



FACT SHEET

Visual Communication Services (VCS)

**DESCRIPTION
OF VCS**

The Department of Budget and Management (DBM) awarded ten Contractors to provide Visual Communication Services for individuals who are **deaf or hard of hearing**. These services provide an on-demand, easy to use, cost-effective source of **sign language interpreters** and **computer assisted real-time transcription (CART)**.

**VCS
CATEGORIES**

The categories of Visual Communication Services for the deaf and hard of hearing are:

(Category I)	On-Site Interpretation (sign language in-person)	Real-time, in-person visual language interpretation, such as American Sign Language, Pidgin Signed English, Signed Exact English (I and II), Oral, Tactile and/or Cued Speech.
(Category II)	On-Site Computer Assisted Real-Time Transcription (CART)	The instant verbatim translation of the spoken word into English text performed on-site by a CART provider using a stenotype machine, notebook computer and real-time software.
(Category III)	Video Remote Interpretation (VRI) (sign language by video)	Requires the interpreter to use video conferencing equipment to provide visual language interpreting services from an off-site location to the individual requiring the visual language interpretation service.
(Category IV)	Remote Computer Assisted Real-Time Transcription (CART)	The instant verbatim translation of the spoken word into English text by a remote CART provider using a computer and real-time software through an Internet or telephone connection from an off-site location.

**ARRANGING
VCS
SERVICES**

In order to arrange Visual Communication Services, the type of service needed and region must be determined.

Per the ADAAA, Title II, Subpart E(b)(1)

THE CONSTITUENT’S PREFERRED REQUEST SHOULD BE GIVEN PRIMARY CONSIDERATION.

- STEP 1:** Visit the DBM Visual Communication Services website and select the service category at: <http://dbm.maryland.gov/proc-contracts/Pages/statewide-contracts/VCSContractHome.aspx>
- STEP 2:** Identify the Region where services will be rendered.
NOTE: This region is identified by the location of the meeting, not the billing address.
- STEP 3:** Contact the **#1 ranked Contractor** to set-up an account. When naming your office, state “Maryland Department of Health” before providing the office information. **The Contractor will provide a UserID and Password that will allow access to their website to request services.**
- STEP 4:** Receive confirmation for your request.
NOTE: ONLY If the #1 ranked Contractor has documented that they cannot provide the service **or** if the Contractor fails to confirm the assignment within the confirmation time frame, is the #2 ranked Contractor afforded the assignment.

Follow steps 1 and 2, then proceed to the next ranked vendor by selecting “NO” to the confirmation of services question listed at the bottom of the webpage.



FACT SHEET

Visual Communication Services (VCS)

CONFIRMATION TIMEFRAMES

Contractors must confirm within:

- 1 day for requests made 3-5 days in advance, or
- 2 days for requests made 6-29 days in advance, or
- 5 days for requests made 30 days or more in advance

EMERGENCY & EXPEDITED REQUESTS

Due to the nature of emergencies that may arise, expedited and emergency requests may follow a different ordering process than Standard/Routine assignments.

For both emergency and expedited requests, the agency must **verbally contact** each Contractor **in order of highest-ranked to lowest-ranked** until a confirmation of assignment is completed.

RATES FOR SERVICES

Rates for services are billed as Standard/Routine, Non-Standard/Routine, Expedited, Emergency, or Holiday. Non-Standard/Routine, Expedited, Emergency, and Holiday requests incur additional charges.

There is a minimum of two (2) hours for Visual Communication Services under **Categories I and II** (on-site sign-language and on-site CART). Sign-language interpretation services lasting more than 90 minutes require a minimum of two interpreters. If more than one sign-language interpreter is required, each interpreter is paid the hourly rate. There is a minimum of ten (10) minutes for Visual Communication Services under **Category III** (video remote interpretation) and a minimum of one (1) hour for **Category IV** (remote CART).

Cancellation fees vary by service category and when notice was given. Before paying for services rendered, agencies should verify that the hours and rates charged on the invoice are accurate.

Please refer to the Visual Communication Services "**RATE SHEET**" for Contractor rates.

****The rates listed represent one interpreter****

NOTE: The rate sheet for Visual Communication Services is an internal confidential document.
It is not to be shared with offices or agencies outside of MDH.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Visual Communication Services contract extends through February 28, 2019, with a renewal option. Interpretation services are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The interpreters under the Visual Communication Services contract are all licensed or certified. For a more detailed description of available sign-language or computer assisted real-time transcription (CART) services, visit the Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing's website:
<http://odhh.maryland.gov/resources/>

If you have questions or concerns about the Visual Communication Services contract or selected contractors, please contact the DBM Visual Communication Services Administrator, Andrea Lockett, at (410) 260-7374 or send an email to Andrea.Lockett@maryland.gov.

