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Overview

This bill modernizes and modifies certain provisions of the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Services Act.

Section

- 1 **Deaf.** Amends § 256C.23, subd. 2. Updates the definition of “deaf.”
- 2 **Real-time captioning.** Amends § 256C.23, by adding subd. 6. Defines “real-time captioning.”
- 3 **Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Services Division.** Amends § 256C.233, subd. 1. Updates the list of activities the division must address. Removes language referring to an “interagency management team” and replaces it with “interagency advisors.” Updates language to be person-centered.
- 4 **Responsibilities.** Amends § 256C.233, subd. 2. Updates the list of duties the division must perform. Updates language to be person-centered.
- 5 **Location.** Amends § 256C.24, subd. 1. Modifies the number of regional service centers the division must establish. Updates language to be person-centered.
- 6 **Responsibilities.** Amends § 256C.24, subd. 2. Updates the list of duties the regional service centers must perform. Updates language to be person-centered. Allows people who have to travel more than 50 miles round-trip from home or work to receive services at a regional service center to be reimbursed for mileage at the reimbursement rate established by the IRS. Prohibits staff from traveling to a client’s home to provide services.

Section

- 7** **Services for persons who are deafblind.** Amends § 256C.261. Removes obsolete language and updates language to be person-centered.
- 8** **Direction to commissioner; telecommunication equipment program.** Requires the commissioner of human services to work in consultation with the Commission of Deaf, Deafblind, and Hard-of-Hearing Minnesotans to provide recommendations by January 15, 2018, to the legislative committees with jurisdiction over human services to modernize the telecommunications equipment program. Requires the recommendations to include draft legislative language.
- 9** **Appropriations; Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Services.** Paragraph (a) appropriates \$800,000 in each year of the 2018-2019 biennium from the general fund to the commissioner of human services for the purposes of the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Services Division. Requires 20 percent of this appropriation to be used for technology improvements, technology support, and training for staff on the use of technology. Adds this appropriation to the base.
- Paragraph (b) appropriates \$700,000 in each year of the 2018-2019 biennium from the general fund to the commissioner of human services for deaf and hard-of-hearing grants. Specifies how the funds must be used. Adds this appropriation to the base.
- 10** **Repealer.** Repeals Minnesota Statutes, sections 256C.23, subd. 3 (definitions; regional service center); 256C.233, subd. 4 (duties of state agencies; state commissioners); and 256C.25, subds. 1 (interpreter services; establishment) and 2 (interpreter services; duties).