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Services

Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services: What do We Really Do?

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Health and Human Services

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ODHHS Programs

- Board for Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI)
- Statewide Consumer Training
- Specialized Telecommunication Assistance Program (STAP)
- Certificate of Deafness for Tuition Waiver
- Driver Visor Card
- Camp Sign
- Interpreter Skills Building
- Senior Citizens Program
- Access Specialists
- Technology Specialists
- Last Resort Communication Services



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Board of Evaluations for Interpreters (BEI) Program

- Improve the quality of interpreters' skills
- Qualified interpreter definition:
 - Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)



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Board of Evaluations for Interpreters (BEI) Certificates

Certificates awarded:

- Basic, Advanced, or Master
- Court
- Oral (Basic, Comprehensive, or Visible)
- Trilingual (Advanced or Master)
- Morphemic Sign System (MSS)
- Signing Exact English (SEE)
- Medical



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Statewide Consumer Training

- Deaf Self-Advocacy Training
- Disclosing Hearing Loss
- Communication Strategies/Living with Hearing Loss
- ADA Overview
- Soft Skills Building
- Hearing Aids and Assistive Technology
- Interpreters Training



Specialized Telecommunication Assistance Program (STAP)

Overview of STAP

- Applicant eligibility requirements
- Certifying the application
- Vouchers – values and eligible categories
- Vendors
- The exchange of the voucher for equipment/services



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STAP Equipment



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Certificate of Deafness for Tuition Waiver

Basic eligibility based on:

- Age?
- Income?
- Residency?
- Degree of hearing loss?
- Combination of above?



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Driver Visor Card

- The deaf or hard of hearing driver identification program is for Texas residents who hold a valid, state-issued driver's license.
- To apply, contact your local Resource Specialist



Email: Krystina.Flanigan@hhsc.state.tx.us



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Camp Sign

A week-long program for those ages 8-17 who are deaf or hard of hearing.

- Reduces isolation by offering a place to socialize with peers
- 110+ campers attended in 2017
- 2018 Dates: August 5 – 11
- Location: Conroe, TX



Contact: DHHS.Training@hhsc.state.tx.us



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Interpreter Training

Webinars Offered:

- BEI Test Overview: What is the Test Testing?
- Ethical Considerations of the Americans with Disabilities Act for Interpreters
- Test of English Proficiency Prep Series
- Soft Skills for Interpreters
- BEI Court Interpreter Certification Overview
- BEI Medical Interpreter Certification Overview



Senior Citizens Program

- Opportunities toward bridging communication barriers
- Reduces the isolation facing persons who are deaf/hard of hearing, aged 60 or older
- Outreach in rural areas and/or nursing homes



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Access Specialists

What they do:

- Advocacy
- Training
- Self advocacy
- Sensitivity training
- Americans with Disabilities Act
- Referral to community resources



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Contact: Melissa.Bell@hhsc.state.tx.us

Technology Specialists

What they do:

- Demonstration and assessment of assistive technology
- Information on communication strategies, hearing loss awareness, cochlear implants, hearing aids and other resources
- Free group trainings on above topics to businesses and the community

Contact: Melissa.Bell@hhsc.state.tx.us



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Last Resort Communication Services

- Available as a last resort when ADA and other access mandates are not applicable
- Deaf and hard of hearing individuals may reach out to local service providers to see if they can assist with services
- Covers the cost of sign language interpreters or real-time captioning services



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List of providers available on the HHS website:

<https://hhs.texas.gov/services/disability/deaf-hard-hearing>



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Thank you!

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