, checklists, financing and reporting; and
 - c. institutes pre-/in-service training following national standards for all its teachers and staff;
- 2. The ECCDC shall specify the needed specialized sign language competency for the Agency, based on the minimum standards of the National Information & Communication Policy for the Deaf and Filipino Sign Language set by the KWF.
- 3. Toward this end, it shall coordinate with the PRC to employ alternative procedures in licensing of deaf teachers; hire teachers and staff, designate Filipino Deaf - FSL consultants / specialists, and fully engage with Deaf organizations and researchers with experience in FSL, to fully and sustainably implement the FSL Act.

Section 9. For deaf learners in Basic Education (K-12)

- 1. The Department of Education (DepEd) shall issue an inclusive Agency Information and Communication Policy for the Filipino Deaf and FSL which shall:
 - a. adopt FSL as the medium/language of instruction;
 - b. review, amend, and formulate all frameworks, plans, policies, activities, and practices as necessary, for: curriculum development and support, teachers, training, materials, ICT, assessment, monitoring, and evaluation, for the implementation of the FSL Act and these Rules and Regulations. This includes joint efforts with the PRC and the CHED to actively recruit Deaf teacher education graduates;
 - c. add FSL as part of the languages recognized in the Mother Tongue Based-Multilingual Education program, wherein FSL is the mother/first/visual language (L1) of deaf learners, and the primary medium of instruction throughout Basic Education; with written English, Filipino, and or other Philippine languages as the languages of literacy (L2) functioning as auxiliary mediums of instruction; and
 - d. designate Filipino Deaf - FSL consultants / specialists, and fully engage Deaf organizations and researchers with experience in FSL, to fully and sustainably implement the FSL Act in: the classroom, alternative learning systems, as well as through other delivery platforms such as online/distance education, or through the National Council for Children's Television programs, activities and projects.
- 2. As part of the mandate for inclusive education, the DepEd shall provide qualified sign language interpreters, and accessible materials for all their programs and activities for all deaf learners, and Deaf teachers and staff.

To achieve this, the DepEd shall develop policies for the hiring of Deaf teachers; and designate qualified sign language interpreters. The distinction of the latter separates duties and functions of teachers to ensure accessibility to deaf learners without undermining the duty of teachers to deliver effective and efficient instruction. Likewise, routinely assigning interpreting duties to teachers, such as, for law enforcement interviews, affidavit preparation, court proceedings, polling place electoral-related duties, and all other non-instructional related activities, shall be discouraged.

The DepEd shall specify the needed specialized sign language competency for the Agency, based on the minimum standards of the National Information & Communication Policy for the Deaf and Filipino Sign Language set by the KWF.

3. The DepEd shall also consider inclusion and intersectionality of deaf learners, on an equal basis as all other learners, and the use of FSL in all its programs, activities, and projects (including the Indigenous Persons and Madrasah programs), national testing, and others;.

Section 10. For deaf learners in Technical-Vocational Education. The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) shall issue an Agency Information and Communication Policy for the Filipino Deaf and FSL which shall:

- a. adopt FSL as the medium of instruction in all its programs and activities; as well as access in enrollment and training on an equal basis as all other Filipinos
- b. review and enhance existing policies and frameworks, including curriculum development, standards, assessment and accreditation, and ensure implementation of the FSL Act and these Rules and Regulations in TESDA's programs, activities and projects; this includes the long-term goal of hiring Deaf teachers and trainers for their program offerings;

The TESDA shall specify the needed specialized sign language competency for the Agency, based on the minimum standards of the National Information & Communication Policy for the Deaf and Filipino Sign Language set by the KWF.

- c. in close consultation and coordination with Deaf organizations, interpreter organizations, and other concerned entities, plan on offering training in interpreting in FSL
- d. provide qualified sign language interpreters, and accessible materials for all their programs and activities as part of their mandate for inclusive services;
- e. designate Filipino Deaf - FSL consultants / specialists, and fully engage with Deaf organizations and researchers with experience in FSL, to fully and sustainably implement FSL Act in the TESDA systems; and
- f. actively promote and include deaf training graduates in transition programs for employment;

Section 11. For deaf learners in Higher Education. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) shall issue an inclusive Agency Information and Communication Policy for the Filipino Deaf and FSL which shall:

- a. adopt FSL as the medium of instruction in Higher Education for deaf enrollees;
- b. review and enhance existing policies, standards, and frameworks of higher education institutions, including for: curriculum development and support, teachers, training, materials, ICT, assessment, financing, monitoring and evaluation - particularly for teacher education programs and ensure implementation of FSL Act and these Rules and Regulations in CHED's program offerings.

