

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 27, 2016  
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 16, 2016  
CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 2311**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Brown**

February 18, 2016

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An act to ~~add Sections 8588.20, 8598.5, and 8635.5 to amend the heading of Article 6.5 (commencing with Section 8593) of Chapter 7 of Division 1 of Title 2 of, and to add Section 8593.3 to, the Government Code, relating to emergency services.~~

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2311, as amended, Brown. Emergency services: ~~sign language interpreters.~~ *access and functional needs in emergencies.*

Existing law establishes the Office of Emergency Services within the office of the Governor and under the supervision of the Director of Emergency Services and makes the office responsible for the state's emergency and disaster response services for natural, technological, or manmade disasters and emergencies. ~~Existing law requires every state agency and officer to cooperate with the secretary in rendering all possible assistance in carrying out the provisions of the act. Existing law defines the terms "political subdivision" and "emergency plan" for purposes of emergency services provided by local governments. Existing law requires the Office of Emergency Services to work with specified entities to improve communication with deaf and hearing-impaired persons during emergencies.~~

This bill would require ~~the office, in cooperation with the Office for Access and Functional Needs, to provide or contract for a disaster~~

~~response sign language interpreter credential program to train American Sign Language interpreters to effectively communicate public safety information. The bill would additionally require every state agency and every local agency to utilize a sign language interpreter who has completed that credential program to provide interpretation services at every media or public briefing and any emergency shelter where actionable information will be disseminated before, during, or after a state of war emergency, state of emergency, or local emergency. each political subdivision of the state to integrate access and functional needs, as defined, into its emergency plan, as specified. By increasing the duties of local officials, this bill would impose a state-mandated local program.~~

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.  
 State-mandated local program: yes.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

- 1     ~~SECTION 1.— Section 8588.20 is added to the Government~~
- 2     ~~Code, immediately following Section 8588.15, to read:~~
- 3     ~~8588.20. The office shall, in cooperation with the Office for~~
- 4     ~~Access and Functional Needs, or its successor, provide, or contract~~
- 5     ~~for, a disaster response sign language interpreter credential~~
- 6     ~~program, which shall train American Sign Language interpreters~~
- 7     ~~to effectively communicate public safety information.~~
- 8     ~~SEC. 2.— Section 8598.5 is added to the Government Code, to~~
- 9     ~~read:~~
- 10    ~~8598.5. Every state agency shall utilize a sign language~~
- 11    ~~interpreter who holds a disaster response sign language interpreter~~
- 12    ~~credential pursuant to the program specified in Section 8588.20,~~
- 13    ~~to provide interpretation services at every media or public briefing~~
- 14    ~~and any emergency shelter where actionable information will be~~
- 15    ~~disseminated before, during, or after a state of emergency, state~~
- 16    ~~of war emergency, or local emergency.~~

1 ~~SEC. 3. Section 8635.5 is added to the Government Code, to~~  
2 ~~read:~~

3 ~~8635.5. The governing body of a local agency shall utilize a~~  
4 ~~sign language interpreter who holds a disaster response sign~~  
5 ~~language interpreter credential pursuant to the program specified~~  
6 ~~in Section 8588.20, to provide interpretation services at every~~  
7 ~~media or public briefing and any emergency shelter where~~  
8 ~~actionable information will be disseminated before, during, or after~~  
9 ~~a state of emergency, state of war emergency, or local emergency.~~

10 *SECTION 1. The heading of Article 6.5 (commencing with*  
11 *Section 8593) of Chapter 7 of Division 1 of Title 2 of the*  
12 *Government Code is amended to read:*

13  
14 *Article 6.5. Accessibility to Emergency Services Information*  
15 *and Services*  
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17 *SEC. 2. Section 8593.3 is added to the Government Code, to*  
18 *read:*

19 *8593.3. (a) A political subdivision shall integrate access and*  
20 *functional needs into its emergency plan by addressing, at a*  
21 *minimum, how the access and functional needs population is served*  
22 *by the following:*

23 *(1) Emergency communications, including the integration of*  
24 *interpreters, translators, and assistive technology.*

25 *(2) Emergency evacuation, including the identification of*  
26 *transportation resources and resources that are compliant with*  
27 *the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C.*  
28 *Sec. 12101 et seq.) for individuals who are dependent on public*  
29 *transportation.*

30 *(3) Emergency sheltering, including ensuring that designated*  
31 *shelters are compliant with the federal Americans with Disabilities*  
32 *Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12101 et seq.) or can be made*  
33 *compliant through modification and that showers and bathrooms*  
34 *are fully accessible to all occupants.*

35 *(b) For purposes of this section, the “access and functional*  
36 *needs population” consists of individuals who have developmental*  
37 *or intellectual disabilities, physical disabilities, chronic conditions,*  
38 *injuries, limited English proficiency or who are non-English*  
39 *speaking, older adults, children, people living in institutionalized*  
40 *settings, or those who are low income, homeless, or transportation*

1 *disadvantaged, including, but not limited to, those who are*  
2 *dependent on public transit or those who are pregnant.*

3 ~~SEC. 4.~~

4 *SEC. 3.* If the Commission on State Mandates determines that  
5 this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to  
6 local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made  
7 pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division  
8 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.