

Councils and Commissions for the Deaf/HH: States with Populations between 1 - 2.6 Million

Information Report
July 2007

Idaho Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing



Executive Summary

Background

Almost all states have a specialized council, commission, or office to serve deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals. This report summarizes the statutes, funding, and functions of these agencies in states with populations between one and 2.6 million.

Table 1: Demographics & Services Summary

| States – ordered by population | Population – in thousandths | State funding – in thousandths | Staff – full- and part-time | Advocacy | Grantor to other non-profits | Legislation | Info & referral | Outreach, training, consultation | Equipment distribution | Direct interpreter referral | Interpreter directory | Interpreter certification authority | Interpreter mentoring | Research | HH adjustment training | Adult education programs | Newborn hearing screening | Operation of community center | Counseling and case management | VR and independent living |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------|------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| RI | 1,067 | \$370 | 3 | X | | X | X | X | | X | | | | | | | | | | |
| HI | 1,285 | \$155 | 2 | X | | X | X | X | | | X | X | | | | | | | | |
| NH | 1,314 | \$120 | 2 | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | | | X | | | | | | |
| ME | 1,321 | \$500 | 2.5 | X | X | X | X | X | | | X | | | | | | | X | | |
| ID | 1,466 | \$143 | 2 | X | | X | X | X | X | | X | | | X | | | X ¹ | | | |
| NE | 1,768 | \$789 | 13 | X | | X | X | X | | X | X | X | | X | | | | | | |
| WV | 1,818 | \$275 | 3 | X | | X | X | X | X | | X | X | | | | | | | | |
| NM | 1,954 | \$4,300 | 15 | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | X | | | | X | | | |
| NV | 2,495 | \$642 | 10 ² | X | X | X | X | X | X | | | | | X | | | | | | |
| UT | 2,550 | \$1,788 | 93 | X | | X | X | X | X | | X | X | X | | X | X | | X | X | X |

Summary of Facts³

- Advocacy is permitted in all states
- All states appropriate funding for specialized deaf-hh services
- Idaho, New Hampshire, and Hawaii’s agencies/programs for the deaf-hh have the lowest annual budgets, employees, and spending per capita
- The two states most comparable in population to Idaho are Nebraska and Maine. Their state agencies for the deaf-hh receive four and a half times more annual funding than Idaho’s agency⁴
- New Mexico’s population is only one-third greater than Idaho’s, but its agency for the deaf-hh receives 30 times more annual funding
- Utah’s population is less than twice as large as Idaho’s, but its agency for the deaf-hh has 46 times more employees

¹ Idaho CDHH runs the statewide newborn hearing screening program with federal funds.

² These are employees of the Nevada Association of the Deaf, a non-profit organization that receives state funding.

³ Based on states with a general population between one and 2.6 million.

⁴ Nebraska = \$789K; Maine = \$500K; Average of Two = \$644.5K

Chart 1: Annual State Funding per Agency (in thousandths)

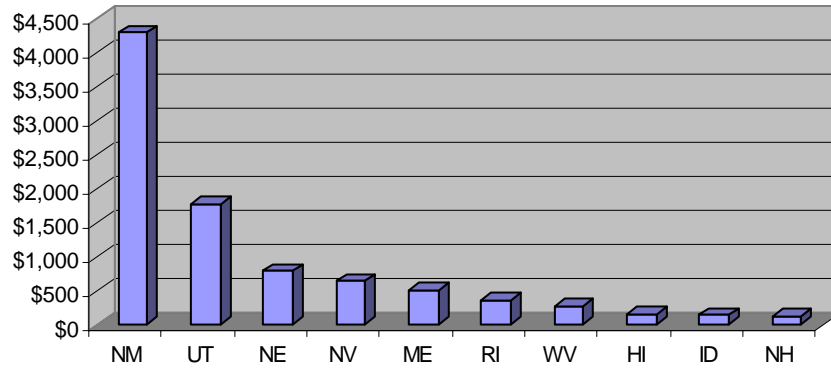
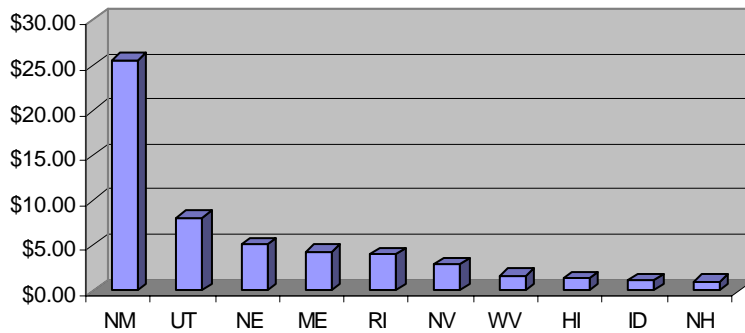
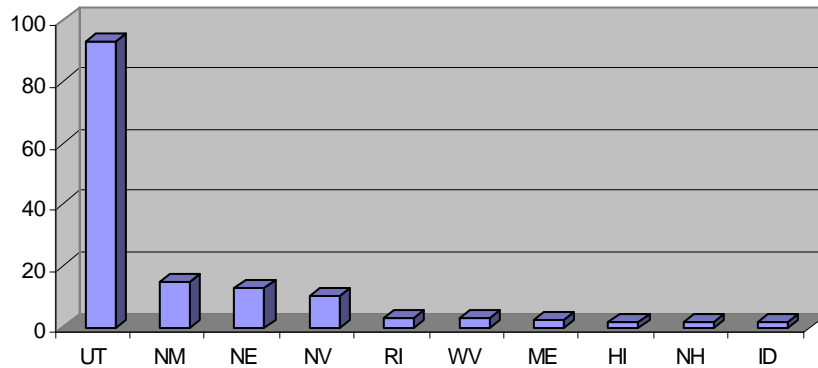


