

PRESS RELEASE

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The Florida Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf Offers Training on Emergency Management Interpreting

2012 FRID Conference, Jacksonville, FL, October 18 – 21, 2012

Jacksonville, FL, July 14, 2012 – The Florida Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (FRID) announces its 2012 Conference program to include 12 hours of training on Emergency Management Interpreting (EMI) . In this emerging field for sign language interpreters, this training has never been available at any national, regional or statewide conference. The FRID Emergency Management Committee (EMC), working closely with the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf’s (RID) Emergency Management Task Force (EMTF), has gathered experts in the field to present this training program. The EMI training includes modules as recommended by the RID EMTF in addition to requirements specific to Florida. At the conclusion of the conference, FRID expects to have interpreters who have completed all of the recommended modules and be qualified to be deployed in Florida Interpreter Strike Teams (FIST) as needed during emergency or disaster situations in the State of Florida.

The Florida Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf seeks to recruit qualified, nationally certified, sign language interpreters in Florida to complete the Florida EMI recommended trainings. To be considered for inclusion and deployment as part of an FIST, interpreters will need to meet additional requirements such as interpreter certification, years of interpreting service, and interpreting experience, and have appropriate background checks and fingerprinting. A “registry of interpreters” who have completed the trainings and qualifications will be made available to the Florida Division of Emergency Management to assist them in deployment of resources when needed.

The Florida EMI and RID EMTF recommended trainings to be offered at the 2012 FRID conference are listed below. You may find full descriptions of the trainings, presenter bios and a complete list of the RID EMTF recommended trainings on the FRID website at – <http://fridcentral.org/FlaEMI>

- Interpreter Self-care and Trauma Mitigation
- Role, Function and Deployment
- Press Conferences and Family Briefings
- Disaster Table-top Exercise
- Red Cross Shelter Overview

The creation of these ISTs is vital to Florida as it meets requirements under the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended (ADA) and meets the spirit and intent of

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Presidential Executive Order #13347, entitled "Individuals with Disabilities in Emergency Preparedness", signed July 2004, which requires the Federal Government to support safety and security for individuals with disabilities in situations involving disasters, including earthquakes, tornadoes, fires, floods, hurricanes, and acts of terrorism. FEMA's Office of Disability Integration and Coordination (ODIC) has outlined several steps for States to consider in protecting individuals with disabilities. They have published *The Functional Needs Support Services Guidance*, or FNSS that provides state and local governments recommendations to help them provide emergency sheltering services that meet the needs of their communities and are in compliance with existing federal laws designed to prevent discrimination on the basis of disability. The need for sign language interpreting services will not just be in sheltering situations, but could be in triage areas, public affairs environments, law enforcement, evacuation situations, hospitals, emergency operation centers, and Disaster Recovery Centers, etc. Additionally, federal laws include the Stafford Act, the Fair Housing Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act. In addition, the Department of Justice (*Emergency Management Under Title II of the ADA*) states: One of the primary responsibilities of state and local governments is to protect residents and visitors from harm, including assistance in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies and disasters. State and local governments must comply with Title II of the ADA in the emergency and disaster-related programs, services, and activities they provide. This requirement applies to programs, services, and activities provided directly by state and local governments as well as those provided through third parties, such as the American Red Cross, private nonprofit organizations, and religious entities. Under Title II of the ADA, emergency programs, services, activities, and facilities must be physically and programmatically accessible to people with disabilities and generally may not use eligibility criteria that screen out or tend to screen out people with disabilities. The ADA also requires making reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures when necessary to avoid discrimination against a person with a disability and taking the steps necessary to ensure effective communication with people with disabilities. This program will improve Florida's ability to respond to people who are deaf or hard of hearing during any emergency or disaster (an All Hazard approach).

The Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (<http://rid.org/>) is a national membership organization representing the professionals who provide sign language interpreting/transliterating services for the deaf and hard of hearing in a vast array of community settings. Established in 1964 and incorporated in 1973, RID is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

The Florida Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf is an affiliate chapter of RID and therefore is also a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. With a membership of over 1,000 individuals, FRID is governed by a nine (9) member board of directors. FRID is an all volunteer organization.

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