

**VOLUME II:
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

**COMMISSION ON THE
DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING**

Agency Summary

COMMISSION ON THE DEAF & HARD OF HEARING

Agency Mission

To promote greater accessibility to services for the deaf and hard of hearing by developing awareness, communication access, and training programs to agencies, organizations, and businesses. To conduct an ongoing needs assessment to identify gaps and recommend changes to improve the quality of living for the deaf and hard of hearing populations in Rhode Island. To provide statewide centralized sign language interpreter referral services, including emergency referrals. To advocate for the enactment of legislation that will promote accessibility of services. To develop a statewide coordinating council to implement the comprehensive statewide strategic plan for children who are deaf or have hearing loss. To oversee state agency compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act regulations related to deaf and hard of hearing access issues through monitoring, training, and advocating. To work with federal, state, and local organizations and agencies to improve the quality of life for deaf and hard of hearing persons in Rhode Island. To coordinate sign language and equipment interpreter services between agencies and organizations with the goal of centralizing services.

Agency Description

The Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (RICDHH) is a service-providing, coordinating, and advocating entity committed to promoting an environment in which more than 200,000 deaf and hard citizens in Rhode Island are afforded equal opportunity in all aspects of their lives. The RICDHH is independent of any existing agency or department within the state according to R.I. General Laws 23-1.8-2. The legislative mandates of the commission include engagement in advocacy to promote accessibility of services as well as providing general training and technical assistance on various topics such as technology, accommodations, culture, legal, education, all related to deaf and hard of hearing issues.

Statutory History

The Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing was established by Law (1977-Senate Bill 882) signed by Governor J. Joseph Garrahy on May 9, 1978 after the original bill was introduced in the 1977 Legislative session. The Commission is to address the needs and concerns of Rhode Island's Deaf and Hard of Hearing population. The name of the Commission was the Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired with 21 Commissioners. In 1992, the bill, House Bill 8245, was introduced on February 12, 1992 to restructure the Commission, down from 21 Commissioners to 9 Commissioners and changed from Hearing Impaired to Hard of Hearing. This bill was signed into law by Governor Bruce Sundlun on July 13, 1992. This is now known as R.I. General Laws § 23-1. Emergency and Public Communication Access Program (EPCAP) is established by Article 17 of HB 5127 signed by Governor Lincoln Chafee on July 3, 2013. It is now known as RIGL § 39-1-42(d) and § 23-1.8-4.

Budget

Commission On The Deaf & Hard Of Hearing

	2019 Actuals	2020 Actuals	2021 Enacted Budget	2021 Revised Budget	2022 Recommended
Expenditures by Program					
Central Management	521,004	674,000	650,270	651,960	775,242
Total Expenditures	521,004	674,000	650,270	651,960	775,242
Expenditures by Object					
Salary And Benefits	380,359	454,476	485,663	487,353	493,231
Contract Professional Services	96,098	144,008	80,000	80,000	182,806
Operating Supplies And Expenses	44,548	70,278	51,607	51,607	66,205
Subtotal: Operating	521,004	668,763	617,270	618,960	742,242
Capital Purchases And Equipment	0	5,238	33,000	33,000	33,000
Subtotal: Other	0	5,238	33,000	33,000	33,000
Total Expenditures	521,004	674,000	650,270	651,960	775,242
Expenditures by Source of Funds					
General Revenue	447,101	496,574	507,816	509,463	612,440
Federal Funds	0	46,056	0	0	0
Restricted Receipts	73,904	131,369	142,454	142,497	162,802
Total Expenditures	521,004	674,000	650,270	651,960	775,242
FTE Authorization	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0

Performance Measures

Commission On The Deaf & Hard Of Hearing

Timeliness of Fulfilled Interpreter Requests

One of the Commission's legislative mandates (RIGL 23-1.8-2(6)) is to administer the interpreter referral service. The Statewide Interpreter Referral Service locates and secures freelance interpreters for assignments requested by the paying parties (such as hospitals, civil and criminal courts, etc.) to ensure communication access is being provided. The figures below represent the percentage of interpreter requests received more than three business days in advance that are filled. [Notes: The 2019/2020 target has been revised. Missing values appear as zeros in the measure.]

<i>Frequency: Annual</i>	<i>Reporting Period: State Fiscal Year</i>				
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Target	95.00%	92.00%	85.00%	87.50%	90.00%
Actual	84.00%	138.00%	82.22%	0.00%	

Timeliness of Information Request Response

Individuals with hearing loss, parents, businesses, and other members of the general public regularly contact the office seeking resources and information. One of the Commission's legislative mandates (RIGL 23-1.8-2(4)) is to promote public awareness and to provide information and referral on the subject of deafness and hearing loss. The Commission aims to be Rhode Island's one-stop resource center for deafness and hearing loss-related inquiries. The figures below represent the percentage of information requests that receive a response within seven business days. [Note: Missing values appear as zeros in the measure.]

<i>Frequency: Annual</i>	<i>Reporting Period: State Fiscal Year</i>				
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Target	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Actual	95.00%	190.00%	97.86%	0.00%	

Personnel

Agency: Commission On The Deaf & Hard Of Hearing

Central Management

		FY 2022	
		FTE	Cost
Unclassified			
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER	00822A	1.0	57,088
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS	00830A	1.0	78,249
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	00832A	1.0	84,543
PROGRAM MANAGER	00828A	1.0	79,616
Subtotal Unclassified		4.0	299,496
Subtotal		4.0	299,496
Total Salaries			299,496
Benefits			
FICA			22,910
Health Benefits			54,353
Payroll Accrual			1,748
Retiree Health			15,813
Retirement			87,081
Subtotal			181,905
Total Salaries and Benefits		4.0	481,401
Cost Per FTE Position			120,350
Statewide Benefit Assessment			11,830
Payroll Costs		4.0	493,231
Purchased Services			
Clerical and Temporary Services			126,923
Other Contracts			55,883
Subtotal			182,806
Total Personnel		4.0	676,037
Distribution by Source of Funds			
General Revenue		4.0	569,893
Restricted Receipts		0.0	106,144
Total All Funds		4.0	676,037