The CHED shall specify the needed specialized sign language competency for the Agency, based on the minimum standards of the National Information & Communication Policy for the Deaf and Filipino Sign Language set by the KWF.

- c. formulate policies, coordinate, and monitor the institutional financing and provision of qualified sign language interpreters, and accessible materials by higher education institutions, in compliance with R.A. 10931, the Universal Access to Tertiary Education, so that deaf enrollees are able to avail of the latter on an equal basis as all other Filipinos; and
- d. institute and monitor measures and fully engage with Deaf organizations and researchers with experience in FSL, for the designation of Filipino Deaf - FSL consultants / specialists, to fully and sustainably implement FSL Act and these Rules and Regulations.

Section 12. Deaf Teachers. The Professional Regulation Commission (PRC), with the Commission on Higher Education, shall issue an Agency Information and Communication Policy for the Filipino Deaf and FSL which shall:

- a. review policies, frameworks, and practices on licensing of teachers, and provide transitional alternative assessment procedure as affirmative action to consider the current conditions, background, and social economic circumstances of deaf teacher education graduates;

The PRC shall specify the needed specialized sign language competency for the Agency, based on the minimum standards of the National Information & Communication Policy for the Deaf and Filipino Sign Language set by the KWF.

- b. ensure full accessibility and language and culture fairness of assessment procedures of deaf teacher education graduates;
- c. promote licensing and mobilization of Deaf teachers in formal education, alternative learning systems and other delivery platforms; coordinate with ECCDC and DepEd to ensure entry of Deaf teachers/users of FSL into the public schools, daycare centers, and national child development centers; and

- d. issue guidelines on FSL competency testing and mandatory continuing trainings.

Section 13. FSL in Teacher Education Programs. CHED shall include FSL as a curricular or co-curricular offering, in higher education programs, particularly in teacher education.

Section 14. Training and Evaluation Programs. The University of the Philippines (UP), together with the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (KWF), professional sign linguistics and linguistics researchers, in collaboration with the CHED and the DepEd, and the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Council, shall develop guidelines for the development of training materials in the education of the deaf for use by all state universities and colleges (SUCs), as well as their teachers and staff.

ARTICLE IV FILIPINO SIGN LANGUAGE IN INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Section 15. FSL in Instructional Materials. Pursuant to Section 12 of the FSL Act, the DepEd Instructional Materials and Council Secretariat shall, in coordination with the Bureau of Learning Resources and the Bureau of Learning Delivery, as well as the ECCD Council, develop guidelines for the selection, production, procurement, and distribution of print and video materials in FSL to all public schools, day care centers, and national child development centers in accordance with existing laws and corresponding Implementing Rules and Regulations.

Also in compliance with Executive Order 417, the Economic Independence Program For Persons With Disabilities, the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and their corresponding LGUs shall engage with local Deaf people's organizations/cooperatives in their area for their recognition, capacitation and support in the production of FSL materials.

Annual data from the DBM, Commission on Audit (COA), DepEd, and DILG shall be submitted to the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) to ensure that this Affirmative Action measures are concretely benefiting Deaf Filipinos relative to all other citizens.

Relevant and allowable expenditures related to this provision may also be charged to the ECCD Council, LGU Special Education Fund, or other relevant fund.

ARTICLE V FILIPINO SIGN LANGUAGE IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Pursuant to Section 6 of the FSL Act, measures shall be created guaranteeing accessibility and eliminating all forms of discrimination against deaf Filipinos in the justice system through the institutional use of Filipino Sign Language . Filipino deaf and

their families shall be provided with services, support and interventions in all public hearings, proceedings, and transactions of the courts, quasi-judicial agencies, and other tribunals.

