

VR4 Hearing Loss

Everything You Want to Hear

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Objectives

Gain a basic understanding of Federal laws that provide people hearing loss equal opportunity and accommodations for the workplace, places of public accommodations, State and local governments, when traveling, and when accessing telecommunications.

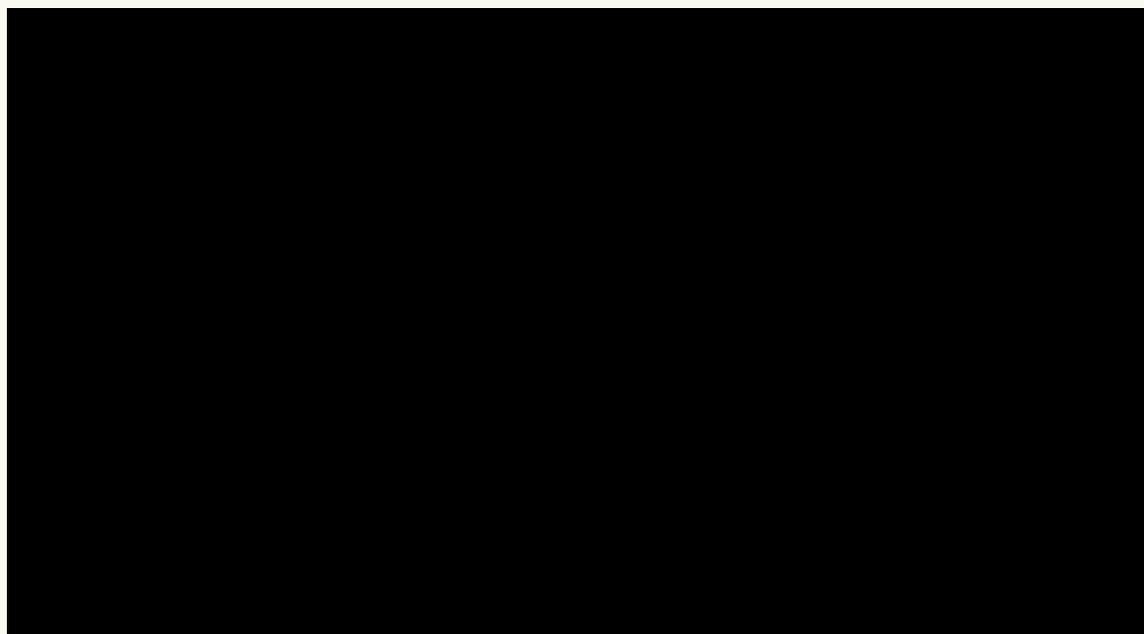
Learn about consumer protection in the states.

Understand how consumers filing complaints can help enforce disability laws.

Find out about the resources and organizations available to help advocate for greater access for people with hearing loss.

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Where



Where can people with hearing loss find current information, long-term support and tools for self-advocacy? Explore this module to learn about laws, resources and organizations that serve the persons with hearing loss. This module provides contact information for Federal, state, and private resources to address the access and advocacy needs of the consumer population with hearing loss.

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1 – ADA – The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

Seeking and Maintaining Employment

The [Americans with Disabilities Act](#) (ADA) was signed into law in 1990. One of the first booklets to educate the public about the ADA was produced by the Equal Opportunity Commission (EEOC) working with the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ). It was published in May 1992 entitled “Questions and Answers about the ADA.” The [introduction of that booklet](#) made it clear that there were high hopes for the ADA:

Barriers to employment, transportation, public accommodations, public services, and telecommunications have imposed staggering economic and social costs on American society and have undermined our well-intentioned efforts to educate, rehabilitate, and employ individuals with disabilities. By breaking down these barriers, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) will enable society to benefit from the skills and talents of individuals with disabilities, will allow us all to gain from their increased purchasing power and ability to use it, and will lead to fuller, more productive lives for all Americans.

The Americans with Disabilities Act gives civil rights protections to individuals with disabilities similar to those provided to individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, and religion. It guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, State and local government services, and telecommunications.

Fair, swift, and effective enforcement of this landmark civil rights legislation is a high priority of the Federal Government.

On the seventh anniversary of the ADA, the National Council on Disability (NCD) published a history of the making of the ADA, entitled “Equality of Opportunity: The Making of the Americans with Disabilities Act.” In their introduction, NCD says:

Future historians will come to view the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 as one of the most formative pieces of American social policy legislation in the 20th century. Its enactment codified into law important principles that would hence forth govern the relationship between society and its citizens with disabilities. The ADA is universal. It champions human rights themes by declaring that people with disabilities are an integral part of society and, as such, should not be segregated, isolated or subjected to the effects of discrimination. The ADA is also distinctly American. It embraces several archetypal American themes such as self-determination, self-reliance and individual achievement. The ADA is about enabling people with disabilities to take charge of their lives and join the American mainstream. It seeks to do so by fostering employment opportunities, facilitating access to public accommodations, and ensuring the use of our nation’s communication systems. Citation: National Council on Disability, Equality of Opportunity, The Making of the Americans with Disabilities Act. 1997, 2010. Washington, DC.

The ADA is arguably the best known of disability civil rights laws. But it's not the only law that impacts people with disabilities. This section will provide a brief overview of several federal civil rights laws that ensure equal opportunity for people with disabilities, at work, getting to meetings and during meetings, and while visiting a public place.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

Title I: Employment

The ADA is a federal law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities. Title I of the ADA covers employment by private employers with 15 or more employees and state and local government employers of the same size. Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act provides the same protections for federal employees and applicants for federal employment. Most states also have their own laws prohibiting employment discrimination on the basis of disability. Some of these state laws may apply to smaller employers and provide protections in addition to those available under the ADA.

The ADA defines disability as an impairment that substantially limits a major life activity. Hearing is considered a major life activity. Employers are required to provide adjustments or modifications that enable qualified people with disabilities to enjoy equal employment opportunities unless doing so would result in undue hardship, i.e., significant difficulty or expense. Employers should not assume that all persons with hearing impairments will require an accommodation or even the same accommodation.

Applicants or employees with hearing disabilities may request accommodations at any point for all employment related activities, including during the recruiting and interview process and on the job. The employee may request one or more of the following accommodations, or another accommodation as needed:

- A sign language interpreter

- A TTY, or text telephone, voice carry-over telephone or captioned telephone

- A telephone headset

- Appropriate emergency notification systems, e.g., strobe lighting on fire alarms or vibrating pagers

- Written memos and notes — especially used for brief, simple or routine communications

- Work area adjustments, e.g., a desk away from a noisy area or near an emergency alarm with strobe lighting

- Assistive listening devices

Employers are prohibited from harassing or allowing employees with disabilities to be harassed in the workplace. When harassment is brought to an employer's attention, management and/or the supervisor must take steps to stop it.

Resources

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
 P.O. Box 7033
 Lawrence, Kansas 66044
 (800) 669-4000 (Voice), (800) 669-6820 (TDD)

Architectural and Transportation Barriers
 Compliance Board
 1111 18th Street, NW, Suite 501
 Washington, DC 20036
 800-USA-ABLE
 800-USA-ABLE (TDD)

Job Accommodations Network

<http://askjan.org/index.html>

<http://askjan.org/media/Hearing.html>

(800)526-7234 (Voice)

(877)781-9403 (TTY)

Sources

US Department of Justice, *Americans with Disabilities Act: A Guide to Disability Rights Laws* (September 2005, updated September, 2006)

A Guide for People with Disabilities Seeking Employment, US DOJ, EEOC, SSA (October, 2000, updated October, 2008)

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, *The ADA: Your Employment Rights as an Individual with a Disability* (Updated March, 2005)

The Job Accommodation Network

The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) is a service provided by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP). JAN is the leading source of free, expert and confidential guidance on workplace accommodations and disability employment issues. Working toward practical solutions that benefit both employer and employee, JAN helps people with disabilities enhance their employability, and shows employers how to capitalize on the value and talent that people with disabilities add to the workplace.

Title II: State and Local Government

Title II covers all activities of state and local governments regardless of the government entity's size or receipt of Federal funding. Title II requires that state and local governments give people with disabilities an equal opportunity to benefit from all of their programs, services and activities, e.g. public education, employment, transportation, recreation, health care, social services, courts, voting and town meetings.

State and local governments are required to follow specific architectural standards in the new construction and alteration of their buildings. They also must relocate programs or otherwise provide access in inaccessible older buildings, and communicate effectively with people who have hearing, vision, or speech disabilities. Public entities are not required to take actions that would result in undue financial and administrative burdens. They are required to make reasonable modifications to policies, practices and procedures where necessary to avoid discrimination, unless they can demonstrate that doing so would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program or activity being provided.

Complaints of title II violations may be filed with the Department of Justice within 180 days of the date of discrimination. In certain situations, cases may be referred to a mediation program sponsored by the department. The department may bring a lawsuit where it has investigated a matter and has been unable to resolve violations. Title II may also be enforced through private lawsuits in Federal court.

Title II: Public Transportation

The transportation provisions of title II cover public transportation services, such as city buses and public rail transit, e.g. subways, commuter rails and Amtrak. Public transportation authorities may not discriminate against people with disabilities in the provision of their services. They must comply with requirements for accessibility in newly purchased vehicles, make good faith efforts to purchase or lease accessible used buses, remanufacture buses in an accessible manner, and unless it would result in an undue burden, provide paratransit where they operate fixed-route bus or rail systems. Paratransit is a service where individuals who are unable to use the

regular transit system independently because of a physical or mental impairment, are picked up and dropped off at their destinations.

