



## **DEAFund Information Sheet**

### ***Deaf Equal Access Fund of the Monroe County Bar Association***

The Monroe County Bar Association is committed to promoting equal access to local attorneys for the Greater Rochester Area's 50,000 deaf and hard of hearing citizens, and ensuring that local attorneys are fulfilling their obligations to this unique community according to the requirements of the American with Disabilities Act.

**To this end, the MCBA has established a Deaf Awareness Task Force with the following objectives:**

1. To educate attorneys about their obligations to clients with disabilities under the ADA requirements, with a primary focus on clients who are deaf, and to provide attorneys with information on how to effectively provide services to deaf clients.
2. To educate the deaf community about their basic legal rights and provide them the reassurance that the local bar understands their obligation to deaf clients.
3. To establish a relationship with Lifespan Interpreting Services to deliver simple-to-arrange, affordable, and competent interpreter services to attorneys for the benefit of deaf clients.
4. To establish a fund that will provide member attorneys with partial reimbursement for the costs of interpreters hired through the program.
5. To identify other sources of funding for the DEAFund through grant opportunities.

#### **Guidelines for reimbursement from DEAFund:**

1. The MCBA will reimburse any member attorney the total amount of the interpreter for the first client meeting, not to exceed two hours, **only when** the attorney has secured the interpreter from the Lifespan Interpreting Services according to the MCBA Letter of Agreement with Lifespan.
  - a. The attorney must be a member of the MCBA at the time the Lifespan Interpreting Service is rendered. If submitted by a paralegal or legal administrator, proof of member attorney representing the client is required.
2. The MCBA will reimburse any member attorney for 50% on the cost of an interpreter, only when the interpreter has been secured through Lifespan Interpreting Services, for up to a total of \$150.00 per client. Any remaining

balance owed to Lifespan is the responsibility of the attorney. The negotiated hourly rate for an interpreter through Lifespan is \$55/hour.

- a. The DEAFund Reimbursement Form will be available on the MCBA website and must be completed and submitted to the MCBA along with the actual receipt from the interpreter for reimbursement.
  - b. Reimbursement payments will be prepared every two weeks.
  - c. All reimbursements will require the prior approval of the Executive Director.
  - d. The House Finance will receive a monthly report on the Fund balance; with a quarterly report made to the Board of Trustees.
3. Special requests for additional reimbursement will be considered upon receipt of a request in writing.
  4. There is no cap for individual attorneys; the only cap is on the amount of reimbursement for the individual client.
  5. If the attorney is able to recover expenses, the attorney is obligated to reimburse the DEAFund for the benefit of future clients and attorneys.

**For more information about these guidelines, please contact:**

*Kathy Fico*  
*Business Manager*  
*Monroe County Bar Association*  
*One West Main Street, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor*  
*Rochester, NY 14614*  
*P 585-546-1817*  
*F 585-546-1807*  
*E [Kfico@mcb.org](mailto:Kfico@mcb.org)*

**To secure an interpreter from Lifespan Interpreting Services, please contact:**

*Interpreting Services*  
*Lifespan*  
*1900 S Clinton Avenue*  
*Rochester, New York 14618*  
*P 585-244-8400 ext 175*  
*F 585-244-9114*  
*E [interpreting@lifespan-roch.org](mailto:interpreting@lifespan-roch.org)*