To implement this provision, the agencies listed below shall perform the following roles and functions:

Section 16. Department of Justice

The Department of Justice shall issue an Agency Information and Communication Policy for the Filipino Deaf and FSL which shall:

- a. declare FSL as the official language in all its offices and constituent/attached agencies, for all programs, activities, projects, and hearings, proceedings, and transactions involving deaf Filipinos, particularly women and children, and also including arrests of deaf respondents, and accessibility in correctional facilities;
- b. review, amend, enhance, implement, and monitor policies, programs, activities and projects, and ensure implementation of FSL Act and these Rules and Regulations;

The DOJ shall specify the needed specialized sign language competency for the Agency, based on the minimum standards of the National Information & Communication Policy for the Deaf and Filipino Sign Language set by the KWF.

- c. Together with the Judiciary and the DILG, formulate standards for the institutionalization of necessary assessment of the communication characteristics and preferences of the deaf client, i.e., the Visual Communication Assessment for the Deaf (VCAD), to determine the provision of appropriate interpreting; assistance and support, and/or translation, such as for communication with the medico-legal, various preliminary transactions with the PNP, quasi-judicial bodies, and other tribunals; and the preparation of affidavits, and so on.
- d. compile cases, and jointly with the administrative offices of the DILG, DSWD, and Supreme Court Office of the Court Administrator, create and maintain a database of cases involving deaf individuals (real parties in interest), as basis of monitoring and for research, ensuring that where confidentiality is required by law, measures shall be taken to protect the privacy of persons and/or confidentiality of information. This may be done with the support of SUCs.

Section 17. Supreme Court. The Judiciary is enjoined to consider the following, for the implementation of this Act:

- a. issue a Supreme Court policy declaring Filipino Sign Language as the official language in legal interpreting, and in all its courts, and offices for all hearings, proceedings, and transactions involving deaf Filipinos;
- b. review, amend, enhance, implement, and monitor policies, programs, activities, and projects; and ensure implementation of FSL Act and these Rules and

Regulations, in compliance with State commitment to the UNCRPD, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, (CEDAW), and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC);

- c. formulate standards for the conduct of interpreting and documentation in court proceedings, and handling of cases involving deaf parties, with accompanying administrative guidelines for subpoenas, compensation, etc. particularly in relation to deaf children, and unschooled deaf individuals;
- d. include Filipino Sign Language modules, as determined in Section 7 and Section 21, as part of Mandatory Continuing Legal Education to ensure awareness-raising among all judges, lawyers, and court personnel on deafness, interpreting, and FSL;
- e. designate Filipino Deaf - FSL consultants / specialists, and fully engage with Deaf organizations and researchers with experience in FSL, to fully and sustainably implement the FSL Act in the courts and all offices; and
- f. develop, implement, and monitor policies for the designation of qualified sign language interpreters, translators, and VCAD administrators.

Section 18. Department of Interior and Local Government

The Department of Interior and Local Government shall issue an Agency Information and Communication Policy for the Filipino Deaf and FSL which shall:

- a. declare FSL as the official language in all its offices and constituent/attached agencies, as well as to all Local Government Units, their local bodies / mechanisms, for all programs, activities, projects, and hearings, proceedings, and transactions involving all deaf parties engaging with the Katarungang Pambarangay/Lupong Tagapamayapa;
- b. review relevant sections of the Revised Local Government Code, R.A. 7160 Katarungang Pambarangay, including DILG Administrative Circular No. 14-93 Guidelines on the Katarungang Pambarangay Conciliation Procedure;
- c. monitor, consolidate, and report: (1) disaggregated data on deaf persons, specially of deaf women and children, for: relevant demographics, including the use of FSL and interpreting, by constituents and Local Governments; and (2) the review, amendment, and implementation of policies, programs, activities, and projects by Local Governments, including law enforcement, to ensure implementation of this section of the FSL Act and these Rules and Regulations;
- d. in consultation with Filipino Deaf - FSL experts, the Agency shall institute, coordinate, and monitor in the administration of justice - the inclusion of FSL in the programs, activities and projects of all Local Government Units, their local bodies and mechanisms, the Local Government Academy for training, for instance in programs for Newly Elected Officials, and online webinar series: (1)

local government policy-making, (2) orientation on deafness, Filipino Deaf culture, and FSL, (3) FSL instruction, and (4) FSL interpreting following national standards on FSL instruction and training;

