

# MISSOURI COMMISSION FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING



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**Michael L. Parson**  
Governor

Greetings on behalf of Missouri Commission for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing,

The Missouri Commission for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing (MCDHH) is a state agency that works with individuals, service providers, businesses, organizations, and government agencies to advocate on behalf of Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind citizens of Missouri.

It is MCDHH's mission to be proactive in supporting both Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind citizens as well as law enforcement to result in accessible and adequate services and interactions. Please read and consider the following to ensure the rights of the citizens you serve pertaining to the Americans with Disabilities Act which "prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in several areas, including employment, transportation, public accommodations, communications and access to state and local government programs and services."

The National Association of the Deaf (2020) provides the specific requirements below:

- Law enforcement/police officer are required to provide qualified American Sign Language Interpreter. Qualified interpreters must have appropriate certification and carry a license to work in the state of Missouri. Do not use family, friends, employees, staff if they know American Sign Language. Being a relative of a Deaf and hard of Hearing person does not mean they are qualified as an interpreter.
- Law enforcement/police officer should not exclude, deny, segregate, or treat individuals with disabilities differently from individuals without disabilities. Ensure equal access to your interaction and facilities with auxiliary aid or services.
- Law enforcement/police officer are strongly encouraged to consult Deaf and hard of hearing witnesses/suspects/victims to determine the most effective way to communicate.
- Law enforcement/police officer are responsible for the auxiliary services. Such services must be provided at no cost and with the consult of the Deaf and hard of hearing witnesses/suspects/victims.
- Law enforcement/police officer are responsible to understand that additional auxiliary aids and services could be necessary to ensure legal obligations are met. Such services could be a Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI), Video Remote Interpreters (VRI), and Communication Access Realtime Transcription (CART).
- Law enforcement/police officer must accept a call or make a call from or through video relay services (VRS) or text-based telecommunication relay services (TRS) to communicate Deaf and hard of hearing witnesses/suspects/victims as the same as direct telephone calls

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

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Sincerely,

Missouri Commission for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing

Sources:

American with Disabilities Act:

<https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/disability/ada>

National Association of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing:

<https://www.nad.org/resources/advocacy-letters/>

American Sign Language Interpreting Agencies in Missouri:

[https://www.canva.com/design/DAE9rzbyvvl/WC1Bb9buswcNQ--C-cAXZA/view?utm\\_content=DAE9rzbyvvl&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link&utm\\_source=publishsharelink](https://www.canva.com/design/DAE9rzbyvvl/WC1Bb9buswcNQ--C-cAXZA/view?utm_content=DAE9rzbyvvl&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=publishsharelink)