



1/17/2020

The Okanagan Valley Association of the Deaf is very happy to announce that it has resolved its human rights complaint against St. John Ambulance (SJA).

The complaint was about the fact that SJA did not provide Sign interpretation at its first aid courses. OVAD filed the complaint on behalf of all Deaf people in BC who use Sign language and had been impacted by St John Ambulance's denial of interpretation services.

**As part of the settlement, St. John Ambulance has agreed to the following:**

- **They will pay for Sign interpretation at up to six BC first aid courses in 2020, and up to five courses in subsequent years. These are called the "Interpreted Sessions".**
- **They will make a fund of \$3500 available to pay for interpretation services for Deaf individuals who can't attend one of the five interpreted sessions. Access to this fund is by "Special Request".**

The locations for the Interpreted Sessions in 2020 will be announced soon!

OVAD will work with Wavefront, GVAD, DeafBC, and other Deaf advocacy organizations to promote the Interpreted Sessions. Keep an eye out for emails and social media posts letting you know which of St John Ambulance's upcoming first aid training courses will have a Sign language interpreter at them. We encourage you to consider signing up! The benefits of first aid can be related to your work requirements, volunteer position requirements, and general readiness in case of emergency.

We encourage people to sign up for one of the six Interpreted Sessions scheduled for 2020. It will be fun to do the training together! We can have up to 12 of us taking the course. Please watch for a vlog! If you cannot attend one of the six Interpreted Sessions in 2020 (five in subsequent years), you can make a Special Request for funding from St. John Ambulance to have an interpreter for a different session. To do this, contact the CEO's office of SJA: Ofelia Comandao, Executive Assistant, St. John Ambulance, 201 - 6111 Cambie St, Vancouver, BC, V5Z 3B2

p: 1.604.301.2701 f: 1.604.321.5316 – email: [Ofelia.Comandao@sja.ca](mailto:Ofelia.Comandao@sja.ca) with a CC to Gordon J. Rattray at [gords@shaw.ca](mailto:gords@shaw.ca). Explain your situation and why you can't attend one of the six Interpreted Sessions.

Please note that Sign interpretation for a day-long first aid training course costs about \$1000. St. John Ambulance has agreed to make \$3500 available for these Special Requests each year. As this fund is intended for individuals with *exceptional circumstances*, please join one of the Interpreted Sessions if you can. This will ensure that the Special Requests fund is used effectively.

OVAD's authorized rep for the SJA case is Gordon J. Rattray at [gords@shaw.ca](mailto:gords@shaw.ca) or text 250-491-2532. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

Gordon J. Rattray

**123 Franklyn Road, Kelowna, BC, V1X 6A9**