Chart 2: Annual State Funding Per Deaf/HH Person*



*8.6 rate in U.S.: <http://library.gallaudet.edu/dr/faq-statistics-deaf-us.html>, 7-6-07.

Chart 3: Number of Employees



Councils and Commissions for the Deaf/HH: States with Populations between 1 – 2.6 Million⁵

Hawaii (1,285,498 people)

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) is a general agency that serves individuals with disabilities.⁶ The DCAB has two full-time staff members who focus on deaf and hard of hearing issues. The total budget to operate the deaf-hh program is approximately \$155,000.⁷ DCAB's main functions are the following:

- Advocacy
- Monitoring public policy
- Information and referral
- Outreach and training
- Interpreter credentialing
- Maintaining an interpreter directory

Idaho (1,466,465 people)

The Idaho Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CDHH) is a state agency with \$142,900 of annual state funding. Two full-time staff members carry out the Council's operations under the direction of nine governor-appointed board members and 11 ex-officio members. CDHH's main functions are the following:

- Advocacy
- Information and referral clearinghouse
- Assistive technology equipment distribution subsidy program
- Outreach, training, and consultation
- Researching demographics, trends, and other issues
- Monitoring consumer protection
- Maintaining interpreter directory
- Universal newborn hearing screening (federally funded)

Maine (1,321,574 people)

The Maine Division of Deafness (DOD) is a state agency under the Department of Labor, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services with an annual state budget of \$500,000. Two full-time, and one part-time, employees carry out DOD's operations under the direction of a 27 member Advisory Board appointed by the Director of the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services. The agency fulfills the following functions.⁸

- Advocacy
- Statewide registry of deaf and hard-of-hearing persons
- Information and referral clearinghouse
- Development, planning, and cooperation

⁵ Populations are based on 2006 numbers, accessed online 6-26-07 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._states_by_population

⁶ Personal Communication with Maureen Sheedy, HSD volunteer, 6-14-07.

⁷ Personal Communication with Francine, Wai, Executive Director, 7-6-07.

⁸ Personal Communication with Nancy Melanson, Assistant to the Director, 6-7-07 and 6-27-07.

- Community direct service center
- Promoting accessibility
- Maintaining a registry of licensed legal interpreters
- Making recommendations to the Governor for improvement of services or establishment of new services

DOD has a contract with the Maine Center on Deafness to provide direct services for deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals, including advocacy and legislation, administering the telecommunication equipment distribution program, and administering the Emergency Notification System for Deaf and Hard of Hearing People, where each person is issued a pager that notifies them in the case of an emergency.

Nebraska (1,768,331 people)

The Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NCDHH) is a state agency with an annual state budget of \$788,524. Thirteen full-time staff members carry out the Commission's operations under the direction of a nine-member Governor-appointed board. NCDHH's main functions are the following⁹:

- Advocacy
- Monitoring public policies
- Information and referral clearinghouse
- Outreach, training and consultation
- Maintaining interpreter directory
- Census research
- Interpreter referral
- Interpreter certification

Nevada (2,495,529 people)

The Advisory Committee on Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons (ACDHH) is situated under the Office of Disability Services, which is an office under the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services. ACDHH consists of eleven individuals appointed by the Director of the Department. The state provides \$641,866 of annual funding to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advocacy Resource Center, which is operated by the Nevada Association of the Deaf (NVAD). NVAD has 10 employees.¹⁰ The main functions of ACDHH and NVAD are the following¹¹:

- Advocacy
- Legislative consultation
- Administering telecommunication equipment distribution
- Information and referral
- Junior National Association of the Deaf
- Distributing periodicals

⁹ Personal Communication with Lori Burrage, Director, 6-14-07 and 6-27-07.