Title III: Public Accommodations

Title III covers businesses and nonprofit service providers that are public accommodations, privately operated entities offering certain types of courses and examinations, privately operated transportation and commercial facilities. Public accommodations are private entities who own, lease, lease to, or operate facilities such as restaurants, retail stores, hotels, movie theaters, private schools, convention centers, doctors' offices, homeless shelters, transportation depots, zoos, funeral homes, day care centers and recreation facilities including sports stadiums and fitness clubs. Transportation services provided by private entities are also covered by title III.

Public accommodations must comply with basic nondiscrimination requirements that prohibit exclusion, segregation and unequal treatment. They also must comply with specific requirements related to architectural standards for new and altered buildings; reasonable modifications to policies, practices and procedures; effective communication with people with hearing, vision or speech disabilities; and other access requirements. Additionally, public accommodations must remove barriers in existing buildings where it is easy to do so without much difficulty or expense, given the public accommodation's resources.

Courses and examinations related to professional, educational or trade-related applications, licensing, certifications or credentialing must be provided in a place and manner accessible to people with disabilities or alternative accessible arrangements must be offered.

Commercial facilities, such as factories and warehouses, must comply with the ADA's architectural standards for new construction and alterations.

Complaints of title III violations may be filed with the Department of Justice. In certain situations, cases may be referred to a mediation program sponsored by the department. The department is authorized to bring a lawsuit where there is a pattern or practice of discrimination in violation of title III, or where an act of discrimination raises an issue of general public importance. Title III may also be enforced through private lawsuits. It is not necessary to file a complaint with the Department of Justice (or any Federal agency), or to receive a "right-to-sue" letter, before going to court.

Resource

For more information contact:

U.S. Department of Justice
Civil Rights Division
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Disability Rights Section – NYAV
Washington, D.C. 20530

www.ada.gov

(800) 514-0301 (voice)

(800) 514-0383 (TTY)

The U.S. DOJ also has a series of reports on the ADA, targeted to the business community, including the booklet "**Accessible Information Exchange: Meeting on a Level Playing Field**," which says:

Meetings between businesses and people with disabilities – whether related to researching customer preferences, developing a business education curriculum, or discovering effective ways to comply with the ADA – can result in innovative ideas and powerful collaborations that bring greater access to customers with disabilities and attract new customers to businesses.

For these meetings to be successful, everyone involved must have an equal opportunity to participate. Three components are key to presenting meetings that are accessible to people with disabilities: where the meeting is held, how the meeting room furniture is arranged, and how the meeting information is communicated. Event organizers will find that when these elements are accessible, they serve not only the participants with disabilities but also a wide range of others, including older adults, baby boomers and people with temporary disabilities.

Auxiliary Aids and Services

If auxiliary aids and services are requested by guests, meeting organizers will need to address before the meeting takes place how to provide such services as interpreters, realtime captioning, and notetakers.

•To provide effective communication for participants who are deaf or have hearing loss or who are blind or have low vision, meeting organizers may need to provide auxiliary aids and services, which may include for example: (for people who are deaf or have hearing loss) qualified interpreters, notetakers, realtime captioning, written materials, assistive listening systems, and open and closed captioning.

See [Expanding Your Market: Gathering Input from Customers with Disabilities](#)

ADA Business Briefs

Communicating with Guests Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing in Hotels, Motels, and Other Places of Transient Lodging

[Communicating in Transient Lodging \(PDF version\)](#)

[Communicating in Transient Lodging \(PDF version\)](#)

[Communicating in Transient Lodging \(HTML version\)](#)

[Service Animals \(PDF screen version\)](#)

[Service Animals \(PDF\) print version](#)

[Service Animals \(HTML version\)](#)

[ADA Questions and Answers](#)

[ADA Regulations for Businesses](#)

[\(title III\) – Department of Justice requirements for businesses and non-profit service providers](#)

[ADA and Employment](#)

[Department of Justice ADA Publications](#)

[See more information](#)

Title IV: Telecommunications Services

Title IV addresses telephone and television access for people with hearing and speech disabilities. It requires common carriers (telephone companies) to establish interstate and intrastate telecommunications relay services (TRS) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. TRS enables callers with hearing and speech disabilities who use telecommunications devices for the deaf (TDDs), which are also known as teletypewriters (TTYs), and callers

who use voice telephones to communicate with each other through a third party communications assistant. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has set minimum standards for TRS services. Title IV also requires closed captioning of Federally funded public service announcements.

Resource

For more information about TRS, contact the FCC at:

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro

(888) 225-5322 (Voice)

(888) 835-5322 (TTY)

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2 – Age Discrimination in Employment Act

Age discrimination involves treating someone (an applicant or employee) less favorably because of his/her age. The [Age Discrimination in Employment Act \(ADEA\)](#) only forbids age discrimination against people who are age 40 or older. It does not protect workers under the age of 40, although some states do have laws that protect younger workers from age discrimination. It is not illegal for an employer or other covered entity to favor an older worker over a younger one, even if both workers are age 40 or older. Discrimination can occur when the victim and the person who inflicted the discrimination are both over 40.

Age Discrimination and Work Situations

The law forbids discrimination when it comes to any aspect of employment, including hiring, firing, pay, job assignments, promotions, layoff, training, fringe benefits and any other term or condition of employment.

Age Discrimination and Harassment

It is unlawful to harass a person because of his or her age. Harassment can include, for example, offensive remarks about a person's age. Although the law doesn't prohibit simple teasing, offhand comments or isolated incidents that aren't very serious, harassment is illegal when it is so frequent or severe that it creates a hostile or offensive work environment or when it results in an adverse employment decision, such as the victim being fired or demoted.

The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, a supervisor in another area, a co-worker or someone who is not an employee of the employer, such as a client or customer.

Age Discrimination and Employment Policies/Practices

An employment policy or practice that applies to everyone, regardless of age, can be illegal if it has a negative impact on applicants or employees age 40 or older and is not based on a reasonable factor other than age.

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3 – Air Carriers Access Act

The Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA) prohibits discrimination by U.S. and foreign air carriers on the basis of disability. The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) has issued rules defining the rights of passengers and the obligations of air carriers under this law. The DOT amended the rules May 13, 2009. The final rules apply to foreign carriers and add new provision concerning passengers who use medical oxygen and passengers who are deaf or hard of hearing.

ACAA rules apply to the conduct of air carrier personnel, e.g., pilots, flight attendants, gate agents or check-in counter personnel. They do not apply to Federal security screeners who are covered by rules of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Transportation Security Agency (TSA). They also do not apply to parts of the airport terminal itself, such as retail stores that are covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

According to ACAA rules, air carriers must ensure that people who have a hearing loss have timely access to information that the carriers provide to other passengers. People with a hearing loss must identify themselves as a person with a hearing loss to air carrier personnel. Personnel may provide the needed information themselves, or the airline can use alternative formats, such as visual messaging to provide the requested information.

Examples of the kinds of information that must be provided include:

- Ticketing
- Flight delays
- Schedule changes
- Connections
- Flight check-in
- Gate assignments
- Checking and claiming of luggage
- Aircraft changes
- Safety briefings presented to passengers on airlines
- Warnings to passengers to use the restrooms more than half an hour before arrival

ACCA rules also state that service animals must be permitted to accompany an individual with a disability, and the carrier must allow the traveler to sit in any seat on the airplane unless the animal obstructs the aisle or emergency exit.

More [information about filing complaints](#) with the DOT

Toll-Free Hotline for Air Travelers with Disabilities

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DOT has established a [toll-free hotline](#) to assist travelers with disabilities. The hotline provides general information to consumers about the rights of air travelers with disabilities, responds to requests for printed consumer information, and assists air travelers with time-sensitive disability-related issues that need to be addressed in “real time.”

The hours for the hotline are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday, except federal holidays. Air travelers who experience disability-related air travel service problems may call the hotline at 1-800-778-4838 (voice) or 1-800-455-9880 (TTY) to obtain assistance. As in the past, air travelers who would like DOT to investigate a complaint about a disability issue must submit their complaint in writing or via e-mail. [Click here for details.](#)

“I believe today as I believed over a decade ago, as a co-author of the Americans with Disabilities Act, that accessibility in transportation is a civil right,” said Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta. “The U.S. Department of Transportation is committed to increasing mobility for all Americans, particularly those with disabilities. The establishment of the toll-free hotline is a major step in facilitating accessible air travel for all individuals with disabilities.”

In assisting individuals with disabilities who may have air travel complaints that require immediate intervention, the role of the DOT employees is one of facilitating compliance with DOT’s rules and suggesting possible customer-service solutions to the airline involved. Since compliance with the ACAA and DOT’s implementing regulations remains the obligation of the carrier, airline employees continue to decide what action will be taken in any given situation.

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4 – Communications Act and Telecommunications Act

Section 255 and Section 251(a)(2) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended by the Telecommunications Act of 1996, require manufacturers of telecommunications equipment and providers of telecommunications services to ensure that such equipment and services are accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities, if readily achievable. These amendments ensure that people with disabilities will have access to a broad range of products and services such as telephones, cell phones, pagers, call-waiting and operator services that were often inaccessible to many users with disabilities.

