

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 senior citizens as well all senior care providers including long-term, rehabilitation, and skilled nursing facilities 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." ADA compliance when serving Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or DeafBlind consumers is explained in Title II and Title III.

The specific requirements are listed below:

- Providers should not exclude, deny, segregate, or treat individuals with disabilities differently from individuals without disabilities. Ensure equal access to your facilities with auxiliary aid or services.
- Providers are strongly encouraged to consult Deaf and hard of hearing attendee(s) to determine the most effective communication for the patient or companion of the patient.
- Providers are required to provide auxiliary aid or service which includes a qualified American Sign Language Interpreter. 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. A qualified certified and licensed interpreter is necessary to communicate with Deaf and hard of hearing attendee(s).
- Providers 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).
- Providers are responsible for the auxiliary services that do not result in such alteration financial in service or burden. Such services must be provided at no cost and with to the consult of Deaf and hard of hearing attendee(s).
- Providers cannot charge Deaf and hard of hearing attendee(s) requesting auxiliary aid or service for those services.

- Providers 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 attendee(s) as the same as direct telephone calls

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

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 Agency in Missouri:

https://www.canva.com/design/DAE9rzbyvvl/WC1Bb9buswcNQ--C-cAXZA/view?utm_content=DAE9rzbyvvl&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=publishsharelink