¹⁰ Personal Communication with Edina Jambor, Office Manager, on 7-5-07.

¹¹ Personal review of statute, accessed online, 6-07, from <http://www.leg.state.nv.us/Statutes/72nd/Stats200321.html#Stats200321page2626>; Personal Communication with Betty A. Hammond, Relay Administrator, on 7-2-07; and review of NVAD's Web site on 7-11-07: <http://deafnevada.org/NVAD/services.htm>

- Making recommendations to the Director of the Department and the Office concerning the establishment and operation of programs for persons with disabilities which affect their ability to communicate
- Recommending to the Director of the Department and the Office any proposed legislation
- Collect information concerning persons with disabilities which affect their ability to communicate

New Hampshire (1,314,895 people)

New Hampshire Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) is a state agency under the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. ODHH has an annual budget of \$120,000 and a staff of two. There is an Advisory Board appointed by the Governor. Most advocacy and direct services are provided by non-profit deaf centers throughout the state. ODHH's main functions are the following¹²:

- Information and referral clearinghouse
- Outreach, training and consultation
- Grantor to non-profit organizations
- Administering and monitor the telecommunications equipment program
- Research
- Assisting in development of legislation

New Mexico (1,954,599 people)

The New Mexico Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons (NMCDHH) is a state agency with \$4,300,000 in annual state funding. Fifteen full-time employees and many contractors carry out NMCDHH's operations under the direction of seven governor-appointed board members. NMCDHH's main functions are the following¹³:

- Advocacy
- Information and referral clearinghouse
- Assistive technology equipment distribution program
- Outreach, training, and consultation
- Universal newborn hearing screening
- Direct interpreter referral services
- Interpreter mentoring
- Grantor to non-profit organizations

Rhode Island (1,067,610 people)

The Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (RICDHH) is a state agency under the Executive Department with an annual state budget of \$370, 329 (enacted). Three full-time staff members carry out the operations under the direction of 11 governor-appointed board members. RICDHH was legislatively created in 1992. RICDHH's eleven board members are appointed by the Governor, with consent of the Senate: five Deaf (who use ASL), three hard of hearing, two hearing, and one deaf (who does not use ASL). The main functions of the Commission are the following^{14, 15}:

¹² Personal Communication with H. Dee Clanton, State Coordinator, 6-7-07.

¹³ Personal Communication with Thomas Dillon, Executive Director, 6-11-07.

¹⁴ Personal communication with Pam Zellner, Program Manager, on 6-27-07 and 7-6-07.

- Advocacy
- Outreach, training, and consultation
- Conducting ongoing needs assessments
- Information and referral clearinghouse
- Promoting legislation
- Direct interpreter referral services

Utah (2,550,063 people)

Utah has a Division of Services to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DSDHH) under the Department of Rehabilitation, which is under the State Office of Education. The annual state budget is \$1,788,000. There are 26 full-time staff members and 67 additional staff (working about 10 hours a week) statewide who carry out DSDHH's operations. Offices are located at the Sanderson Community Center of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and at the St. George Satellite Office. Direct services to deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals are provided. DSDHH's main functions are as follows:¹⁶

- Information and referral clearinghouse
- Outreach, training, and consultation
- Interpreter certification administration
- Interpreter mentoring program
- Deaf adult education classes and leadership program
- Operation of community center – 32,000 square foot facility
- Deaf senior citizens services
- Hard of hearing adjustment training
- Counseling and case Management
- Assistive technology labs/loaner program
- One stop services for VR and independent living

West Virginia (1,818,470 people)

The West Virginia Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (WVCDHH) is a state agency with \$275,000 in annual funding. Three full-time staff members carry out the WVCDD's operations under the direction of a 17-member governor-appointed board (nine are governor-appointed and eight are ex-officios). West Virginia's main functions are the following¹⁷:

- Advocacy
- Assistive listening device equipment distribution program
- Maintaining an interpreter directory
- Information and referral clearinghouse
- Outreach, training, and consultation
- Quality assurance program for interpreters

¹⁵ Personal review of statute, accessed online 6-07, from <http://www.rilin.state.ir.us/publiclaws99/law99072.htm>

¹⁶ Personal Communication with Marilyn Call, Director, 6-11-07 and 7-5-07.

¹⁷ Personal Communication with Deanna Stone, Executive Director, 6-11-07.