



Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF NEGROS OCCIDENTAL
 Old Capitol Building, Bacolod City
 Tel. No. 707-8075 (Admin) * 435-7698 (Board Member) * 709-0121 (Legislative Division)
OFFICE OF THE SANGGUNIANG PANLALAWIGAN

EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION OF THE SANGGUNIANG PANLALAWIGAN OF THE PROVINCE OF NEGROS OCCIDENTAL HELD IN THE CITY OF BACOLOD ON THE 16th DAY OF DECEMBER, 2025

PRESENT:

Hon. Jose Benito A. Alonso	Vice Governor/Presiding Officer
Hon. Araceli T. Somosa	Member - 1 st District
Hon. Laurence Marxlen J. de la Cruz	Member - 1 st District
Hon. Sixto Teofilo Roxas V. Guanzon, Jr.	Member - 2 nd District
Hon. Arthur Christopher D. Marañon	Member - 2 nd District
Hon. Andrew Gerard L. Montelibano	Member - 3 rd District
Hon. Hope Marey B. Depasucat	Member - 3 rd District
Hon. Nicholas M. Yulo	Member - 4 th District
Hon. Patricia Paula M. Alonso-Valderrama	Member - 4 th District
Hon. Rita Angela S. Gatuslao	Member - 5 th District
Hon. Hadji P. Trojillo	Member - 5 th District
Hon. Genaro G. Alvarez IV	Member - 6 th District
Hon. Jeffrey T. Tubola	Member - 6 th District
Hon. Richard Julius L. Sablan	Member - ABC Rep.
Hon. Mayvelyn L. Madrid	Member - SK Rep.
OFFICIAL BUSINESS:	
Hon. Julius Martin D. Asistio	Member - PCL Rep.

ORDINANCE NO. 028
Series of 2025

AN ORDINANCE PROMOTING THE USE OF FILIPINO SIGN LANGUAGE (FSL) AS THE NATIONAL SIGN LANGUAGE OF THE FILIPINO DEAF AND THE OFFICIAL SIGN LANGUAGE OF GOVERNMENT IN ALL TRANSACTIONS INVOLVING THE DEAF AND MANDATING ITS USE IN GOVERNMENT OFFICES IN THE PROVINCE OF NEGROS OCCIDENTAL, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

(Author: Board Member Hope Marey B. Depasucat)
(Sponsor: Board Member Rita Angela S. Gatuslao)

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 11106, also known as “The Filipino Sign Language Act,” declares the Filipino Sign Language (FSL) as the National Sign Language of the Filipino Deaf and Official Sign Language of Government in all public transactions, services, and facilities, involving the Deaf;

WHEREAS, it is the policy of the state, in compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, to promote, protect, and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of persons with disabilities;

WHEREAS, the national and local state agencies shall uphold respect the inherent dignity, individual autonomy, and independence of persons with disabilities by guaranteeing accessibility and eliminating all forms of discrimination in all public interactions and transactions, thereby ensuring their full and effective participation and inclusion in society;

WHEREAS, the state has a responsibility to take all appropriate measures to ensure that the Filipino Deaf community can exercise their rights to expression, opinion, and full participation in public life;

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WHEREAS, there is a need to localize the provisions of RA 11106 to effectively implement and promote the use of FSL within the province of Negros Occidental;

BE IT ENACTED by the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of the Province of Negros Occidental in Regular Session duly assembled to enact this ordinance to wit:

SECTION 1. TITLE. This Ordinance shall be known as the “Filipino Sign Language (FSL) Ordinance of the Province of Negros Occidental”.

SECTION 2. PURPOSE. This Ordinance aims to promote the use of Filipino Sign Language (FSL) within the province of Negros Occidental to ensure accessibility and inclusion for Deaf individuals in public services. It also seeks to establish a pool of certified FSL interpreters for all the province’s frontline offices, departments, hospitals, and other domains, and to ensure that all public provincial events are accessible through the use of FSL interpreters, as mandated by RA 11106.

SECTION 3. SCOPE. This Ordinance shall apply to all government offices, departments, and services within the territorial jurisdiction of the province of Negros Occidental. It mandates the provision of Filipino Sign Language (FSL) interpretation services in all frontline offices, departments, and public services, including but not limited to social welfare, health, employment, civil registration, public safety, education, legislative functions, tourism, public information, and legal services, in the province of Negros Occidental.

Additionally, this Ordinance applies to all public events organized or sponsored by the province and private events utilizing public venues, where FSL interpretation services must be made available upon request or when Deaf individuals are present. The provisions of this Ordinance are aligned with Republic Act No. 11106 and other relevant laws promoting the rights and accessibility of persons with disabilities (PWDs), specifically the Deaf community.