You may also contact the MDH, Office of Equal Opportunity Programs, Equal Access Compliance Unit, at (410) 767-5184 or email Delinda.Blake@maryland.gov with questions or concerns related to billing or MDH accounts with the Contractors.

Please note that each MDH office must contact the Visual Communication Services Contractors to set-up their own account and arrange services.

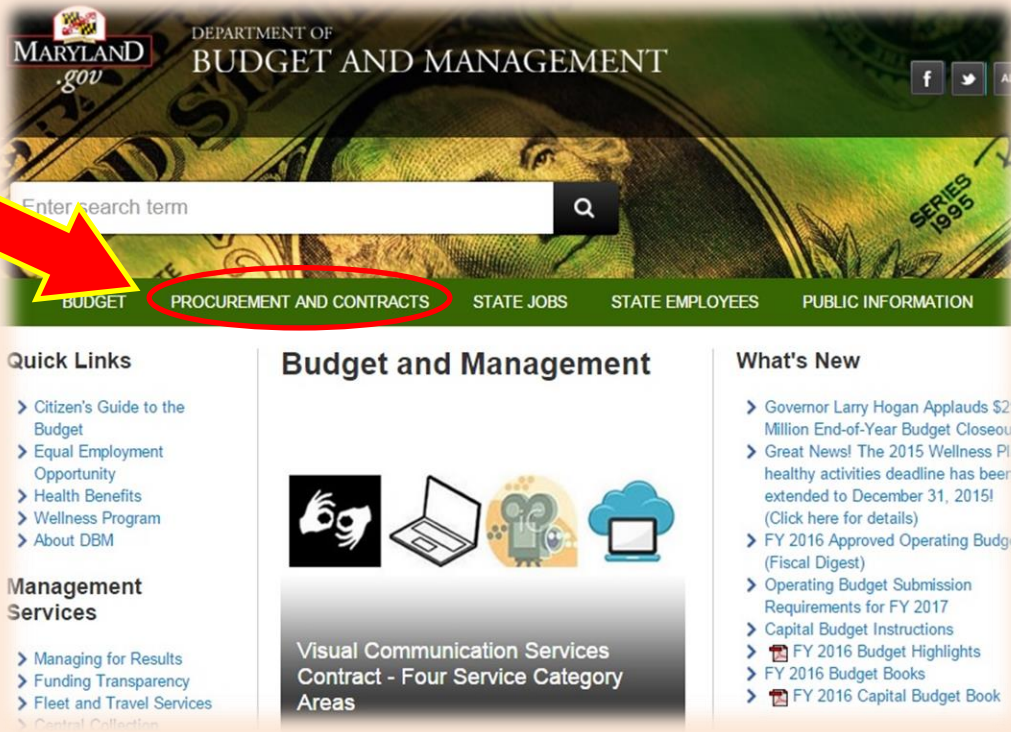
Services are not arranged for offices by DBM or the MDH, Office of Equal Opportunity Programs