SECTION 255

Disabled Persons' Telecommunications Access

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has rules requiring telecommunications equipment manufacturers and service providers to make their products and services accessible to people with disabilities, if such access is readily achievable. These rules implement [Section 255 of the Communications Act](#). Where access is not readily achievable, Section 255 requires manufacturers and service providers to make their devices and services compatible with peripheral devices and specialized customer premises equipment that are commonly used by people with disabilities, if such compatibility is readily achievable. The FCC has determined that interconnected Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) providers must comply with Section 255.

Products and Services Covered Under Section 255

The FCC's rules cover all hardware and software telephone network equipment and customer premises equipment (CPE). CPE is telecommunications equipment used in the home or office (or other premises) to originate, route or terminate telecommunications. Examples of CPE are telephones, fax machines, answering machines and pagers. CPE that provides both telecommunications and non-telecommunications functions is covered only to the extent it provides telecommunications functions.

The FCC's rules cover basic and special telecommunications services, including regular telephone calls, call waiting, speed dialing, call forwarding, computer-provided directory assistance, call monitoring, caller identification, call tracing and repeat dialing. In addition, the rules cover interactive voice response (IVR) systems and voice mail. IVR systems are phone systems that provide callers with menus of choices.

Closed Captioning (47 CFR § 79.1)

The FCC implements the closed captioning requirements of the Telecommunications Act, found in Section 713, to make sure that television is made accessible for people who are hard of hearing or deaf. [Closed captioning](#)

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is a technology that provides visual text to describe dialogue, background noise and sound effects on television programming.

Closed captioning allows persons with hearing disabilities to have access to television programming by displaying the audio portion of a television program as text on the television screen. Beginning in July 1993, the FCC required all analog television receivers with screens 13 inches or larger sold or manufactured in the United States to contain built-in decoder circuitry to display closed captioning. Beginning July 1, 2002, the FCC also required that digital television (DTV) receivers include closed captioning display capability.

In 1996, Congress required video programming distributors (VPDs), i.e., cable operators, broadcasters, satellite distributors, and other multi-channel video programming distributors, to close caption their television programs. In 1997, the FCC set a transition schedule requiring distributors to provide an increasing amount of captioned programming. As of January 2006, 100 percent of all new, non-exempt English language video programming is required to be captioned.

Access to Emergency Information on TV (47 CFR § 79.2)

The FCC implements rules that require broadcasters, cable operators and other multichannel video programming distributors to make emergency information, e.g., pertaining to storms, school closings and other emergencies, they provide to their viewers accessible to persons with hearing and vision disabilities.

Emergency Video Programming Accessibility to Persons with Hearing and Visual Disabilities

Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules require broadcasters and cable operators to make local emergency information accessible to persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, and to persons who are blind or have visual disabilities. This rule means that emergency information must be provided both aurally and in a visual format.

What Qualifies as an Emergency?

Emergency information is information that is intended to further the protection of life, health, safety or property. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

Immediate Weather Situations: tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, tidal waves, earthquakes, icing conditions, heavy snows, widespread fires, warnings and watches of impending changes in weather.

Community Situations: discharge of toxic gases, widespread power failures, industrial explosions, civil disorders, school closings and changes in school bus schedules resulting from such conditions.

How Does the Emergency Information Need to Be Made Accessible?

In the case of persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, emergency information that is provided in the audio portion of programming must be provided either using closed captioning or other methods of visual presentation, such as open captioning, crawls or scrolls that appear on the screen. Emergency information provided by means other than closed captioning should not block any closed captioning, and closed captioning should not block any emergency information provided by means other than closed captioning.

Closed captions are visual text displays that are hidden in the video signal. Closed captioning can be accessed through a remote control or on-screen menu (all TVs with a 13 inch or larger diameter screen manufactured after 1993 have either analog caption decoder circuitry or support digital television closed captions) or through an external decoder. Open captions are an integral part of the television picture, like subtitles in a movie. In other words, open captions cannot be turned off. Text that advances very slowly across the bottom of the

screen is referred to as a crawl; displayed text or graphics that move up and down the screen are said to scroll.

In the case of persons with vision difficulties, emergency information that is provided in the video portion of a regularly scheduled newscast or a newscast that interrupts regular programming must be made accessible. This requires the aural description of emergency information in the main audio. If the emergency information is being provided in the video portion of programming that is not a regularly scheduled newscast or a newscast that interrupts regular programming, e.g., the programmer provides the emergency information through “crawling” or “scrolling” during regular programming, this information must be accompanied by an aural tone. This tone is to alert persons with vision disabilities that the broadcaster is providing emergency information, and alert such persons to tune to another source, such as a radio, for more information.

What Information about the Emergency Must Be Provided?

The information provided visually and aurally must include critical details regarding the emergency and how to respond. Critical details could include, among other things:

- Specific details regarding the areas that will be affected by the emergency

- Evacuation orders, detailed descriptions of areas to be evacuated and specific evacuation routes

- Approved shelters or the way to take shelter in one’s home, instructions on how to secure personal property, road closures, and how to obtain relief assistance.

In determining whether particular details need to be presented visually and aurally, programmers may rely on their own good faith judgments.

There could be a limited number of instances when an emergency affects the broadcast station or non-broadcast network or distributor and it may be impossible to provide accessible emergency information.

[See more FCC guidelines on broadcasting emergency information](#)

Section 504 Handbook

The FCC [Section 504 Programs & Activities Accessibility Handbook](#) (Section 504 Handbook) is a collection of guidelines, information and procedures to ensure that the commission is accessible to individuals with disabilities. The content of this handbook is designed to assist commission personnel in their efforts to provide such accessibility.

Resource

For more information, contact the commission at

Federal Communications Commission

445 12th Street SW, Washington, DC 20554

Phone: 1-888-225-5322

TTY: 1-888-835-5322

Fax: 1-866-418-0232

E-mail: fccinfo@fcc.gov

<http://www.fcc.gov>

<http://www.fcc.gov/consumer-governmental-affairs-bureau>

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5 – CVAA

21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010

On October 8, 2010, President Barack Obama signed into law the 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010 (CVAA). CVAA updates the Communications Act and establishes new safeguards for disability access to ensure that people with disabilities are not left behind as technology changes and the United States migrates to the next generation of Internet-based and digital communication technologies.

There are two sections that stand out for most people with hearing loss: the section requiring telephones that are used with the Internet to be hearing aid-compatible; and the section that ensures that people with disabilities will have access to commercial video programming presented on the Internet. Under the new law, once a television program is published or exhibited on television with closed captions, any subsequent distribution of that programming on the Internet must include closed captions.

There is more to the law, including requirements for video description for people with vision loss. Here is a quick summary of some of the provisions:

Requires telephones used with the Internet to be hearing aid-compatible;

Allocates up to \$10 million per year from the Interstate Relay Service Fund for equipment used by individuals who are deaf-blind;

Restores Federal Communication Commission (FCC) rules requiring video description;

Requires devices designed to receive or play back video programming, using a picture screen of any size, to be capable of displaying closed captioning, delivering available video description, and making emergency information accessible to individuals who are blind or have low vision. The exception is that devices with picture screens less than 13" must meet these requirements if achievable with reasonable effort or expense;

Requires devices designed to record video programming (such as DVRs) to enable the rendering or pass through of closed captions, video description and emergency information, so viewers can turn the closed captions and video description on/off when played back on a screen of any size; and

Requires devices designed to receive or play back video programming to provide access to built-in closed captioning and video description features through a mechanism that is reasonably comparable to a button, key or icon designated for activating the closed captioning or accessibility features.

When Does the New Law Take Effect?

Different sections of CVAA take effect at different times. The law also provides for an Advisory Committee, which was established April 2011. A report of the committee's recommendations and findings on closed captioning was due October 2011. The FCC was then directed to revise its regulations and adopt a phase-in

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schedule no later than six months after the Advisory Committee submits the closed captioning report.

Schedule:

1. Advisory committee established: 4/8/2011
2. Advisory committee report due: 10/8/2011
3. Begin phase-in of closed captioning for the Internet: 4/8/2012
4. Equipment phase-in (devices smaller than 13" to display captions, closed captioning buttons on remote control devices, video description decoding) between 4/2012 and 10/2012

[Hearing Loss Association of America blog](#)

Resource

Federal Communications Commission
Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau
Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

<http://transition.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/cvaa.html>

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6 – Fair Housing Act

Disability Rights in Private and Public Housing

Regardless of whether an individual lives in private or public housing, Federal laws provide the following rights to persons with disabilities:

Laws prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities. It is unlawful for a housing provider to refuse to rent or sell to a person simply because of a disability. A housing provider may not impose different application or qualification criteria, rental fees or sales prices, and rental or sales terms or conditions than those required of or provided to persons who are not disabled.

Example: A housing provider may not refuse to rent to an otherwise qualified individual with a mental disability because he/she is uncomfortable with the individual's disability. Such an act would violate the Fair Housing Act because it denies a person housing solely on the basis of their disability.

Laws require housing providers to make reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities. A reasonable accommodation is a change in rules, policies and practices or services so that a person with a disability will have an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling unit or common space. A housing provider should do everything he/she can to assist, but he/she is not required to make changes that would fundamentally alter the program or create an undue financial and administrative burden. Reasonable accommodations may be necessary at all stages of the housing process, including application, tenancy or to prevent eviction.