- e. monitor Local Government coordination with respective social services for the provision, financing, and monitoring of the needs for FSL interpreting and FSL materials among their respective constituencies in all aspects of the administration of justice; and
- f. formulate Local Government incentives for the implementation of this Section of this Act;

Section 19. National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF)/Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)

- a. issue an NCMF policy declaring FSL as the official language in all its offices and constituent/attached agencies, for all programs, activities, projects, and hearings, proceedings, and transactions involving all Deaf Muslim Filipinos, including in the BARMM;
- b. formulate, implement, and monitor policies, programs, activities, and projects; designate Filipino Deaf - FSL consultants / specialists, and fully engage with Deaf organizations and researchers with experience in FSL to ensure implementation of FSL Act and these Rules and Regulations; and
- c. establish, monitor, and sustain an interpreting system appropriate for a Muslim context and Shariah courts, tapping regional/international cooperation from Muslim Deaf experts and organizations for technical assistance

Section 20. All other quasi-judicial and administrative entities and tribunals. Administration of justice by all other entities and tribunals shall similarly comply as already described.

**ARTICLE VI
FILIPINO SIGN LANGUAGE IN ALL WORKPLACES**

Pursuant to Section 7 of the FSL Act, the Civil Service Commission (CSC) shall issue an Agency Information and Communication Policy for the Filipino Deaf and FSL which shall declare FSL as the official language in the civil service and all government work places and facilitate adaptation of reasonable measures to encourage the use of FSL among its deaf and hearing employees.

It shall specify the needed specialized sign language competency for the Agency, based on the minimum standards of the National Information & Communication Policy for the Deaf and Filipino Sign Language set by the KWF.

Section 20. Hiring, Recruitment, and Placement. After the adoption of these Rules and Regulations, there shall be an appropriate incremental increase in the recruitment and training of interpreters in Filipino Sign Language in the six domains covered by this Act, i.e., educational system, justice system, workplaces, health system, all other public transactions and services, and the media.

The CSC shall conduct a personnel audit of the bureaucracy. Together with the DSWD, and the concerned government agencies and offices, and in consultation with organizations of Filipino Deaf, it shall recommend to the DBM appropriate staffing measures towards progressive realization of an ideal interpreting service - deaf client ratio.

The formation of pools of interpreters, to provide services may be sourced from within the agency, as well as outsourced externally, placing primary importance on the qualifications of interpreters, and the quality of interpreting delivered.

Within thirty (30) days after the adoption of these Rules and Regulations, the CSC shall promulgate policies, rules, and regulations for the implementation of the incremental increase or training of government employees in interpreting. Transitional and long-term plans for internal capacity-building for the incremental creation of plantilla positions for the next five (5) years, henceforth, as needed, along with outsourcing, public-private partnerships and other sustainable options shall also be considered and utilized. This includes interpreters, translators and VCAD Administrators. Important in planning should be the qualifications of interpreters, and the quality of interpreting service to be delivered.

Section 21. Training. The University of the Philippines, together with KWF, professional linguistics organizations and Filipino Deaf - linguistics researchers, shall formulate guidelines for the development of training materials for the employees of Department of Justice (DOJ), the Judiciary, the Department of Health (DOH), the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the Philippine Commission on Women (PCW), the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC), and the Commission on Human Rights (CHR).

Based on the CSC audit and strategic placement of government employees - government personnel, including appointing authorities, local chief executives (LCEs) of LGUs and those in executive managerial positions involved in providing services to the Filipino deaf community shall also regularly undergo training.

