

# What is our Purpose?

**One Department, One Vision, One Mission, One Core Set of Values**

## 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

Office of the Deaf  
and Hard of Hearing  
PO Box 45301  
Olympia, WA 98504-5301

**(800) 422-7930** Voice/TTY

**(360) 902-8000** Voice/TTY

**(360) 902-0855** Fax

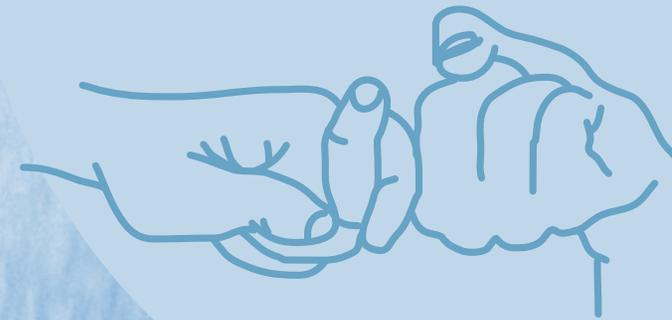
**(360) 339-7382** VP

[odhh@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:odhh@dshs.wa.gov) E-mail

<http://odhh.dshs.wa.gov> Website



## Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing



**ODHH** Office of the Deaf  
& Hard of Hearing

# 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 254,619 individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing live in the State of Washington.
- Of those 74% of them live in urban areas, 4 out of every 100 residents are deaf/hard of hearing.
- Washington has a large deaf-blind population.

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), 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 and 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.