Example: A housing provider would make a reasonable accommodation for a tenant with mobility impairment by fulfilling the tenant's request for a reserved parking space in front of the entrance to their unit, even though all parking is unreserved.

Laws require housing providers to allow persons with disabilities to make reasonable modifications. A reasonable modification is a structural modification that is made to allow persons with disabilities the full enjoyment of the housing and related facilities.

Example: Examples of a reasonable modification would include allowing a person with a disability to install a ramp into a building, lower the entry threshold of a unit, or install grab bars in a bathroom.

Reasonable modifications are usually made at the resident's expense. However, there are resources available for helping fund building modifications. Additionally, if you live in Federally-assisted housing the housing provider may be required to pay for the modification if it does not amount to an undue financial and administrative burden. For more information, see the Reasonable Accommodations section of the [Section 504 Frequently Asked Questions](#) page.

Laws require that new covered multifamily housing be designed and constructed to be accessible. In covered multifamily housing consisting of four or more units with an elevator built for first occupancy after March 13,

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1991, all units must comply with the following seven design and construction requirements of the Fair Housing Act:

- Accessible entrance on an accessible route
- Accessible public and common-use areas
- Usable doors
- Accessible route into and through the dwelling unit
- Accessible light switches, electrical outlets, thermostats and environmental controls
- Reinforced walls in bathrooms
- Usable kitchens and bathrooms

In covered multifamily housing without an elevator that consists of four or more units built for first occupancy after March 13, 1991, all ground floor units must comply with the Fair Housing Act seven design and construction requirements.

For information on how to comply with the physical accessibility requirements of the Fair Housing Act, visit the [Fair Housing Accessibility FIRST Website](#).

These requirements apply to most public and private housing. However, there are limited exemptions for owner-occupied buildings with no more than four units, single-family housing sold or rented without the use of a broker, and housing operated by organizations and private clubs that limit occupancy to members.

If you live in federally-assisted multifamily housing consisting of five or more units, five percent of these units (or at least one unit; whichever is greater) must meet more stringent physical accessibility requirements. Additionally, two percent of units (or at least one unit; whichever is greater) must be accessible for persons with visual or hearing disabilities. For more information, visit [Section 504 Questions and Answers](#).

People with Disabilities in Federally-Assisted Housing

Federal law makes it illegal for an otherwise qualified individual with a disability to be excluded, solely because of his or her disability, from programs receiving Federal financial assistance. For more information on the rights of persons with disabilities in federally assisted housing as well as the responsibilities of housing providers who receive federal financial assistance, visit [Section 504: Disability Rights in HUD Programs site](#).

Zoning and Land Use

It is unlawful for local governments to utilize land use and zoning policies to keep persons with disabilities from locating to their area. For more information, see the [Joint Statement of DOJ and HUD on Group Homes, Local Land Use and the Fair Housing Act](#).

State and Local Laws

Many states and localities have fair housing laws that are substantially equivalent to the Federal Fair Housing Act. Some of these laws prohibit discrimination on additional bases, such as source of income or marital status. Some of these laws may impose more stringent design and construction standards for new multifamily housing.

The Americans with Disabilities Act

In most cases, the ADA does not apply to residential housing. Rather, the ADA applies to places of public accommodation such as restaurants, retail stores, libraries and hospitals as well as commercial facilities such as offices buildings, warehouses and factories. However, Title III of the ADA covers public and common use

areas at housing developments when these public areas are, by their nature, open to the general public. For example, it covers the rental office since the rental office is open to the general public.

Title II of the ADA applies to all programs, services and activities provided or made available by public entities. This includes housing when the housing is provided or made available by a public entity. For example, housing covered by Title II of the ADA includes public housing authorities that meet the ADA definition of “public entity,” and housing operated by states or units of local government, such as housing on a State university campus.

For more information on the Americans with Disabilities Act, visit the [Department of Justice ADA home page](#).

Filing a Complaint

To file a complaint or for information on how HUD processes housing discrimination complaints, see [Fair Housing-It's Your Right](#).

FHEO Headquarters
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20410

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Learn about consumer protection in the states.

Understand how consumers filing complaints can help enforce disability laws.

Find out about the resources and organizations available to help advocate for greater access for people with hearing loss.

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7 – Filing Complaints and Comments

Civil rights laws and regulations as well as consumer protection laws are in place to help consumers when something goes wrong. This is a complaint-driven system: local police do not seek out violators of these laws, throw anyone in jail or even ticket offenders. Enforcement depends on consumers willing to complain when they see a violation of the law.

With that said, filing a formal complaint or considering litigation should not be the first step a consumer considers. Consumers who believe there has been a violation of the law whether related to the workplace, access to a public place or an airline, or dispensing of their hearing aids, should take some important steps first.

For Employment Complaints:

Employees should keep copies of all supporting documentation. If he/she is a long-time employee facing discriminatory actions, they should make sure to have copies of all past evaluations, citations or other written material that attests to the kind of worker they are. They should keep emails, notes, letters and other job related correspondence, and records of the projects they have worked on to show how successful they have been. They are more likely to prove their case if they have documentation that supports their contentions.

Employees should keep a diary of any and all forms of harassment.

They should document any time they thought they were passed over for a promotion, and their basis for their perceptions.

They should talk to trusted co-workers to confirm their analysis of the situation, and find out if others similarly situated were also harassed or passed over for promotions. They should find out what company policy states and whether it is habitually ignored or if perceived discrimination is the action of one individual.

Employees should do their homework by finding out what the procedure is for complaints in their company, and follow that procedure. They should see what they can do to negotiate a satisfactory outcome before filing a formal complaint with the EEOC Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) or going to court.

If all else fails, they should file a complaint with the EEOC or hire an attorney for advice.

For Other Complaints:

The consumer should attempt to negotiate a satisfactory ending on their own. Sometimes the other party simply did not know how to provide the needed accommodation.

If the consumer was not able to resolve the problem on their own, they should do the best they can to document their experience in as great detail as possible. Taking notes as the event is happening will help this process.

Oversight bodies usually have established complaint procedures. They should investigate which is/are the

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appropriate agency/s and the rules for filing a complaint with them.

File a complaint with the appropriate agency as soon as possible after the incident. Often oversight bodies have deadlines for filing complaints. Check each agency to find out what that time limit is.

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8 – Grassroots Advocacy

Advocating for Implementation and Enforcement of Disability Laws

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world.” Margaret Mead

Thoughtful, committed citizens who seek change: there is no more clear or concise definition of grassroots advocates than Margaret Mead’s words uttered over 50 years ago. Grassroots advocates, unlike paid lobbyists, often spend long hours at their own expense to accomplish their goals. They are often passionate about their work, and certainly persistent, because most change does not happen quickly or easily.

The goals of grassroots advocates may be implementation or enforcement of current law. Advocates may seek to work locally, such as standing up for the rights of owners to bring their hearing dogs in a taxi. Or advocates may seek to impact state or federal enforcement of a law, for example when lawsuits are filed against movie theater owners who don’t provide open or closed captions.

Grassroots advocates also work to draft new legislation when there is a need. It often takes years to get new laws on the books. Advocates need to develop a thoughtful strategy, to work with others in coalitions, and to listen to those who would oppose their work. Grassroots advocates need to know why and how to overcome opposition.

To be a good grassroots advocate:

- Be persistent, patient and always courteous
- Start with a plan
- Meet with like-minded people
- Focus on one, doable issue at a time
- Build coalitions
 - Create a dialog with opposing parties
 - Partner with friends
 - Be there for the long haul as well as the quick success
 - Be polite when losing
 - Celebrate success

Resources: National and Local Consumer Organizations

Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (AG Bell)

3417 Volta Place, NW

Washington, DC 20007

Tel: 202/337-5220

TTY: 202/337-5221

Fax: 202/337-8314

www.agbell.org

Association of Late Deafened Adults (ALDA)

8038 Macintosh Lane, Suite 2,

Rockford Illinois, 61107

Phone: 815.332.1515

www.alda.org

Hands and Voices

Business Office

PO Box 3093

Boulder CO 80307

(303) 492-6283

www.handsandvoices.org

Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA)

7910 Woodmont Avenue, Suite 1200

Bethesda, MD 20850

www.hearingloss.org

National Association of the Deaf (NAD)

8630 Fenton Street, Suite 820

Silver Spring, MD 20910

www.nad.org

Telecommunications for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing (TDI)

8630 Fenton Street, Suite 604,

Silver Spring, MD 20910-3822

www.tdiforaccess.org

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9 – Hearing Aid Compatibility Act

As of August 16, 1989, all landline telephones manufactured or imported for use in the U.S. have been required to be hearing aid-compatible. Cordless telephones manufactured or imported for use in the U.S. have also been required to be hearing aid compatible since August 16, 1991. Secure telephones are exempt, as are telephones used with public mobile services or private radio services.

A telephone is hearing aid-compatible if it provides internal means, i.e., without the use of external devices, for effective use with hearing aids that are designed to be compatible with telephones that meet the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) technical standard for hearing aid compatibility (the technical standard is codified at 47 C.F.R. § 68.316). This is usually accomplished by inserting a telecoil in telephones that detects, or is compatible with, a similar telecoil in the hearing aid, and thus allows the hearing aid to “couple” with the telephone through an electromagnetic field.