**VISUAL
COMMUNICATION
SERVICES**

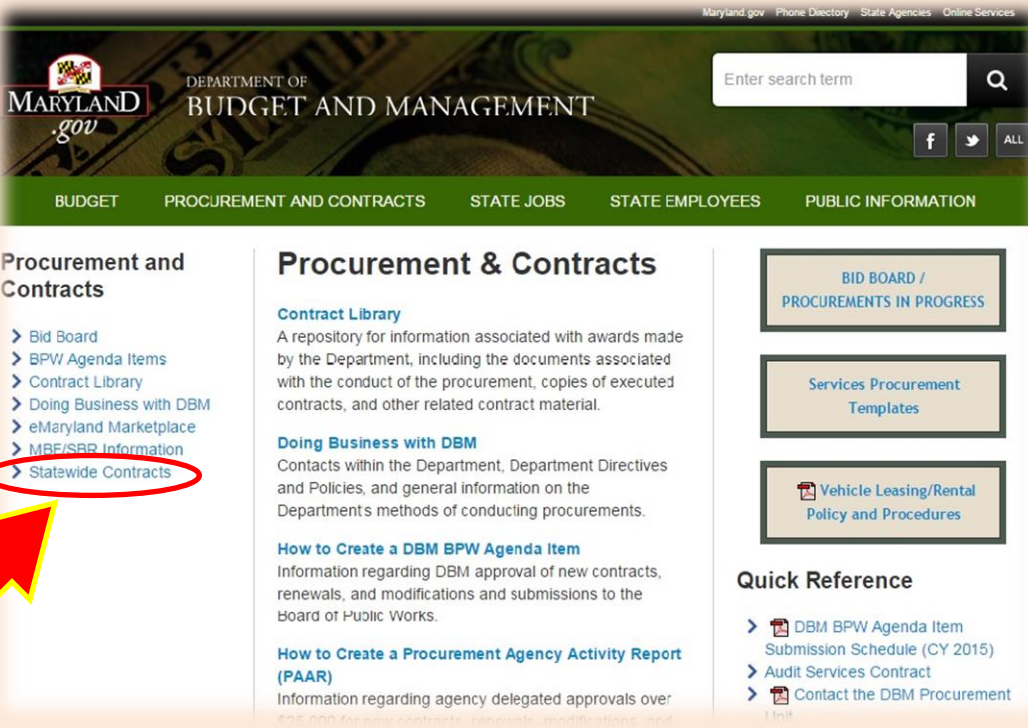
Webpage Guidance

#1: Visit the Department of Budget and Management's website: www.dbm.maryland.gov

#2: Click "Procurement & Contracts"



#3: Click "Statewide Contracts"



#4: Click "Statewide Visual Communication Services"

DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT

BUDGET PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTS STATE JOBS STATE EMPLOYEES PUBLIC INFORMATION

Procurement and Contracts

- > Bid Board
- > BPW Agenda Items
- > Contract Library
- > Doing Business with DBM
- > eMaryland Marketplace
- > MBE/SBR Information
- > Statewide Contracts

Contract Name and Description	All MD State Agencies	MD Local Governments	MD Non-Profit Organizations	Fed / Other State & Local Governments
<p>Statewide Visual Communication Services (Sign Language)</p> <p>Provides Maryland State agencies (as well as Maryland's other non-State government entities such as the local governments, counties, municipalities, etc. and Maryland Not-for-Profits) with competent, continuously available visual communication services to in four (4) Service Category Areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On-Site Interpretation 2. On-Site CART 3. Visual Remote Interpretation 4. Remote CART 	YES	YES	YES	YES, adjoining States for Categories 1 and 2, including Wash DC and all States for Categories 3 and 4

You should arrive at the VISUAL COMMUNICATION SERVICES webpage

#5: Select the TYPE OF SERVICE you require from four options:

1. On-Site Interpretation (in-person sign language interpreter)
2. On-Site CART (Computer Assisted Real-Time Transcription)
3. Visual Remote Interpretation (sign language interpretation by video)
4. Remote CART (Computer Assisted Real-Time Transcription)

DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT

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Visual Communication Services

This contract provides Maryland State agencies (as well as Maryland's other non-State government entities such as the local governments, counties, municipalities, etc. and Maryland Not-for-Profits) with competent, continuously available visual communication services to in four (4) Service Category Areas: (See terms and conditions for an explanation of the services)

VCS Contract Links

- > Contract Home Page
- > Terms and Definitions
- > VCS Ordering Procedures
- > ADPICs Procedures
- > RFP As
- > Contract Award Information

Questions?

Please direct questions about this contract to:
 Visual Communication Services (VCS)
 Contract Administrator
 Joy Epstein
 Email: joy.epstein@maryland.gov
 Telephone: 410.260.7570

For an additional resource for Visual Communication Services please contact
 Kelby Brick, Director for the Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH)
kelby.brick@maryland.gov

1. On-Site Interpretation

2. On-Site CART

3. Visual Remote Interpretation

4. Remote CART

#6: Select the REGION

NOTE: Identify the Region by the **location where the meeting will be held**, not by the billing address. The Contractors vary by Region.

The screenshot shows the Maryland Department of Budget and Management website. The main heading is "Category I - On-Site Visual Language Interpretation". Below the heading, there is a description of the service and a BPO number: "BPO #050B3400001 (see ADPICS Procedures)". A "Reset" button is visible. The instruction says "Please select a Region for the requested assignment location:". The "Region:" dropdown menu is open, showing a list of regions: "Region I - Western (Allegany, Frederick, Garrett, Washington)", "Region II - Central (Anne Arundel, Baltimore City, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, Howard)", "Region III - Eastern (Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, Worcester)", "Region IV - Capital (Montgomery, Prince George's)", and "Region V - Southern (Calvert, Charles, St. Mary's)". A red arrow points to the "Region:" dropdown menu.

