

The Agency

Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Agency Operations

The Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing advocates and coordinates the promotion of an environment in which deaf and hard of hearing persons in Rhode Island are afforded equal opportunity in all aspects of their lives. The commission develops policy and recommends appropriate programs and legislation to enhance cooperation and coordination among agencies and organizations now serving, or having the potential to serve, the deaf and hard of hearing. The commission also provides direct services in its operation of the Sign Language Interpreter Referral Service, and general information and referrals. Beginning in FY 2006, it also administers an Emergency Interpreter Referral Service for hours when the commission is closed. The commission is composed of 13 members, of whom nine are deaf and hard of hearing consumers.

Agency Objectives

To promote greater accessibility to services for the deaf and hard of hearing by developing awareness programs.

To conduct an ongoing needs assessment to identify and prioritize the needs of the deaf and hard of hearing populations in Rhode Island.

To provide 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, teletypewriters, and interpreters.

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.

Statutory History

R.I.G.L. 23-1.8 includes provisions relating to the Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The current commission results from the 1992 restructure of the former Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired, originally established in 1977.

The Budget

Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

	FY 2008 Actual	FY 2009 Actual	FY 2010 Enacted	FY 2010 Revised	FY 2011 Recommended
Expenditures By Object					
Personnel	281,920	329,520	359,440	340,540	354,372
Operating Supplies and Expenses	6,870	7,897	10,706	9,130	9,130
Aid To Local Units Of Government	-	-	-	-	-
Assistance, Grants and Benefits	-	-	-	-	-
Subtotal: Operating Expenditures	\$288,790	\$337,417	\$370,146	\$349,670	\$363,502
Capital Purchases and Equipment	-	-	-	-	-
Debt Service	-	-	-	-	-
Operating Transfers	-	-	-	-	-
Total Expenditures	\$288,790	\$337,417	\$370,146	\$349,670	\$363,502
Expenditures By Funds					
General Revenue	289,412	341,317	370,146	349,670	363,502
Federal Funds	(622)	(3,900)	-	-	-
Total Expenditures	\$288,790	\$337,417	\$370,146	\$349,670	\$363,502
FTE Authorization	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Agency Measures					
Minorities as a Percentage of the Workforce	-	-	-	-	-
Females as a Percentage of the Workforce	33.0%	33.0%	33.0%	33.0%	33.0%
Persons with Disabilities as a Percentage of the Workforce	67.0%	67.0%	67.0%	67.0%	67.0%
Program Measures					
Percentage of Interpreter Requests Filled with at Least 72 Hours Notice	86.0%	91.0%	90.0%	90.0%	92.0%
Percentage of Information Requests Responded to with Relevant Information or Referral within One Week	85.0%	95.0%	96.0%	96.0%	96.0%
Percentage of Legislation Affecting Deaf and Hard of Hearing Citizens Favorably Disposed	80.0%	12.5%	75.0%	75.0%	75.0%