

What is our Purpose?

Vision

Safe, healthy individuals, families, and communities

Mission

The Department of Social and Health Services will improve the safety and health of individuals, families and communities by providing leadership and establishing and participating in partnerships.

Values

Excellence in Service
Respect
Collaboration and Partnership
Diversity
Accountability

Orientations

Early childhood development Person-and family-centered, strengths-based

Our Impact

Together we will decrease poverty, improve safety and health status, and increase educational and employment success to support people and communities in reaching their potential.

How to contact ODHH

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and Hard of Hearing
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(800) 422-7930 Voice/TTY

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Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing



ODHH Office of the Deaf
and Hard of Hearing
DSHS 22-272 (Rev. 8/11)

What are our Concerns?

The general public does not fully understand hearing loss and the unique needs of people with hearing loss.

This lack of understanding creates communication barriers which can occur in all aspects of daily life, including:

- Education
- Employment
- Medical/Mental Health
- Courts/Legal
- Business
- Government

Federal laws required to provide equal reasonable accommodations include:

- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

Some reasonable accommodations to help bridge the communication gap involve:

- Technology
- Interpreters
- Captioning

Who do we serve?

- Approximately 506,000 individuals with a hearing loss live in the State of Washington.
- Approximately 12,600 individuals are profoundly deaf.

Washington is ranked with the second largest deaf-blind population in the nation.

- Hearing loss affects people from all walks of life, from infants to the elderly, and across communities with no regard to socio-economic status, religious affiliation or ethnic background.

The various communities of people with hearing loss who interact with hearing people and use unique means of communication include:

- Deaf
- Hard of Hearing
- Deaf-Blind
- Late Deafened
- Families
- Professionals
- General Public

ODHH also meets a specialized need for people with speech disabilities facing telecommunication barriers.

What do we offer?

- Telecommunication Relay Service (TRS) Relay services allow people with hearing loss to communicate effectively with hearing family members, friends or business associates who do not have specialized telephone equipment. It is similar to how a person with normal hearing and clear speech communicates with the telephone.
- Telecommunication Equipment Distribution (TED) Specialized telephone equipment is available to eligible clients. Contracted trainers provide client training on how to use the equipment.

- Sign Language Interpreter Management (SLIM) A statewide contract for interpreter services is available so individuals using sign language can communicate with government and service provider staff.
- Assistive Communication Technology (ACT) A referral/loan system to provide assistive listening device systems, real-time captioning and other assistive technology.
- Communication Access Network (CAN) Videoconferencing sites throughout Washington provide access to video relay services (VRS), video remote interpreting (VRI), video remote captioning (VRC) and face-to-face interpersonal communication (P2P).
- Social & Human Services (SHS) Non-profit Regional Service Centers for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing are contracted to provide an array of social and human services throughout Washington, including case management and advocacy services.
- Information, Referral & Advocacy (IRA) Provides information, referrals & resources to the general public and communities. Advocates on behalf of individuals needing accessible communication to state government.
- Outreach & Training (OT) Outreach activities increase awareness about diversity and culture. Training activities provide knowledge and skills to effectively serve people with hearing loss through the provision of reasonable accommodations.