SECTION 4. DEFINITION OF TERMS. For purposes of this Ordinance, the following terms are defined:

1. Filipino Sign Language (FSL): the term used by Deaf Filipinos to refer to their visual language which has evolved naturally through the centuries since its hypothesized beginnings in the 1590s in Dulac, Leyte. It is distinct from spoken Filipino. Like other sign languages, it is a visual-spatial language, with no orthographic system (as different from spoken languages), and is rule-governed at the structural levels of phonology, morphology, syntax, and discourse. It belongs to the branch of visual languages influenced by American Sign Language, but has been documented in sign linguistics research to be a language distinct from the American Sign Language;
2. Deaf (capital D): used as a noun to indicate a subset of deaf Filipinos: those individuals with hearing loss who use the natural visual language of the community and support its goals and values as a linguistic and cultural minority. Thus, the Deaf in the Philippines are those deaf Filipinos who collectively identify as a linguistic and cultural community which uses Filipino Sign Language and actively supports its goals and values. All Filipinos Deaf are deaf, while not all deaf Filipinos are Deaf;

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3. deaf (lowercase d): used as an adjective describing individuals who are unable to fully use their hearing to process information. They may or may not be signers or identify themselves with the community of other persons with hearing loss. Non-signers may include some individuals who are hard of hearing, other persons, orally schooled individuals, persons with cochlear implants, and others, who use other modes or means of communications, e.g., speech, and speech-reading. Persons with
4. hearing loss who are isolated and use gestural non-standard signs are also included under this term;
4. Hard of Hearing: Refers to individuals with residual hearing who may use hearing aids and may be able to engage in auditory communication.
5. Certified FSL Interpreter - an interpreter who is competent to deliver the interpreting skills needed and/or preferred by a deaf client. A trained and certified individual proficient in expressive and receptive interpretation of FSL.
6. FSL Interpreter Pool: A group of certified FSL interpreters available to provide interpretation services for Deaf individuals within LGU offices and departments and provide such other services for the Deaf community.

SECTION 5. INTERPRETING IN FILIPINO SIGN LANGUAGE. As the national sign language of the Philippines, FSL shall be recognized, promoted, and supported as the medium of official communication in all transactions involving the deaf. Thus, it shall also be the official language of interpreting, INCLUDING cover Deaf Relay Interpreting, without prejudice to the use of other forms of communication depending on the Deaf's individual choice of preference.

SECTION 6. FSL FOCAL POINTS. The Local Chief Executive shall formulate and issue appropriate policies to institutionalize the presence of the FSL Focal Points [WHAT IS A FOCAL POINT] from among Social Services staff in their respective agencies or LGUs. The tasks and functions of these FSL Focal Points shall form part of their regular key result and shall be given due consideration in their performance evaluation.

The head of agency or LCE shall ensure that all FSL focal points undergo capacity-building and training on management of FSL interpreting.

In addition, the FSL Focal Points shall ensure the provision of accessible materials in FSL for the various services of the local government.

SECTION 7. PROMOTION OF FILIPINO SIGN LANGUAGE. Pursuant to Section 11 of the FSL Act, the LCE, in coordination with the Deaf community, effective immediately upon promulgation of the rules and regulations to implement this Ordinance, shall take appropriate steps to propagate FSL awareness and language competency among hearing people by offering FSL trainings, including offering FSL as an elective subject in the regular or mainstream curriculum of SUCs in the Province.

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SECTION 8. ESTABLISHMENT OF FILIPINO SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER POOL

1. Creation of Interpreter Pool: The Local Chief Executive shall appoint a qualified in-house interpreter responsible for establishing and training a pool of certified FSL interpreters to be deployed in LGU frontline offices and departments.
2. Inclusion of Deaf Members: The FSL Interpreter Pool shall include at least one (1) Deaf member to ensure the full participation of the Deaf community in fostering inclusion.
3. Training Program: The Province shall develop and implement a comprehensive training program for individuals interested in becoming qualified FSL interpreters. This program shall include basic and advanced FSL interpreter training and certification.
4. On-Call Services: FSL interpreters shall be available during reasonable hours, with on-call services provided for urgent situations, as needed.