Regulations for HAC/VC (hearing aid compatible/volume control) are promulgated under the authority of the Hearing Aid Compatibility Act of 1988 (HAC Act), (codified at 47 U.S.C. § 610). The intent of the HAC Act is to ensure reasonable access to telephone service by persons with hearing disabilities.

[Hearing Aid Compatibility and Volume Control FAQs](#)

Hearing Aid Compatibility for Wireless Telephones

The Hearing Aid Compatibility Act of 1988 (HAC Act) generally requires that the FCC ensure that telephones manufactured or imported for use in the United States after August 1989, and all “essential” telephones, are hearing aid-compatible. When Congress passed the Act in 1988, it specifically exempted “telephones used with public mobile services” (wireless telephones) from these requirements. To ensure that the HAC Act kept pace with the evolution of telecommunications, however, Congress granted the FCC a means to revoke or limit the exemption for wireless telephones. On August 14, 2003, the FCC determined that continuation of a complete exemption for wireless telephones would have an adverse effect on individuals with hearing disabilities, and that limiting the exemption was technologically feasible and in the public interest. Based upon these findings, the FCC established rules for the hearing aid compatibility of digital wireless phones.

What Makes a Phone Hearing Aid-Compatible?

Hearing aids operate in one of two modes — acoustic coupling or telecoil coupling. Hearing aids operating in acoustic coupling mode receive and amplify all sounds surrounding the user; both desired sounds, such as a telephone’s audio signal, as well as unwanted ambient noise. Hearing aids operating in telecoil coupling mode avoid unwanted ambient noise by turning off the microphone and receiving only signals from magnetic fields generated by telecoil-compatible telephones. In the U.S., about 60 percent of hearing aids contain telecoils, which generally are used by individuals with profound hearing loss.

A telecoil is a small, tightly-wrapped piece of wire inside the hearing aid that, when activated, picks up the voice signal from the electromagnetic field that leaks from compatible telephones. While the microphone on a hearing aid picks up all sounds, the telecoil will only pick up an electromagnetic signal from the telephone. Thus, users of telecoil-equipped hearing aids are able to communicate effectively over the telephone without feedback and without the amplification of unwanted background noise. Telecoils can generally fit in two styles of hearing aids: “In-The-Ear” and “Behind-The-Ear” aids. Most small hearing aids are not large enough to fit the telecoil. Many people report feedback (or squealing) when they place a telephone next to their hearing aid. When placed correctly, telecoils can eliminate this feedback because the hearing aid microphone is turned off and the hearing aid only amplifies the signal coming through the telecoil. Some hearing aid users may need to place the telephone slightly behind the ear rather than directly over the ear to obtain the clearest signal.

The ability to make wireless telephones compatible with hearing aids also depends in part on other technical and design choices made by carriers and manufacturers. For example, for technical reasons, it is easier to meet hearing aid compatibility standards on systems that use a Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) air interface (including Verizon Wireless and Sprint Nextel) than on systems that use a Global System for Mobile (GSM) (such as AT&T Mobility and T-Mobile) air interface. It is also easier to meet hearing aid compatibility standards in phones with clamshell (or “flip”) designs than in “candy bar” or other styles. Therefore, consumers may generally find more models that meet hearing aid compatibility standards available from CDMA carriers and in clamshell designs.

What Are the FCC’s Requirements for Hearing Aid Compatibility for Digital Wireless Telephones?

Analog wireless telephones usually do not cause interference with hearing aids. Digital wireless telephones, on the other hand, sometimes cause interference because of electromagnetic energy emitted by the telephone’s antenna, backlight or other components. Therefore, the FCC has adopted specific hearing aid compatibility rules for digital wireless telephones.

The standard for compatibility of digital wireless phones with hearing aids is set forth in American National Standard Institute (ANSI) standard C63.19. ANSI C63.19 contains two sets of standards: an “M” rating (originally a “U” rating) from one to four for reduced radio frequency (RF) interference to enable acoustic coupling with hearing aids that do not operate in telecoil mode, and a “T” rating (originally a “UT” rating) from one to four to enable inductive coupling with hearing aids operating in telecoil mode. A digital wireless handset is considered hearing aid-compatible for acoustic coupling if it meets an “M3” (or “U3”) rating under the ANSI standard. A digital wireless handset is considered hearing aid-compatible for inductive coupling if it meets a “T3” (or “U3T”) rating under the ANSI standard.

In addition to rating wireless phones, the ANSI standard also provides a methodology for rating hearing aids from M1 to M4, with M1 being the least immune to RF interference and M4 the most immune. To determine whether a particular digital wireless telephone is likely to interfere with a particular hearing aid, the immunity rating of the hearing aid is added to the rating of the telephone. A sum of four would indicate that the telephone is usable; a sum of five would indicate that the telephone would provide normal use; and a sum of six or greater would indicate that the telephone would provide excellent performance with that hearing aid.

Are Hearing Aid-Compatible Digital Wireless Phones Available?

To ensure that sufficient hearing aid-compatible digital wireless phones complying with the ANSI standard are available, the FCC set benchmark dates by which digital wireless handset manufacturers and service providers had to gradually increase the number of hearing aid-compatible digital wireless phones available to consumers. The currently applicable benchmarks are as follows:

For Acoustic Coupling

Each handset manufacturer must meet at least an M3 rating for one third of the handset models that it offers to service providers per digital air interface. If one third of the manufacturer's handset models work out to a fraction, the manufacturer may round the result down.

Each nationwide wireless service provider (Verizon Wireless, AT&T Mobility, Sprint Nextel and T-Mobile) must meet at least an M3 rating for 50 percent or eight of the handset models it offers to consumers, whichever is less, per digital air interface. For service providers that do not meet the 50 percent threshold, the minimum number of compatible models required increased to 10 on February 15, 2010.

Each non-nationwide wireless service provider must meet at least an M3 rating for 50 percent or eight of the handset models it offers to consumers, whichever is less, per digital air interface. For service providers that do not meet the 50 percent threshold, the minimum number of compatible models required, increased to 10 on May 15, 2010.

For Inductive Coupling

Each handset manufacturer must offer to service providers at least two T3-rated handset models per digital air interface. In addition, manufacturers must ensure that 25 percent of their handset models per air interface met at least a T3 rating, which began February 15, 2010, and one third, which began February 15, 2011. If these percentages work out to a fraction, the manufacturer may round the result down; however, any manufacturer offering four or more handset models over a digital air interface must offer at least two that meet a T3 or higher rating.

Each nationwide wireless service provider (Verizon Wireless, AT&T Mobility, Sprint Nextel, and T-Mobile) must meet at least a T3 rating for one third or three of the handset models it offers to consumers, whichever is less, per digital air interface. For service providers that do not meet the one third threshold, the minimum number of compatible models required increased to seven on February 15, 2010, and 1 on February 15, 2011.

After September 7, 2008, each non-nationwide wireless service provider must meet at least a T3 rating for one third or three of the handset models it offers to consumers, whichever is less, per digital air interface. For service providers that did not meet the one third threshold, the minimum number of compatible models required increased to five on May 15, 2009, seven on May 15, 2010, and 10 on May 15, 2011.

These numbers are minimum requirements, and manufacturers and service providers may offer more qualifying handsets if they choose. In addition, manufacturers are required to partially refresh their offerings of hearing aid-compatible phones each year, and service providers must offer a range of hearing aid-compatible phones with differing levels of functionality.

The FCC allows a “de minimis” exception to its requirements for handset manufacturers and wireless service providers offering a small number of hearing aid-compatible handsets. Under this exception:

Wireless service providers and handset manufacturers that offer two or fewer digital wireless handsets in the U.S. for a particular air interface need not offer hearing aid-compatible handsets.

Wireless service providers and handset manufacturers that offer three digital wireless handsets in the U.S. for a particular air interface must offer at least one hearing aid-compatible handset model.

Are There Labeling and Testing Requirements?

Packages containing hearing aid-compatible handsets must be explicitly labeled and must include detailed information in the package or product manual. Wireless service providers must offer a means for consumers to test hearing aid-compatible handsets in their owned or operated retail stores.

Some hearing aid manufacturers are voluntarily including information about hearing aid compatibility with their products. Wireless service providers are also offering similar information in their owned or operated retail stores and are training employees to help persons with hearing aids. This information and the package labeling required by the FCC help persons with hearing aids make fully-informed decisions about purchasing their

hearing aid-compatible wireless phones.

After January 15, 2009, manufacturers and service providers are required to post information about their hearing aid-compatible handset offerings on their Websites.

Try Before You Buy

Try the wireless device with your hearing aid in the store before making your purchase. It's best to try several models before buying to find the best match with your hearing aids. Visit a full service carrier store and ask to try devices that have been designated as "hearing aid-compatible." Your cell phone's RF emissions can change depending on your location. Be sure to fully evaluate your listening experience outside and during the return period. Read the fine print on the return policy and any early termination fees before signing up for any new cell phone or service.

Filing a Complaint with the FCC

If you have a problem using a hearing aid with a digital wireless phone that is supposed to be hearing aid-compatible, first try to resolve it with the equipment manufacturer or your wireless service provider. If you can't resolve the issue directly, you can file a complaint with the FCC. There is no charge for filing a complaint. You can file your complaint using an online complaint form.

