

**KANSAS COMMISSION FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING**

**FY2024 ANNUAL BRIEFING TO:  
THE HONORABLE LAURA KELLY  
GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF KANSAS**

January 2025

As per K.S.A. 75-5391(9), the Kansas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (KCDHH) provides an annual report to the Governor on the status of state services to the deaf and hard of hearing and to recommend priorities to the Governor for development and coordination of services to the deaf and hard of hearing (D/HH). While KCDHH provides a comprehensive annual report about every 5 years with last one in 2020, this briefing highlights the status of KCDHH and selected major state services to D/HH within Kansas, along with key recommendations on priorities and/or areas of future needs.

**1. SNAPSHOT ON KCDHH**

- A. KCDHH has four staff members: Executive Director, Communication Access Services Program Manager, Community Collaborative Professional, and Administrative Officer.
- B. KCDHH continues to be involved in a number of interagency activities with state agencies, local government agencies, law enforcement, and courts throughout Kansas.
- C. KCDHH staff receive an average of 800 contacts every month (mostly phone calls or email messages) involving many issues on services or needing specific resources for D/HH.
- D. KCDHH maintains a registration list of 410 sign language interpreters in Kansas, who provide interpreting services for D/HH, and KCDHH is working to develop other communication access services.
- E. KCDHH continues to monitor the Language Assessment Program for the D/HH, which is being administered by Kansas School for the Deaf (KSD).
- F. KCDHH tracks various state programs and services benefitting D/HH and/or their families, while identifying gaps in other programs and services not meeting needs of the D/HH individuals.
- G. KCDHH provides an annual Deaf and Hard of Hearing Day at the Capitol event every March.

**2. PRIORITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS for 2025**

- A. To create a permanent Communication Access Fund (CAF) by FY2026 to address communication access gaps within state services, courts and court-related services, when a D/HH is meeting with attorney, making any crucial decision in healthcare, in other many instances where a communication access is expected, or when a responsible party does not understand the obligation or how to make a communication effective.
- B. To improve on the interagency activities and initiatives to provide better access and services to D/HH, including crucial service gaps in areas of behavioral health and elderly.
- C. To enhance support in crucial functions of certain state and/or local political subdivisions in their efforts to improve accessibility in emergency preparedness and management, law enforcement relations with D/HH communities, and transition services for successful post-secondary outcomes.
- D. To complete process of proposed rules and regulations (K.A.R. 134 as authorized by K.S.A. 75-5393a and 75-5393c) to assure better communication access services, especially the qualified sign language interpreters. Subsequent sets of proposed rules and regulations will involve other communication access services and to enhance access with use of technology.
- E. To continue expanding KCDHH website with online modules and to increase social media (Facebook, etc.) presence, as another source for state agencies, local governments, local law enforcement, courts, and anyone seeking resources on D/HH.

**3. STATUS OF SELECTED MAJOR STATE SERVICES TO DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING PEOPLE**

**A. Early Hearing Detection and Identification (EHDI via KDHE SoundBeginnings Program)**

	<u>Year 2023</u>	<u>Year 2024*</u>
All babies born	35,851	35,815*
Babies screened	35,463      99%	35,219*      98%
Screening not passed	487	511*
Diagnostic completed	375      77%	388*      76%
ID with hearing loss	87	80*
Early intervention enrolled	57      74%	38*      48%

*\*Estimated based on 1<sup>st</sup> half*

**B. Language Assessment Program (LAPDHH via KSD)**

	<u>FY2023</u>	<u>FY2024</u>
# DHH children assessed	133	211
Not meeting language milestone	87%	91%

**C. Kansas School for the Deaf (KSD)**

	<u>School year 2022-23</u>	<u>School year 2023-24</u>
# DHH students enrolled	153	147

**D. Kansas Department of Education – Special Education (KSDE)**

	<u>School year 2022-23</u>	<u>School year 2023-24</u>
DHH students on IEP	888	893
-As primary disability	714	704
-As secondary disability	174	189

**E. Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS at DCF, transition from HS into college or employment)**

	<u>FY2023</u>	<u>FY2024</u>
Total DHH VR cases served	683	633
Total DHH Pre-ETS served	50	67
New DHH VR applicants	280	300
Successful DHH closures	209	170

**F. Telecommunication Access Program (TAP via Assistive Technology for Kansans, ATK at KU)**

	<u>FY2023</u>	<u>FY2024</u>
# DHH served	93	49

**About KCDHH** – The Kansas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (KCDHH) is a state agency administratively housed within the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF). Based in Topeka, KCDHH works with agencies and organizations throughout Kansas to assure availability and coordination of services for people who are deaf and hard of hearing, including communication access. As required by K.S.A. 74-4355b (a), “All interpreters for the deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired shall be certified or registered with the KCDHH or an agency designated by the Commission.” This is applicable to all interpreters hired or contracted by state agencies or any political subdivisions of Kansas, including the Courts.

**Kansas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing – [kcdhh.ks.gov](http://kcdhh.ks.gov)**

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