

NC Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Law Enforcement Interaction and Communication with People Who Have Hearing Loss

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NC Traffic Safety Webinar
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Common Experiences of Individuals with Hearing Loss

- Experience balance challenges when asked to take DWI test even though they may not be drinking
- Could not read lips with bright light behind the officer or flashing light on the person
- Has officer's questions answered by a hearing person
- Is not believed to have a hearing loss due to clear speech
- Being the last person to be interviewed at the accident site
- Some officers have basic sign language skills

N.C. Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DSDHH)

Home Office -
Raleigh

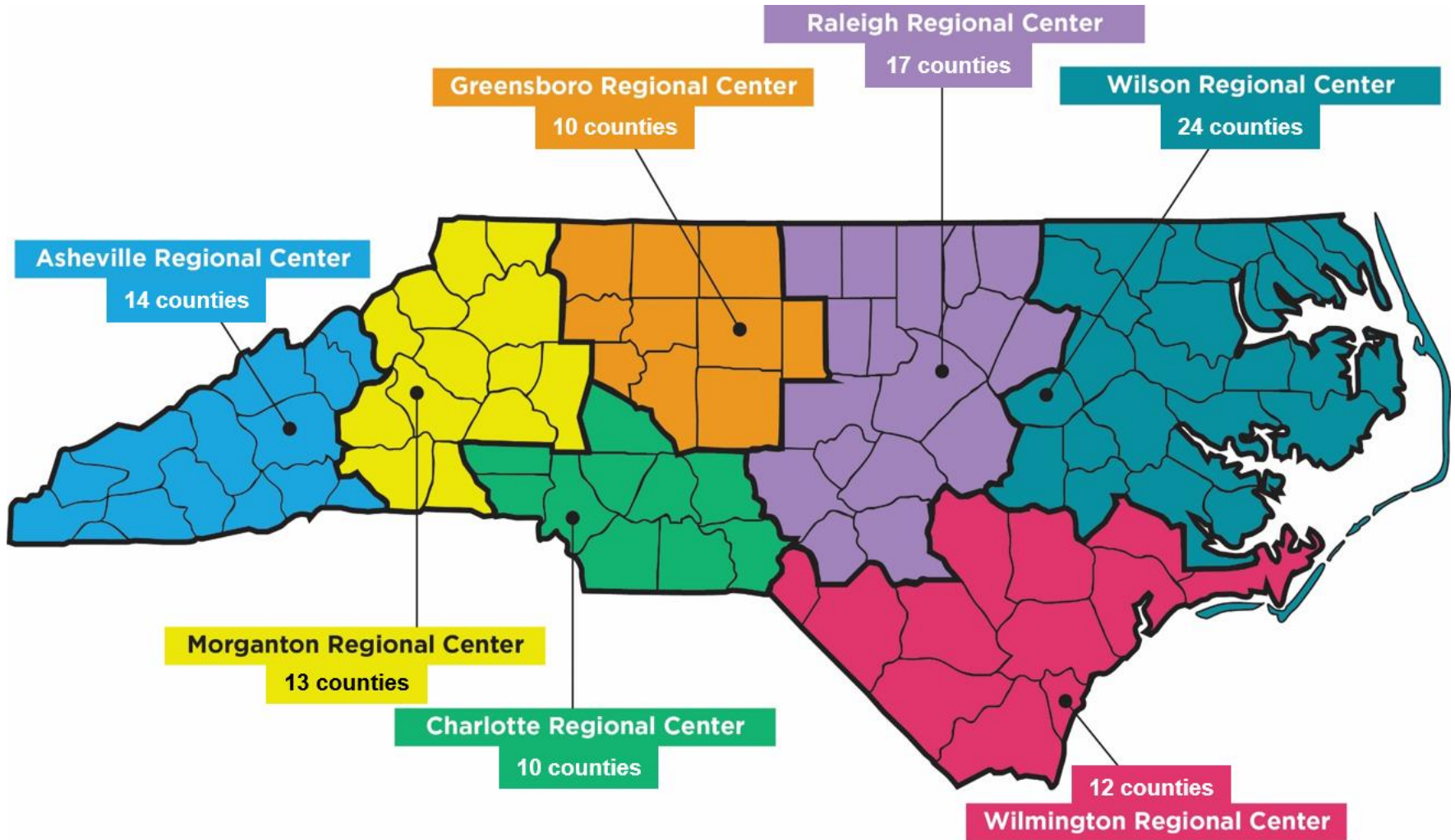
Seven Regional
Centers – 100 counties

Free – no cost for
consultation and
training

Will travel!