To file a complaint with the FCC's Consumer Center:

Call 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322) voice, or 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322) TTY

Fax 1-866-418-0232

Write to:

Federal Communications Commission
Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau
Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

What to Include in a Complaint

The best way to provide all the information the FCC needs to process a complaint is to fully complete the online complaint form. When opening the form, you will be asked a series of questions that will take you to the particular section of the form you need to complete. If you do not use the online complaint form, your complaint, at a minimum, should indicate:

Your name, address, e-mail address and phone number where you can be reached;

Preferred format or method of response (letter, fax, voice phone call, e-mail, TRS, TTY, ASCII text, audio recording or Braille);

That your complaint is about hearing aid compatibility for a digital wireless telephone;

The make and model number of the equipment or device you are complaining about;

Name, address, telephone number (if known) of the company or companies involved in your complaint; and

A brief description of your complaint and the resolution you are seeking, and a full description of the equipment or service you are complaining about, including date of purchase, use, or attempt to use.

For More Information

For information about hearing aid-compatible wireline telephones, see the FCC consumer fact sheet. For more information about FCC programs to promote access to telecommunications services for people with disabilities, visit its Disability Rights Office Website. Finally, for information about other telecommunications issues, visit the FCC's Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau Website, or contact the FCC's Consumer Center using the contact information provided for filing a complaint.

A list of all [equipment manufacturers and service providers](#)

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10 – Oversight of Dispensing Professionals

According to the American Academy of Audiology (Academy), “Audiologists are health-care professionals who evaluate, diagnose, treat, and manage hearing loss, tinnitus, and balance disorders in newborn, children, and adults.”

Audiologists must be licensed by the state. Specific state laws covering audiologists can be found on the websites of [ASHA](#) and the [Academy](#). Most audiologists earn an AuD, but some have other doctoral degrees. In addition, they may be certified by the [American Board of Audiology \(ABA\)](#), or by the [American Speech Language Hearing Association \(ASHA\)](#). These certifications are voluntary. Each requires the applicant to pass an examination, and demonstrate knowledge, skills and expertise in the field.

A hearing instrument specialist is a professional certified by the National Board for Certification in Hearing Instrument Sciences (NBC-HIS) and licensed or registered in all states. The specialist does an assessment, fits and dispenses hearing aids, and provides instruction in the use and care of hearing aids and related devices. In some states, dispensing audiologists are licensed separately from non-audiologist dispensers.

A [list of state licensing boards](#) that cover hearing aid dispensers

All three professional organizations publish and expect their members to adhere to a written code of ethics and have rules in place for complaint procedures that can be found on their websites.

[American Academy of Audiology code of ethics and ethical practices committee](#)
[American Speech-Language-Hearing Association code of ethics and complaint procedures](#)
[International Hearing Society code of ethics and complaint procedures](#)

Apparently IHS accepts complaints only from other members; presumably consumers who bring a complaint to the IHS board might find that the board itself could file a complaint.

Before purchase of a hearing aid, consumers should check the credentials of the dispenser. If the dispenser’s practice, including the sale of hearing aids, does not adhere to state regulations covering the dispenser and any board certifications the dispenser holds, the consumer should contact the state licensing board and/or the state attorney general as well as any other oversight body to file a complaint.

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11 – Regulation of Hearing Aid Sales

Rights afforded to purchasers of hearing aids depend upon the state where the purchase has been made. This system has resulted in a patchwork of laws and regulations across the country. Only 30 states mandate a trial period during which the consumer can decide if the hearing aid purchased is suitable. In those states that require trial periods, consumers have the right to return the hearing aid and obtain a refund. The length of time for the trial period varies from state to state.

Typically, the hearing aid dispenser is allowed to keep some fees to cover the cost of the ear mold, the cost of an audiogram, if done, and a percentage or flat fee to cover the dispenser's time spent with the consumer choosing a hearing aid. The terms of the trial period should be provided in writing, including the start and end date for the trial period and any fees that the dispenser is entitled to keep if the hearing aid is returned within the trial period.

In states that have no mandatory trial period accompanied by refunds, providing these rights is left to the discretion of the individual hearing aid dispenser. Many dispensers see the value of a trial period even if not mandated by law. In addition, sales of hearing aids, just like any other product, are covered by the sales contract. Consumers may be able to negotiate a trial period and have that included in the contract. Consumers must be sure to read and understand the sales contract.

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Consumer Rights

Hearing Loss Association of America has compiled information regarding the trial period for hearing aids for every state in the United States. The information available on the [HLAA website](#) also identifies the state agency that accepts and reviews complaints about hearing aid dispensers. Complaints are not limited to trial periods and refunds in those states that require them, but may cover any aspect of the consumer's experience in dealing with a hearing aid dispenser and purchasing a hearing aid.

[See consumer protection laws according to state](#)

In three states, Arizona, Florida and New York, information about telecoils must be included in educational materials for consumers. This is the kind of useful information that allows people to use their hearing aids to their fullest advantage.

A Caveat: The information was obtained by searching the laws and regulations of each state on line. In a few instances, personal contact was made with a state official to verify or clarify available information. However, no state law or regulation expressly states the absence of a right to a trial period and a refund. So, the conclusion, "None required," was assumed for many of the states listed in the table as having no mandatory trial period. It is possible that in doing this research, the existence of a required trial period accompanied by a refund was simply not found, although the state may provide these rights.

[See more on advocacy for people with hearing loss](#)

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12 – Rehabilitation Act of 1973

The Rehabilitation Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs conducted by Federal agencies, in programs receiving Federal financial assistance, in Federal employment and in the employment practices of Federal contractors. The standards for determining employment discrimination under the Rehabilitation Act are the same as those used in Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Rights Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

What is Section 504?

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a national law that protects qualified individuals from discrimination based on their disability. The nondiscrimination requirements of the law apply to employers and organizations that receive financial assistance from any Federal department or agency, including the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). These organizations and employers include many hospitals, nursing homes, mental health centers and human service programs. Section 504 forbids organizations and employers from excluding or denying individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to receive program benefits and services. It defines the rights of individuals with disabilities to participate in, and have access to, program benefits and services.

Who Is Protected from Discrimination?

Section 504 protects qualified individuals with disabilities. Under this law, individuals with disabilities are defined as persons with a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities. People who have a history of or who are regarded as having a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities are also covered. Major life activities include caring for one's self, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, working, performing manual tasks and learning. Some examples of impairments which may substantially limit major life activities, even with the help of medication or aids/devices, are: AIDS, alcoholism, blindness or visual impairment, cancer, deafness or hearing impairment, diabetes, drug addiction, heart disease and mental illness. In addition to meeting the above definition, for purposes of receiving services, education or training, qualified individuals with disabilities are persons who meet normal and essential eligibility requirements.

For purposes of employment, qualified individuals with disabilities are persons who, with reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of the job for which they have applied or have been hired to perform. Complaints alleging employment discrimination on the basis of disability against a single individual will be referred to the U. S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for processing.

Reasonable accommodation means an employer is required to take reasonable steps to accommodate an individual's disability unless it would cause the employer undue hardship.

[Take the Assessment](#)

Prohibited Discriminatory Acts in Health Care and Human Services Settings

Section 504 prohibitions against discrimination apply to service availability, accessibility, delivery, employment and the administrative activities and responsibilities of organizations receiving Federal financial assistance. A recipient of Federal financial assistance may not, on the basis of disability:

- Deny qualified individuals the opportunity to participate in or benefit from federally funded programs, services or other benefits

- Deny access to programs, services, benefits or opportunities to participate as a result of physical barriers

- Deny employment opportunities, including hiring, promotion, training and fringe benefits, for which they are otherwise entitled or qualified

These and other prohibitions against discrimination based on disability can be found in the DHHS Section 504 regulation at 45 CFR Part 84.

Section 503

Section 503 requires affirmative action and prohibits employment discrimination by Federal government contractors and subcontractors with contracts of more than \$10,000.

For more information on section 503, contact:

Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs
U.S. Department of Labor

200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Room C-3325
Washington, D.C. 20210

(202) 693-0106 (voice/relay)

Enforcement of Section 504

Section 504 states that “no qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall be excluded from, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under” any program or activity that either receives Federal financial assistance or is conducted by any Executive agency or the United States Postal Service.

Each Federal agency has its own set of section 504 regulations that apply to its own programs. Agencies that provide Federal financial assistance also have section 504 regulations covering entities that receive Federal aid. Requirements common to these regulations include reasonable accommodation for employees with disabilities; program accessibility; effective communication with people who have hearing or vision disabilities; and accessible new construction and alterations. Each agency is responsible for enforcing its own regulations. Section 504 may also be enforced through private lawsuits. It is not necessary to file a complaint with a Federal agency or to receive a “right-to-sue” letter before going to court.

For information on how to file 504 complaints with the appropriate agency, contact:

U.S. Department of Justice
Civil Rights Division
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Disability Rights Section – NYAV

Washington, D.C. 20530

www.ada.gov

(800) 514-0301 (voice)

(800) 514-0383 (TTY)

Section 508

Section 508 establishes requirements for electronic and information technology developed, maintained, procured or used by the Federal government. Section 508 requires Federal electronic and information technology to be accessible to people with disabilities, including employees and members of the public.

An accessible information technology system is one that can be operated in a variety of ways and does not rely on a single sense or ability of the user. For example, a system that provides output only in visual format may not be accessible to people with visual impairments and a system that provides output only in audio format may not be accessible to people who are deaf or hard of hearing. Some individuals with disabilities may need accessibility-related software or peripheral devices in order to use systems that comply with Section 508.