ARTICLE VII FILIPINO SIGN LANGUAGE IN THE HEALTH SYSTEM

Section 22. Department of Health. Pursuant to Section 8 of the FSL Act, the Department of Health (DOH) shall issue an Agency Information and Communication Policy for the Filipino Deaf and FSL which shall:

- a. declare Filipino Sign Language as the official language in all its offices, constituent/attached agencies, facilities for all programs, activities, projects in all transactions involving the deaf; as well as its consideration in the impact on all levels of health care, health systems, service delivery networks, and health technology assessment;
- b. review and enhance existing policies, frameworks, and practices of public institutions, centers and the like, including: a) curricula, training and relevant testing in the preparation/training of all medical/health service providers, including nursing and the allied medical professions, and all other health care professionals; b) community-based support care; c) pharmacies, diagnostics clinics, HMOs; d) transactions with the PhilHealth, SSS, GSIS; and all other policies, frameworks and practices, to ensure implementation of the FSL Act and these Rules and Regulations;

The DOH shall specify the needed specialized sign language competency for the Agency, based on the minimum standards of the National Information & Communication Policy for the Deaf and Filipino Sign Language set by the KWF.

- c. ensure barrier-free services and materials, particularly in the priority areas of Sexual & Reproductive Health specially relating to VAWC; mental health; and HIV/AIDS; considering the intersectionality of health concerns with gender, age, socio-economic status and other relevant considerations;
- d. designate Filipino Deaf - FSL consultants / specialists, and fully engage with Deaf organizations and researchers with experience in FSL, to fully and sustainably implement the FSL Act in all health centers and facilities;
- e. develop, promote, and monitor policies for the designation of qualified sign language interpreters, and provision of accessible materials for all health programs, activities, projects, centers, and facilities, for both public and private health centers, facilities, and institutions.

ARTICLE VIII FILIPINO SIGN LANGUAGE IN ALL OTHER PUBLIC TRANSACTIONS, SERVICES, AND FACILITIES

Pursuant to Section 9 of the FSL Act, the following agencies shall each issue an Agency Information and Communication Policy for the Filipino Deaf and FSL which shall carry out the following:

Section 23. GSIS, SSS, PhilHealth, Pag-IBIG, PAGCOR, and similar agencies

- a. declare Filipino Sign Language as the official language in all offices, constituent/ attached agencies, and facilities for all programs, activities, projects in all transactions involving the deaf;

- b. review and enhance their existing policies, frameworks, and practices to ensure implementation of the FSL Act and these Rules and Regulations;
- c. designate Filipino Deaf - FSL consultants / specialists, and fully engage with Deaf organizations and researchers with experience in FSL, to fully & sustainably implement the FSL Act in the said relevant agencies; and
- d. develop, promote and monitor policies for the designation of qualified sign language interpreters, and provision of accessible materials for all programs, activities, projects, centers, and facilities.

Section 24. Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA).

The Philippine Statistics Authority shall issue an Agency Information and Communication Policy for the Filipino Deaf and FSL.

Within one (1) year after the adoption of these Rules and Regulations, the PSA, in consultation with NGAs, LGUs and the Filipino Deaf, shall facilitate the creation of a database of the number of deaf Filipinos, and deaf signers, mapping and disaggregating by gender and age, to serve as basis of strategic focus of resources and qualified sign language interpreters. This shall include data pertinent to each of the Sections of this Act, namely:

1. Education - number of learners, teachers and staff in early, basic, alternative, distance, higher, and technical-vocational education;
2. Justice - disaggregated data on deaf parties engaged with the legal and judicial systems, and quasi-judicial/administrative tribunals, at the national and local levels;
3. Health - number of service users at various health facilities;
4. Workplaces - number of deaf employees throughout various public and private workplaces;
5. Media - demographic profile of deaf viewers of programming with interpreter insets;
6. All Other Services, Transactions, Facilities - relevant data for specific services, transactions, and facilities such as fora, conferences, meetings, cultural events, sports competitions, community affairs, and activities conducted by government agencies and GOCCs.

In addition, the PSA shall gather, consolidate, and report numbers of qualified qualified interpreters, translators, VCAD administrators, and other support personnel relevant to the implementation of this Act; and report on proportion of regional and national services providers to deaf clients / beneficiaries.

