

**Ted Strickland, Governor**  
Gary M. DiCeglio, *Chairperson*  
Jodie M. Taylor, *Member*  
Kevin R. Abrams, *Member*  
Christa D. Deegan, *Executive Director*

# NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
July 26, 2010

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## **Industrial Commission of Ohio Converts** **To Telephone Interpreting Services** *Dialing In Will Save More than \$80,000 per Year*

COLUMBUS – Beginning today, the Industrial Commission of Ohio (IC) is implementing telephone interpreting services as part of a groundbreaking initiative that will save the agency tens of thousands of dollars annually.

**Utilizing telephone interpreting services for most IC hearings will save the agency an estimated \$81,667 per year.** When an interpreter is requested, tele-interpreters will now be scheduled for all IC hearings, except in deaf services cases, depositions, and Commission level hearings.

The IC began a pilot tele-interpreting program one year ago. Such significant savings were realized that the decision was made to make the program permanent.

“There’s a major cost difference between the unit cost per minute of service for on-site versus telephone interpreting services,” says IC Executive Director Christa D. Deegan. “On-site interpreters cost an estimated \$3.08 per minute, while the Language Line telephone interpreting service charges \$1.49 per minute. On-site interpreters also charge for travel time to and from our offices across the state, and may charge if a hearing is cancelled or continued. Language Line does not charge these fees.”

Language Line is based out of California, but has offices nationwide and interpreters available 24/7. Benefits of telephone interpreting services include:

- Hearing cancellations due to bad weather will decrease since interpreters will no longer have to travel to other offices
- Hearing cancellations due to the interpreter not showing up will decrease
- Language Line is able to tell the caller right away if they don’t have an interpreter who speaks a specific language, so that other arrangements can be made. Previously, the IC would have to wait two to three days to find out if a specific on-site interpreter will be available.

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- On-site interpreters are paid for their wait time, mileage and interpreting time. With Language Line, the cost is in real time. That means we pay only for the time that the interpreter is on the phone.

For each hearing, the hearing officer simply dials up Language Line and tells them what language is needed, then enters a password and claim number. Once the interpreter is on the line, the hearing begins. Billing occurs via the claim number and the number of minutes used.

“The use of tele-interpreters has been favorably received by the public, plus Language Line offers over 170 languages,” says Mrs. Deegan. “It’s an outstanding service for our customers at a substantial savings, without compromising the quality of our hearing services.”

The IC conducts hearings on disputed workers’ compensation claims, determines violations of specific safety requirements, and determines if an injured worker is permanently and temporarily disabled due to a work-related injury or occupational disease. We conduct over 180,000 hearings annually and interpreters service more than a thousand of these hearings each year. Three Governor-appointed Commissioners lead the agency -- headquartered in Columbus -- which has five regional and seven district offices throughout the state.

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