For more information on section 508, contact:

U.S. General Services Administration

Center for IT Accommodation (CITA)

1800 F Street, N.W.

Room 1234, MC:MKC

Washington, DC 20405-0001

www.gsa.gov/section508

(202) 501-4906 (voice)

(202) 501-2010 (TTY)

U.S. Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board

1331 F Street, N.W., Suite 1000

Washington, DC 20004-1111

www.access-board.gov

800-872-2253 (voice)

800-993-2822 (TTY)

For information on how to file a complaint of discrimination, or to obtain information of a civil rights nature, contact the Office for Civil Rights.

Hotlines: 1-800-368-1019 (Voice) 1-800-537-7697 (TDD)

E-mail: ocrmail@hhs.gov Website: <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr>

Your Rights Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

(H-8/June 2000 – revised June 2006 – English)

Getting Started

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How...

Where...

Home // Where // 13 – State Offices for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Objectives

Gain a basic understanding of Federal laws that provide people hearing loss equal opportunity and accommodations for the workplace, places of public accommodations, State and local governments, when traveling, and when accessing telecommunications.

Learn about consumer protection in the states.

Understand how consumers filing complaints can help enforce disability laws.

Find out about the resources and organizations available to help advocate for greater access for people with hearing loss.

Take the
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13 – State Offices for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Many states have offices, commissions and advisory councils established to help the consumer get needed information about the rights and responsibilities of people with hearing loss. Some states are in flux, either in the process of gaining an office, or because of budget restraints, in the process of losing or consolidating an office into another state agency.

The following is a list of states with such offices as of June 2011.

Arkansas – N/A

Alabama – N/A

Alaska – N/A

Arizona

Arizona Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

1100 N. Avenue, Suite 104

Phoenix, AZ 85007

602-542-3383 V

602-364-0990 TTY

602-542-3380 FAX

866-352-8161 VP

(928 and 520 area codes)

www.acdh.org/

Email: info@acdh.state.az.us

Sherri Collins, M.Ed., Executive Director

California

Office of Deaf Access

California Department of Social Services 744 P Street,

Mail Station 8-16-91

Sacramento, CA 95814

(916) 653-8320 (V) (916) 653-7651 (T) (916) 653-4001 (Fax)

www.cdss.ca.gov/cdssweb/PG145.htm

Email: deaf.access@dss.ca.gov

Tom Lee, Deputy Director

Lisa Bandaccari, Chief of Office for Special Services

Colorado

Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

1575 Sherman Street, Garden Floor

Denver, Colorado 80203

720-457-3679 VP

303-866-4824 VOICE

303-866-4831 FAX

www.coloradodeafcommission.com

Email: ccdhh@state.co.us

Cliff Moers, Administrator

Cheri Davis, Legal Auxiliary Services Program Manager

Connecticut

Board of Education Services for the Blind and Bureau of Rehabilitation Services - Commission of the Deaf and Hearing Impaired

PO Box 330730

67 Prospect Avenue

Hartford, CT 06133

800-708-6796

860-231-8169 TTY

860-231-8756 V

860-231-8746 Fax

www.ct.gov/cdhi

Email: cdhi@ct.gov

Executive Director: Vacant

Delaware

Delaware Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing - Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

4425 North Market Street

Wilmington, DE 19802-1307

302-761-8275 V & TTY (main line)

302-504-4741 VP (direct line)

302-761-8243 TTY (direct line)

302-761-6611 Fax

www.dvr.delawareworks.com/

Email: Loretta.Sarro@state.de.us

Loretta Sarro, Public Information Officer

Florida

Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

4052 Bald Cypress Way, Bin A06

4025 Esplanade Way, Room 235.10

Tallahassee, FL 32399-1707

866-602-3275 TOLL

850-245-4914 TTY

850-245-4913 VOICE

850-921-8138 FAX

www.fccdhh.org/

Email: MaryGrace_Tavel@doh.state.fl.us

Mary Grace Tavel, Program Assistant

Georgia – N/A

Hawaii

Disability and Communication Access Board

919 Ala Moana Blvd. Room 101

Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

808-586-8121 TTY/Voice

808-447-1397 VP

808-586-8129 FAX

www.hawaii.gov/health/dcab/home/

Email: dcab@doh.hawaii.gov

Francine Wai, Executive Director

Kristine Pagano, Communication Access Specialist

Idaho

Idaho Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

1720 Westgate Drive, Suite A

Boise, ID 83704

800-433-1323 TOLL/VOICE

800-433-1361 TTY

208-473-2122 VP

208-334-0952 FAX

www.cdhh.idaho.gov

Email: schreinc@dhw.idaho.gov

Steven Snow, Executive Director

Cindy Schreiner, Administrative Assistant

Illinois

Illinois Deaf and Hard of Hearing

1630 S. 6th Street

Springfield, IL 62703

217-557-4495 V/TTY

217-303-8010 VP

217-557-4492 Fax

www.idhhc.state.il.us

Email: dhh.webmaster@illinois.gov

John Miller, Director

Indiana

Indiana, D/HH Employment and Innovation

402 W. Washington Street

IGCS – W453

Indianapolis, IN 46204

800-545-7765

866-800-4634 VP

317-542-3325 Fax

www.dhhs.in.gov

Rhonda Marcum, Manager of Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Employment and Innovation

Iowa

Deaf Services Commission of Iowa - Iowa Department of Human Rights

321 E 12th Street

Des Moines, IA 50319

888-221-3724 TOLL

515-281-3164 TTY

515-598-7327 VP

515-281-3164 VOICE

515-242-6119 FAX

www.deafservices.iowa.gov/

Email: dhr.dsci@iowa.gov

Suzy Mannella, Executive Officer

Kansas

Kansas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

915 SW Harrison Street

Docking State Office Building, 9 N

Topeka, Kansas 66612

800-432-0698 TOLL

785-368-8034 VOICE

785-368-7467 FAX

www.srs.ks.gov/Pages/Default.aspx

Rebecca J. Rosenthal, Executive Director

Kentucky

Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

632 Versailles Road

Frankfort, KY 40601

800-372-2907

502-573-2604 TTY/V

502-385-0544 VP

502-573-3594 Fax

www.kcdhh.org

Email: info_svcs@ky.gov

Virginia L. Moore, Executive Director

Louisiana

Louisiana Commission for the Deaf

PO Box 44008

Baton Rouge, LA 70804

800-256-1523

225-341-4837 VP

225-219-2949 Fax

www.new.dhh.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/page/318

Naomi DeDual, Executive Director

Maine

Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Late Deafened

42 Commerce Drive

Augusta, Maine 04333

888-755-0023 TTY

866-760-8430 VP

207-623-7957 VOICE

www.maine.gov/rehab/dod/index.shtml

Division Director: Vacant

Maryland

Maryland Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

217 E. Redwood Street

Suite 1300

Baltimore, MD 21202

410-767-7756 TTY

443-453-5954 VP

410-767-6290 VOICE

410-333-1016 FAX

www.odhh.maryland.gov/

Email: odhh@gov.state.md.us

Lisa H. Kornberg, Director

Massachusetts

Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

150 Mount Vernon Street, Suite 550

Dorchester, MA 02125

617-740-1711 TTY

857-366-4203 VP

617-740-1611 VOICE

617-740-1810 Fax

www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/mcdhh/

Heidi L. Reed, Commissioner

Michigan

Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing

201 N Washington Sq., Suite 150

Lansing, MI 48913

877-499-6232 TOLL – TTY/VOICE

517-507-5223 VP

517-335-7773 FAX

www.michigan.gov/dodhh

Email: dodhh@michigan.gov

Sheryl Emery, Director

Minnesota

Commission of Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and Hard of Hearing Minnesotans

444 Lafayette Road North

St. Paul, MN 55155-3814

888-206-2001 TTY

651-964-2060 VP

651-431-5961 VOICE

651-431-7588 Fax

www.mncdhh.org/

Email: mncdhh.info@state.mn.us

Mary Hartnett, Executive Director

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Division Elmer Andersen Human Services Building

540 Cedar Street

St. Paul, MN 55155

888-206-6506 TTY

651-964-1452 VP

651-431-2355 VOICE

651-431-7417 Fax

www.dhhsd.org

www.DeafBlindinfo.org

Bruce Hodek, Division Director

Mississippi

Office on Deaf and Hard of Hearing

3895 Beasley Road

Jackson, MS 39213

601-898-7056 TTY

601-206-0228 VP

601-898-7057 VOICE

601-898-7098 Fax

www.odhh.org

Benjamin Wagenknecht, Director

Missouri

Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

1500 Southridge Drive, Suite 201

Jefferson City, MO 65109

573-526-5205 TTY/VOICE

573-415-0085 VP

573-526-5209 Fax

www.mcdhh.mo.gov

Email: MCDHH@mcdhh.mo.gov

Ernest E. Garrett III, Executive Director

Montana – N/A

Nebraska

Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

4600 Valley Road

Lincoln, NE 68510

800-545-6244 TOLL

402-471-3593 TTY/VOICE

402-471-3067 FAX

www.ncdhh.ne.gov

Peter J. Seiler, Ed.D., Executive Director

Nevada

Aging & Disability Services Division – Disabilities Unit

3656 Research Way, Suite 32

Carson City, NV 89706

888-337-3839

775-687-3388 TTY

775-687-4452 VOICE

775-687-3292 Fax

www.dhhs.nv.gov

Betty A. Hammond, Social Services Program Specialist II

New Hampshire

Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

21 South Fruit Street, Suite 200

Concord, NH 03301

603-271-1483 TTY

646-863-7075 VP

603-271-3471 VOICE

603-271-7095 FAX

www.ed.state.nh.us

H. Dee Clanton, State Coordinator

New Mexico

New Mexico Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

2500 Louisiana Blvd, Suite 400

Albuquerque, NM 87110

866-755-0242

505-881-8824 TTY/VP/V

505-881-8831 Fax

www.cdhh.state.nm.us

Barbara "BJ" Wood, Executive Director

New Jersey

New Jersey Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

222 South Warren Street

Trenton, NJ 08625

609-984-7281 TTY/VOICE

609-498-7019 VP

609-633-3625 Fax

www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddhh/

David Alexander, Director

New York

NYS Commission on Quality of Care and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities

NYS Interagency Coordinating Council for Services to Persons who are Deaf, Deaf-Blind, or Hard of Hearing

401 State Street

Schenectady, NY 12305-2397

800-624-4143 V, Relay, Spanish

518-388-0691 V

518- 388-2890 F

www.cqc.ny.gov

Email: webmaster@cqcagd.state.ny.us

Rosemary Lamb, Director Division of Advocacy

North Carolina

North Carolina Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

2301 Mail Service Center

Raleigh, NC 27699-2301

800-851-6099

919-874-2212 TTY/VP/V

919-855-6872 Fax

www.ncdhhs.gov/dsdhh/

Email: dsdhh.information@ncmail.net

Jan Withers, Director

North Dakota – N/A

Ohio – N/A

Oklahoma – N/A

Oregon

Department of Human Services – Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Program

500 Summer Street NE

Salem, OR 97301

800-521-9615

503-947-5183 TTY/V

503-947-5184 Fax

www.oregon.gov/DHS/odhhs/index.shtml

Email: Info.odhhs@state.or.us

Patricia O'Sullivan, Public Policy and Government Relations Director

Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

1521 North 6th Street

Harrisburg, PA 17102

800-233-3008 TTY/V (PA only)

717-783-4912 TTY/V

717-831-1928 VP

717-783-4913 Fax

www.dli.state.pa.us/odhh

Email: ra-li-ovr-odhh@state.pa.us

Sharon Behun, Director

Rhode Island

Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

One Capitol Hill, Ground Level

Providence, RI 02908

401-222-1205 TTY

401-256-5511 VP

401-222-1204 V

401-222-5736 Fax

www.cdhh.ri.gov/

Email: cdhh@cdhh.ri.gov

Steven A. Florio, Executive Director

South Carolina – N/A

South Dakota – N/A

Tennessee

Tennessee Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Citizens Plaza Building, 14th Floor

400 Deaderick Street

Nashville, TN 37243

800-270-1349 TTY

615-313-4918 V

615-532-4685 Fax

www.tennessee.gov/humanserv/rehab/cc6.html

Email: TCDHH.Council.DHS@tn.gov

Thom Roberts, Executive Director

Texas

Office for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services - Division for Rehabilitation Services

4900 North Lamar, Suite 2169

Austin, TX 78751

512-407-3251 TTY

512-410-6556 VP

512-407-3250 V

512-407-3299 Fax

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 12904

Austin, TX 78711-2904

www.dars.state.tx.us/dhhs

David W. Myers, Director

Utah

Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Sanderson Community Center of the D/HH

5709 South 1500 West

Taylorsville, UT 84123

801-313-6815 TTY

801-657-5200 VP

801-263-4861 V

801-263-4865 Fax

www.deafservices.utah.gov

Marilyn Call, Director

Vermont – N/A

Virginia

Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

1602 Rolling Hills Drive, Suite 203

Richmond, VA 23229-5012

800-552-7917 TTY/V

804-662-9502 TTY/V

804-325-1290 VP

804-662-9502 TTY/V

804-662-9718 Fax

www.vddhh.org

Email: frontdsk@vddhh.virginia.gov

Ronald L. Lanier, Director

Washington

Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

P.O. Box 45301

Olympia, WA 98504-5301

800-422-7930 TTY/V

360-902-8000 TTY/V

360-339-7382 VP

360-902-0855 Fax

www.dshs.wa.gov/hrsa/odhh/

Email: odhh@dshs.wa.gov

Eric Raff, Director

West Virginia

West Virginia Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Capitol Complex

Building 6, Room 863

Charleston, WV 25305

304-558-1675 V/TTY

866-461-3578 V/TTY

304 558-0937 FAX

304-205-0330 VP

www.wvdhhr.org/wvcdhh

Email: wvdhhr.wvcdhh@sv.org

Marissa Johnson, Executive Director

Wisconsin

Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Department of Health and Family Services

One West Wilson Street, Room 451

P.O. Box 7851

Madison, WI 53707-7851

www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/sensory

Linda Huffer, Director

Wyoming – N/A

Toll-Free Numbers = 800, 888, 877, 866 prefixes

V/T = Voice/TTY; VP = Videophone; V = Voice

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Objectives

Gain a basic understanding of Federal laws that provide people hearing loss equal opportunity and accommodations for the workplace, places of public accommodations, State and local governments, when traveling, and when accessing telecommunications.

Learn about consumer protection in the states.

Understand how consumers filing complaints can help enforce disability laws.

Find out about the resources and organizations available to help advocate for greater access for people with hearing loss.

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14 – Where Assessment

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 is:

A federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in air transportation by domestic and foreign airlines.

A federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment, State and local government, public accommodations, commercial facilities, transportation and telecommunications.

A federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of age.

All of the above.

The ADA covers employment by:

Private employers only.

State and local government employers only.

Private employers with 100 or more employees and State and local government employers.

Private employers with 15 or more employees and State and local government employees.

Accommodations that may be provided in the workplace under the ADA include:

Modification of the employee's schedule

CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation)

Assistive listening devices

Visual fire alerting devices

All of the above

To receive an accommodation in the workplace, the employee:

Must submit a written request to the human resources department 10 days in advance of the need for the accommodation.

Must be a qualified employee who has an impairment of a major life activity.

Must reveal the need for an accommodation during the interview for the job.

Must request only one accommodation at a time.

The ADA is enforced in the workplace by:

A team at the US DOJ (Department of Justice) who make on-site visits to businesses and bring offenders to court.

A team at the EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) who make on-site visits to businesses and fine offenders.

Consumers who file complaints.

The ADA police.

People with hearing loss who need help advocating for accommodations in the workplace can turn to:

State agencies for people with hearing loss.

National and local consumer organizations for people with hearing loss.

The Job Accommodation Network.

All of the above

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The Age Discrimination Act:

- Protects workers over 40 years old from harassment on the job.
- Protects workers over 40 years old from discrimination in hiring.
- Protects workers over 40 years old from a hostile work environment resulting in adverse employment decisions such as firing or demotion.
- All of the above.

The Air Carriers Access Act:

- Prohibits discriminating in the air terminal.
- Prohibits discrimination by US and foreign carriers on the basis of disability.
- Prohibits discrimination during security screening by TSA agents.
- Does not provide provisions for persons traveling with service animals.

Closed Captioning

- The FCC implements the closed captioning requirements of the Telecommunications Act, found in Section 713, to make sure that television is made accessible for people who are hard of hearing or deaf.
- Cable operators, broadcasters, satellite distributors, and other multi-channel video programming distributors, are required to close caption their television programs.
- 100 percent of all new, non-exempt English language video programming is required to be captioned.
- All of the above.

The 21st Century Communications and Video and Communications Act of 2010

- Does not require telephones used over the Internet to be hearing aid compatible.
- Provides for captioning of YouTube videos.
- When the rules come into effect in 2014, will require devices that can play back video to support captions regardless of the size of the device.
- All of the above.

Fair Housing

- The broker who refuses to answer relay calls when selling or rent a home to a person with a hearing loss is in violation of the Fair Housing Act.
- The landlord who refuses to rent to someone because of that person's hearing loss is in violation of the Fair Housing Act.
- A landlord who refuses to install an audio induction loop in a common area of a nursing home is in violation of the Fair Housing Act.
- All of the above.

Employment Complaints

- Employees who believe they have faced discrimination on the job should take their complaint to the US Department of Justice.
- Employees who were refused accommodations for their hearing loss may file an employment discrimination complaint with the EEOC.
- Employees who are teased on the job have a strong case for employment discrimination.
- All of the above.

Grassroots Advocacy

- Grassroots advocates need paid lobbyists before they can change laws.
- Often advocates will effect change within months of taking on their cause.
- Grassroots advocates work with coalitions to change laws or regulations.
- All of the above.

Hearing Aid Compatibility Act

- As of August 16, 1989, all landline telephones manufactured or imported for use in the U.S. have been required to be hearing aid-compatible.
- Typically, landline phones use a telecoil to make them hearing aid compatible.
- The FCC sets hearing aid compatibility rules for wireless phones.
- All of the above.

Regulation of Hearing Aid Sales

- The dispensing of hearing aids is regulated by the FDA.

Currently medical doctors are allowed to dispense hearing aids in all states.
Information about telecoils must be provided by hearing aid dispensers in three states.
All of the above.

Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a national law that protects qualified individuals from discrimination based on their disability.

The nondiscrimination requirements of the law apply to employers and organizations that receive financial assistance from any Federal department or agency, including the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

The standards for determining employment discrimination under the Rehabilitation Act are the same as those used in Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

All of the above.