EXAMPLE

For Region II, the #1 ranked Contractor is "TCS Interpreting, Inc."

Note: The Contractor(s) must be contacted for services in ranking order, starting with the #1 ranked Contractor. Remember, the Contractors vary by Region.

The screenshot shows the same Maryland Department of Budget and Management website. The "Region:" dropdown menu is now set to "Region II - Central (Anne Arundel)". Below the dropdown, the "#1-Ranked Contractor:" field is circled in red and contains the text "TCS Interpreting, Inc.". Below this, there is a "Contract Info:" section with contact details for Anne Tomkinson: "Contact: Anne Tomkinson", "E-mail: Anne.Tomkinson@tcsinterpreting.com", "Work: 240-428-1835", "Fax: 240-428-1830", and "E-mail: clientservices@tcsinterpreting.com". A red arrow points to the "#1-Ranked Contractor:" field.

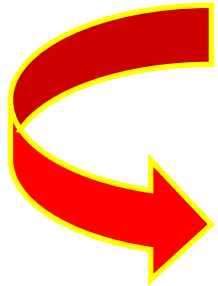
If the #1 ranked Contractor is unable to provide Visual Communication Services or does not respond within the required time frame, select **“NO”** and the **#2 ranked Contractor will appear**.

Contact the #2 ranked Contractor to request Visual Communication Services.

Has the #1 ranked vendor provided confirmation for fulfilling your request within the acceptable timeframe? (Contractors must confirm within: 5 days for requests made 30 days or more in advance, 2 days for requests made 6-29 days in advance, and 1 day for requests made 3-5 days in advance.)

Yes

No (Vendor response shall be retained within the agency's records as proof that the highest ranked vendor was not selected, and is required for audit purposes.)



#2-Ranked Contractor:	Birnbaum Interpreting Services
Contact Info:	Contact: Christian Webster Toll-free: 800-471-6441 Fax: 301-565-0366 E-mail: biscoord@bisworld.com Or, for general questions, call Customer Service: 301-587-8885 Website for Online Registration: www.bisscheduling.com

**VISUAL
COMMUNICATION
SERVICES**

Terms & Definitions

The following terms apply to ALL SERVICE CATEGORIES

TERM	DEFINITION
On-Site Computer Assisted Real-time Transcription (CART)	Computer Assisted Real-time Transcription performed at the assignment location.
Assignment	The work which results from Routine, Emergency and Expedited Requests for services submitted to the awarded Contractor(s).
Computer Assisted Real-time Transcription (CART)	The instant verbatim translation of the spoken word into English text by a CART provider using a stenotype machine, notebook computer and real-time software. Also known in the industry as Communication Access Real-time Translation.
Contractor	A selected Contractor / Offeror that is awarded a contract by the State.
Cued Speech Transliteration	Mode of communication in which the interpreter uses eight hand-shapes in four locations ("cues") in combination with the natural mouth movements of speech to clarify ambiguous mouth movements for lip readers.
DBM	Maryland Department of Budget and Management
Highest Ranked Contractor (#1 st -ranked Contractor)	<p>The Contractor that must be contacted first for Visual Communication Services. The highest-ranked Contractors rates have been deemed the most advantageous to the State. Contractors with the highest overall ranking will be selected first in each Region.</p> <p>Only if the #1st-ranked Contractor has not responded to requests for services within the acceptable timeframe or if the #1-ranked Contractor is unable to service the agency should the next ranked Contractor(s) be contacted. Contractors are ranked in the following order: #2nd-ranked; #3rd ranked; #4th-ranked; and #5th-ranked.</p>
Holidays	Observed Holidays under the Visual Communication Services contract are New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. Each Holiday will start at 12 a.m. and end at 11:59 p.m. on that day.
Interpreter	A sign language interpreter is a person trained in translating between spoken and a signed language. This usually means someone who interprets what is being said and signs it for someone who can't hear, but understands sign.
Lowest Ranked Contractor (#1 st -ranked; #2 nd -ranked; #3 rd -ranked; #4 th -ranked; and #5 th -ranked)	<p>The Contractor(s) that may be contacted after the initial request for services have been requested from the highest ranked (first) Contractor.</p> <p>Only if the #1st-ranked Contractor has not responded to requests for services within the acceptable timeframe or if the #1-ranked Contractor is unable to service the agency should the next ranked Contractor(s) be contacted. Contractors are ranked in the following order:#1st-ranked; #2nd-ranked; #3rd ranked; #4th-ranked; and #5th-ranked.</p>