SECTION 9. MANDATORY USE OF FSL INTERPRETERS. The following LGU offices and departments are required to provide FSL interpretation services upon the request of a Deaf individual or when a Deaf individual is accessing or availing of public services. If on-site interpreters are not immediately available, alternative solutions, such as video remote interpreting or on-call interpreter services, shall be provided within a reasonable time:

1. Governor's Office
2. Office of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan
3. Office of the Provincial Administrator
4. Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office (PSWDO)
5. Provincial Health Office
6. Public Employment Service Office (PESO)
7. Business Permit and Licensing Office
8. Public Safety Office (Police and Fire Department)
9. Department of Education Division Office
10. Local Legislative Office (SP Office)
11. Tourism Office
12. Treasurer's Office
13. Provincial Information Office (PIO)

In emergencies, alternative communication methods such as written communication or visual aids may be temporarily utilized until an interpreter is available.

SECTION 10. TRAINING AND SEMINARS. Trainings and seminars shall be provided and made available by the Province such as but not limited to the following:

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1. Ongoing Training for Interpreters: Members of the FSL Interpreter Pool shall receive regular professional development to maintain and enhance their FSL skills. Certification updates shall also be required.
2. Awareness and Sensitivity Training: The FSL Interpreter Pool shall conduct regular seminars and workshops for provincial employees and in the community, especially those in frontline services, to raise awareness about the Deaf community's needs and the importance of communicating in FSL.

SECTION 11. FSL ACCESSIBILITY IN EVENTS OF THE PROVINCE

1. Public Events: All events organized or sponsored by the Province or its cities of municipalities shall include FSL interpretation in media releases, livestreams, and recordings, ensuring accessibility for Deaf individuals.
2. Private Events in Public Venues: Organizers of private events held in public venues are required to provide FSL interpretation if Deaf participants are expected to attend or participate in such event. If requested, organizers must ensure that interpreters are made available at such event.
3. Real-Time Streaming: Real-time streams or recordings with FSL interpretation shall be broadcasted through the Province's or city's or municipality's official social media channels.

SECTION 12. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING. The implementation and monitoring of the FSL Interpreter Pool shall be overseen by the head of the Persons with Disabilities Affairs Office (PDAO) under the supervision of the Provincial Social Welfare and Development Office's (PSWDO) designated focal person for PWDs. Regular evaluations will ensure the needs of the Deaf community are met, and their accessibility rights are upheld.

SECTION 13. FEEDBACK MECHANISM AND REGULAR ASSESSMENT

1. Hotline for Immediate Concerns: A dedicated hotline with SMS capabilities will be established for Deaf individuals to report issues or challenges with interpreting services.
2. Online Reporting System: An anonymous and user-friendly online platform will be set up for individuals to report concerns or provide feedback.
3. Timely Response: All reports and concerns must be addressed within 48 hours, with appropriate actions taken to resolve the issues.
4. Regular Community Forums: The PDAO head, along with the PSWDO focal person for PWDs, shall organize regular meetings with Deaf community members to discuss their needs and challenges in accessing services.



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SECTION 14. FUNDING. The Provincial Government shall allocate funds from its annual budget to support the establishment, training, and maintenance of the FSL Interpreter Pool and related programs. This allocation shall also cover on-call interpreter services and technological support, such as video remote interpreting. Cities and municipalities are likewise encouraged to provide the necessary funding requirement.

SECTION 12. PENALTIES. Any LGU office or employee found to be in violation of this Ordinance shall be subject to administrative sanctions as may be determined by existing laws and ordinances.

SECTION 13. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE. If any provision of this Ordinance is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 14. REPEALING CLAUSE. All ordinances, resolutions, or executive orders inconsistent with this Ordinance are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

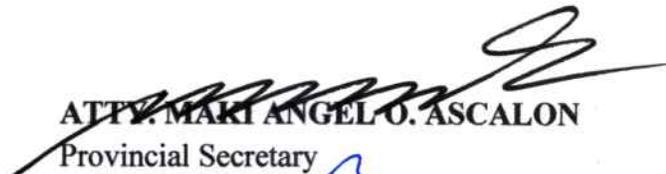
SECTION 15. EFFECTIVITY. This Ordinance shall take effect 15 days after its publication in a newspaper of general circulation.

ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY.

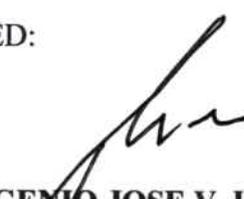
CERTIFIED CORRECT:


HON. JOSE BENITO A. ALONSO
Vice Governor/Presiding Officer

ATTESTED:


ATTY. MAKI ANGEL O. ASCALON
Provincial Secretary

APPROVED:


HON. EUGENIO JOSE V. LACSON
Provincial Governor

JAN 28 2026