www.ncdhhs.gov/dsdhh

DSDHH Regional Centers



SOURCE: www.ncdhhs.gov/assistance/hearing-loss/regional-centers-for-the-Deaf-hard-of-hearing

Demographics

North Carolinians with hearing loss:

- **Statewide:**

- Approx. 1,200,000 people (16.2%)
- 30% ages 65 - 75
- 46% over the age of 75
- Expected to increase by 35 percent by 2030

SOURCE: N.C. Office of State Budget and Management (2015 county population by age) and National Health Interview Survey (average of U.S. population age-adjusted percentages of population with hearing loss) and NC Division of Services for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing -- Services for Hard of Hearing Individuals (2015)

How to Recognize Hearing Loss

- Hearing aid or cochlear implant
- Unclear speech
- Loud or soft speech
- No response, inappropriate response or asks for repetition
- Moving closer to sound
- Puzzled expression while listening
- Not hearing some or any sounds
- Frustrated with lack of communication
- Watching a person's lips
- Gestures/sign language
- Writing or typing messages

Labels

~~Hearing
Impaired~~

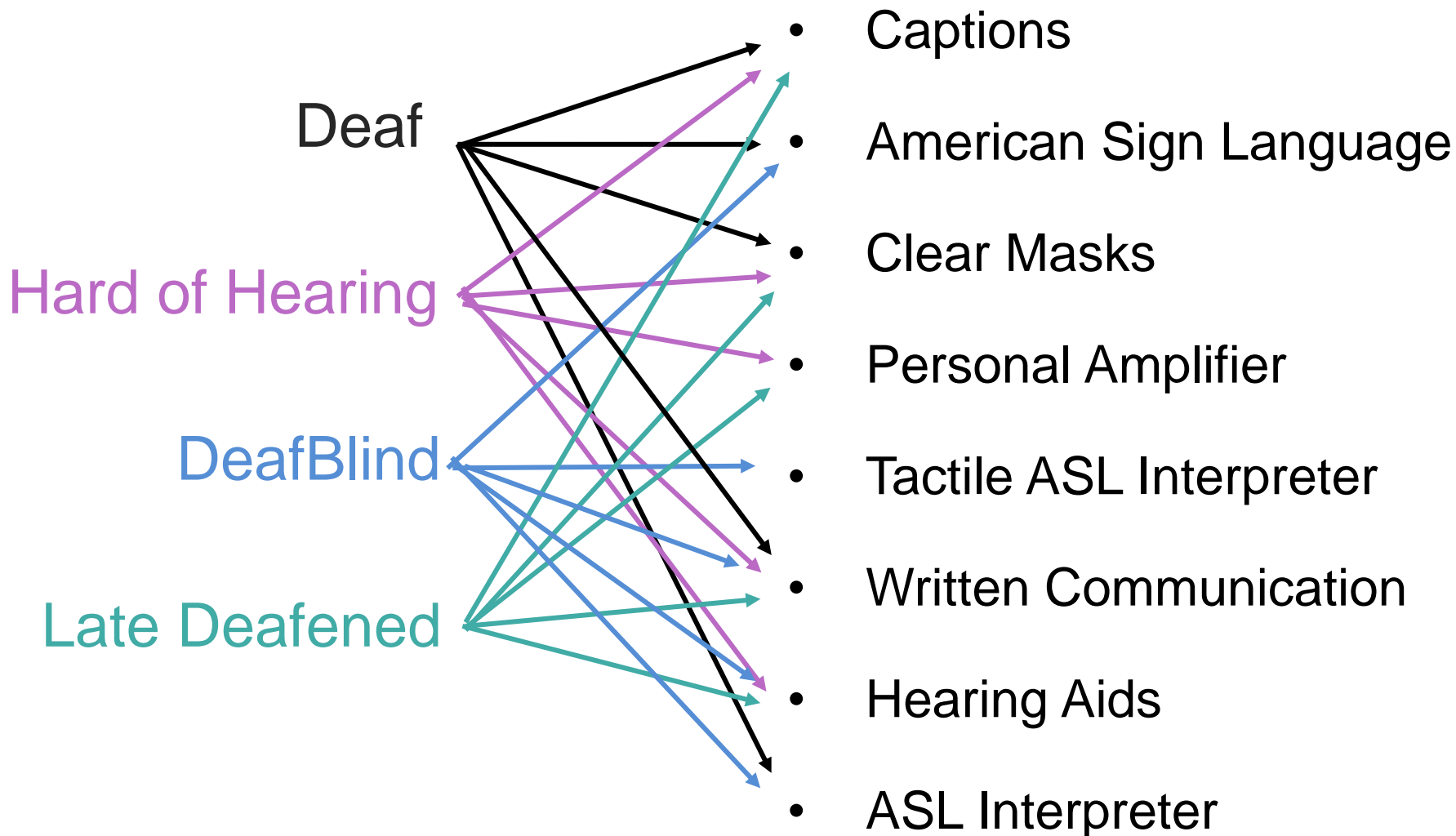
~~Deaf-Mute~~

~~Deaf & Dumb~~

~~Handicapped~~

One more thing...
Deaf, not Death

One Size Does Not Fit All



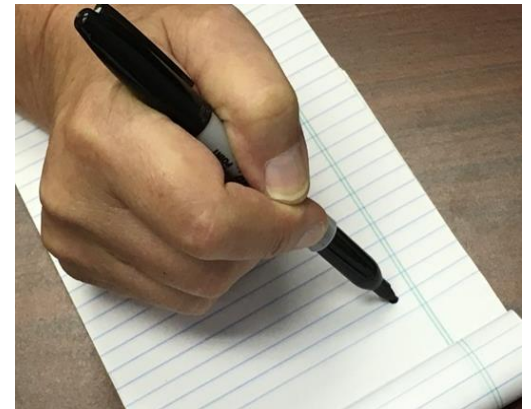
Basic Communication Tips

****Ask the individual what is the best way to effectively communicate****

- Face the person directly. Avoid having your back to bright light and minimize background noise if possible.
- Speak slowly and clearly, but do not exaggerate.
- Do not shout.
- Repeat or rephrase the word, sentence or question.

Basic Communication Tips

- Use communication tools (pictograms, personal amplifier)
- Give visual cues, gestures, or mime.
