



Scott Harris, M.D., M.P.H.

STATE HEALTH OFFICER

Alabama Ryan White Part B Service Standards

Linguistic Services

Effective Date: January 1, 2025

Purpose

This Service Standard was prepared by the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) Office of HIV Prevention and Care (OHPC) and the United Way of Central Alabama (UWCA) in consultation with Organizational Ideas (a technical assistance provider), with stakeholder input to guide the delivery of high-quality services for people with HIV (PWH). This document contains the minimum requirements Ryan White Part B (RWPB) providers are expected to meet when delivering HIV care and support services funded by RWPB. Providers may exceed these standards. These standards will also provide a basis to evaluate the RWPB services. Please note that all RWPB Service Standards expectations also apply to Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Ending the HIV Epidemic in the U.S. (EHE)-funded services unless exceptions are noted.

Definitions and Descriptions

The description under the “Standard” column outlines the required activities that must be provided to the client receiving the RWPB service. The “Documentation” column provides the documents that must be maintained by the provider delivering the service. The Service Standards contain the following major elements:

- **Agency & Personnel Requirements:** The minimum required education, certification, experience, and facility requirements are needed to provide the RWPB service.

- **Eligibility & Intake:** Eligibility refers to the current statewide criteria for receiving services through RWPB as outlined in the *RWPB Universal Service Standard*. Current eligibility criteria can be found at: <https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/hiv/index.html>. The agency must determine or confirm RWPB eligibility for the client prior to provision of services. Eligibility may occur during intake or through a stand-alone process. Intake is the process of collecting information to determine the client's immediate service needs.
- **Assessment:** The Assessment is an evaluation of need conducted by qualified personnel to determine if there is a need for the RWPB service. The evaluation must render the determination for referral or provision of service. It must include the elements listed in the standard. The documentation of the evaluation of need is determined by the agency.
- **Provision of Services:** The provision of services are the activities or services that are provided to the client. Where appropriate, a Service Plan should address the client's assessed needs with a timeline to resolve the need(s).
- **Transition/Discharge:** Transition/Discharge refers to the release or cessation of the RWPB service. Transition or Discharge may occur in conjunction with the transition or discharge from the agency's program, when the client no longer needs or meets the criteria for the service, when the client is transitioned to another care provider, or when a client is deceased.
- **Case Closure:** When a client is discharged or transitioned to another care provider, the services will cease and the case is closed.

I. HRSA Service Category Definition

Linguistic Services include interpretation and translation activities, both oral and written, to eligible clients. These activities must be provided by qualified linguistic services providers as a component of HIV service delivery between the healthcare provider and the client. These services are to be provided when such services are necessary to facilitate communication between the provider and client and/or support delivery of HRSA RWHAP-eligible services.

II. Program Guidance

Linguistic Services provided must comply with the National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS).

Family and friends are not considered adequate substitutes for interpreters because of privacy, confidentiality, and medical terminology issues. If a client chooses to have a family member or friend as their interpreter, the provider must obtain written and signed consent form in the client's language. Family members or friends must be over the age of 18.

III. Key Services Components and Activities

For common components required for all RWPB services, please see the *RWPB Universal Service Standard*. Key service components and activities are noted in the Service Standards below.

ADPH Service Standards:

Standard	Documentation
1. Agency & Personnel Requirements	
1.1) Linguistic services, including interpretation (oral) and translation (written) services, must be provided by a qualified linguistic provider, and must be employed or contracted by the subrecipient agency. Oral and written translators are encouraged to be certified by the Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters (CCHI) ¹ or the National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters (NBCMI) . ²	1.1) Interpreter or translator's relevant certification. Employment or a contract between the linguistic provider and the agency must be on file at the agency.
1.2) Sign language interpreters must be licensed by Alabama Licensure Board for Interpreters and Translators . ³	1.2) Licensure through the Alabama Licensure Board for Interpreters and Translators

¹ Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters: <https://cchicertification.org/>

² National Board of Certification for Medical Interpreters: <https://www.certifiedmedicalinterpreters.org/>

³ Alabama Licensure Board for Interpreters and Translators: <https://albit.alabama.gov/>

	for all sign language interpreters on file at agency.
1.3) Staff must continue to fulfill the requirements of their individual disciplines to maintain their license, if applicable.	1.3) Copies of continuing education and related licensure or certification renewals with license/certificate number
2. Eligibility & Intake	
2.1) Subrecipient must conduct or confirm eligibility consistent with statewide eligibility requirements. All clients must have an active eligibility at the time of service.	2.1) Active eligibility for RWPB in client's record during the service delivery period.
2.2) Complete intake within 2 business days of referral.	2.2) Intake completed within 2 business days of referral.
3. Assessment	
3.1) Client will be assessed for Linguistic Services within 5 business days of intake.	3.1) Assessment of need for Linguistic Services in client's record within 5 business days of Intake.
3.2) Provider will assess clients for interpretation, and/or other translation needs, as evidenced by limited English proficiency, impairment and/or other communication needs.	3.2) Assessment of needs including but not limited to, limited English proficiency, hearing impairment, or other communication needs are documented in client's record.
4. Provision of Services	
4.1) Agency staff provides or coordinates the provision of linguistic services that addresses the client's identified needs within 5 business days of intake.	4.1) Linguistic services are provided based on the client's identified needs and are documented in the client's record.
4.2) Agency staff will reassess client's need for Linguistic Services on an annual basis.	4.2) Reassessment of client's need for Linguistic Services on annual basis is documented in client's record.
4.3) Maintain progress notes of all communication between provider and client (or on behalf of client), including messages left for the provider. Progress notes must indicate the service provided and referrals that link clients to needed services. Documentation should be noted in the client's record within 2 business days of occurrence.	4.3) Progress notes in client's record within 2 business days of occurrence.
5. Transition/Discharge	
5.1) See <i>RWPB Universal Service Standard</i> .	

6. Case Closure	
6.1) See <i>RWPB Universal Service Standard</i> .	

Resources

1. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) HIV/AIDS Bureau (HAB) Policy Clarification Notice (PCN) #16-02: Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Services: Eligible Individuals and Allowable Uses of Funds:
<https://ryanwhite.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/ryanwhite/grants/service-category-pcn-16-02-final.pdf>

2. Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) National Monitoring Standards for RWHAP Part B Recipients:
<https://ryanwhite.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/ryanwhite/grants/2023-rwhap-nms-part-b.pdf>

3. National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) in Health and Health Care
<https://thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/assets/pdfs/EnhancedNationalCLASStandards.pdf>