Non-Routine Travel	Travel to the location of an on-site Assignment beyond the thirty (30)-mile radius of the Base of Operations for which the Contractor will be reimbursed mileage. The first thirty (30) miles of Non-Routine travel conducted by automobile will be treated as Routine Travel and, as described in the definition, will not be reimbursed.
Non-Standard Hours	All hours not specified as standard hours.
OEOP	Maryland Department of Health, Office of Equal Opportunity Programs
On-Site	Means that the Contractor must provide a Transcriber / Interpreter at the assigned location.
On-Site Visual Language Interpretation	Real-time, in-person visual language interpretation, such as American Sign Language, Pidgin Signed English, Signed Exact English (SEE1), Signed Exact English II (SEE2), Oral, Tactile and/or Cued Speech.
Optional Services (add-on)	<p>Optional services consist of Oral Transliteration, Cued Speech Transliteration, SEE1, SEE2, Tactile Services, and interpretation provided by a Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI). Due to the infrequent need for transliterators for these optional services, optional services may be requested under Categories I and III.</p> <p>Category I (on-site sign language interpretation) optional services which may be requested from Contractors include, but are not limited to, Oral Transliteration, Cued Speech Transliteration, SEE1, SEE2, Tactile Services, and Certified Deaf Interpretation (CDI).</p> <p>Category III (video remote interpretation) optional services which may be requested from Contractors include, but are not limited to, Oral Transliteration, Cued Speech Transliteration, SEE1, SEE2, and Certified Deaf Interpretation (CDI).</p>
Oral Transliteration	The interpretive process by which oral interpreters convey information to clients who are deaf or hard of hearing and who rely solely on speech reading for communication. An oral interpreter enunciates, repeats, and/or rephrases a speaker's remarks using natural lip movements and gestures, carefully choosing the words that are more visible on the lips.
Region	<p>The location (county) where the assignment will take place, in other words, the county where the interpreter will provide services.</p> <p>The Region should <u>not</u> be chosen using the billing address unless the meeting will take place at the same location as the billing address. Contractors vary by Region and they are ranked in order from highest (first) to lowest (last).</p>
Remote Computer Assisted Real-time Transcription (CART)	The instant verbatim translation of the spoken word into English text by a remote CART provider using a computer and real-time software through an Internet or telephone connection from an off-site location.
Routine Travel	Travel within a thirty (30)-mile radius of the interpreter's Base of Operations (i.e., the interpreter's home or business) to the location of an on-site assignment. There will be no payment for hourly/minute rates for travel time or reimbursement for any travel expenses for work performed within this radius.

Seeing Essential English I (SEE1)	SEE1 uses American Sign Language (ASL) signs, but it implements English word order and other grammatical markers, such as conjugation. In SEE1, all compound words are formed as separate signs. SEE1 also uses the same sign for all homonyms-the same sign is used to sign <i>blue</i> and <i>blew</i> . Many gestures from ASL are initialized in SEE1. Grammatical markers also have signs of their own, including the <i>-ing</i> ending and articles such as <i>the</i> , which are not typically included in ASL. The verb “ <i>to be</i> ” is unique in SEE1; <i>is</i> , <i>am</i> and <i>are</i> can be signed in the same way, again using initialization.
Signing Exact English II (SEE2)	Many features of SEE2 are identical to the system used in SEE1. Initializations and grammatical markers are used in SEE2, but compound words with an equivalent ASL sign are used as the ASL sign. Signing Exact English uses more markers than the fourteen (14) used in SEE1.
Standard Hours	Standard hours are weekdays (Monday through Friday) from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. Local time, excluding Holidays.
Tactile Interpretation	A technique where the client places his/her hands over the hands of the interpreter, in order to read signs through touch and movement. The interpreter should supply both auditory and visual information to the client.
User ID	The identification code assigned by the Contractor to the Requesting Agency / Entity for billing and contact purposes for services requested pursuant to the Contract(s) awarded through the Visual Communication Services contract.
Video Remote Interpretation (VRI)	Requires the interpreter to use video conferencing equipment to provide visual language interpreting services from an off-site location to the individual requiring the visual language interpretation service.