Section 25. Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG)

The DILG shall issue an Agency Information and Communication Policy for the Filipino Deaf and FSL which shall:

- a. declare FSL as the official language in all its offices and constituent / attached agencies, including all Local Government Units, and its local bodies and mechanisms, for all programs, activities, projects, in all transactions involving the deaf;
- b. review and amend relevant sections of the Revised Local Government Code, R.A. 7160, and related local legislation to ensure compliance with the FSL Act;

The DILG shall specify the needed specialized sign language competency for the Agency, based on the minimum standards of the National Information & Communication Policy for the Deaf and Filipino Sign Language set by the KWF.

- c. monitor, consolidate, and report: a) disaggregated data on deaf persons, specially of deaf women and children, and relevant demographics, including use of FSL, interpreting, by Local Governments within their constituencies; b) the review, amendment, implementation of policies, programs, activities, and projects of Local governments to ensure implementation of this section of the FSL Act and these Rules and Regulations;
- d. in consultation with Filipino Deaf - FSL experts, institute, coordinate and monitor the inclusion of FSL in the programs, activities and projects of the Local Government Academy for training, with for instance, programs for newly-elected officials, and online webinar series: (a) local government policy-making; (b) orientation on deafness, Filipino Deaf culture and FSL; (c) FSL instruction, (d) FSL interpreting following National Standards on FSL instruction and training;
- e. monitor Local Government coordination with respective social services for the provision, financing, and monitoring of the needs for FSL interpreting and FSL materials among their respective constituencies; and
- f. formulate and integrate provisions of this Act on the use of FSL, interpreting, and accessible materials, in Local Government incentives such as the Seal of Good Local Governance, on Good Financial Housekeeping, Performance Incentive Funds, Seal of Child-Friendly Local Governance, GADtimpala Scoring System and other.

Section 26. FSL Focal Points

Based on the CSC audit and strategic placement of government employees, government departments and instrumentalities shall establish a network of qualified non-professional and professional government interpreters.

A centralized facility coordinated across regional units for sign to print translation; as well as administration and coordination of the Visual Communication Assessment for the Deaf (VCAD) shall also be established transitionally, and supported for long-term function.

The head of agencies or LCEs shall formulate and issue appropriate policies to institutionalize the presence of the FSL Focal Points from among Social Services staff in their respective agencies or LGUs. The tasks and functions of these FSL Focal Points shall form part of their regular key result areas and shall be given due consideration in their performance evaluation.

The head of agency or LCE shall ensure that all FSL focal points undergo capacity-building and training on management of FSL interpreting.

In addition, the FSL Focal Points shall ensure the provision of accessible materials in FSL for the various services of the local government.

The National Commission on Muslim Filipinos shall formulate, coordinate, implement and monitor policies, plans, programs, and projects on interpreting for Muslim Deaf particularly in the BARMM, and for all other Deaf Muslims. Cooperation for international assistance is recommended to be tapped for guidance on interpreting that is socially and culturally appropriate for Muslims particularly for deaf women and children.

ARTICLE IX FILIPINO SIGN LANGUAGE IN MEDIA

Section 27. Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB). Pursuant to Section 10 of the FSL Act, MTRCB shall issue an Agency Information and Communication Policy for the Filipino Deaf and FSL which shall declare Filipino Sign Language as official language for broadcast media interpreting, and other related guidelines for the implementation of the provisions of this Act, including coordination with the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (KBP), the Deaf community, and other stakeholders to create a national system of standards, procedures, and accreditation for broadcast media interpreting in FSL following Article II; with the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC), Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), and in consultation with the KBP, and other stakeholders, formulate a national system of technical standards, and procedures, compliant with international accessibility standards and practices for television.

- a. The MTRCB shall specify the needed specialized sign language competency for the Agency, based on the minimum standards of the National Information & Communication Policy for the Deaf and Filipino Sign Language set by the KWF.
- b. coordinate with the DepEd through the National Council for Children's Television in planning for accessible and universally designed programs; while exploring these programs as a platform for Alternative Learning Systems;

Five years after the adoption of these Rules and Regulations, the Inter-Agency Council, in consultation with all relevant agencies and stakeholders, shall undertake the necessary revisions.

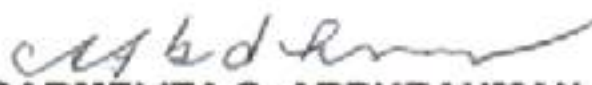
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