- Write (use black felt-tip marker) or type notes or print on palm.



Gesture Exercise



Can You Gesture This?

I stopped you because you drove fast and didn't stop at the stop sign. Your driver's license and registration please.

Lipreading Exercise



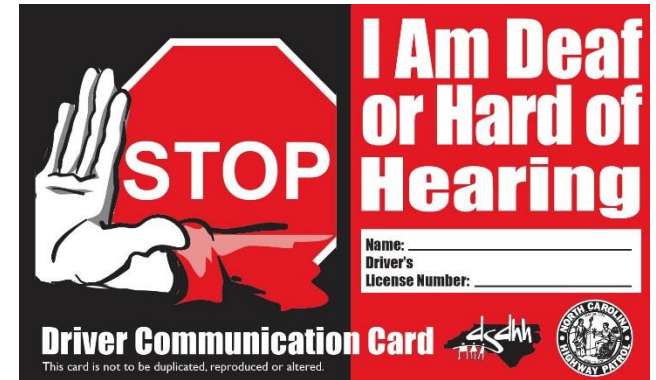
NC S.L. 2017-191 / HB 84 (driver license)

Deaf or Hard of Hearing driver can voluntarily request a “hearing loss designation” symbol to be added to their driver license.



SOURCE: <https://www.ncleg.net/Sessions/2017/Bills/House/PDF/H84v7.pdf>

Driver Communication Visor Card



SOURCE: <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/dsdhh/publicsafety>

Communication Guide Brochure

Driver Communication Cards

Some who are deaf or hard-of-hearing (HOH) may present you with a driver communication card. There are currently 2 (two) communication cards being provided in North Carolina. Both are pictured. (Previously trademark DCS - Front Back)

Where to Find Sign Language Interpreters

A list of licensed interpreters and transliterators, with contact information, can be found here:

- Division of Services for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing (DSDH) http://www.ncdshh.gov/sign_language_interpreter/translator_directory
- To check if the interpreter or transliterator is licensed in North Carolina, see the North Carolina Interpreter and Transliterators Licensing Board Website http://www.ncitlb.org/current_licensees/

North Carolina Justice Academy
State of North Carolina - Department of Justice
Phone: 910-525-4151
Web: <http://ncja.ncdoj.gov>

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Division of Services for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing
State of North Carolina - Department of Health and Human Services
Phone: 1-800-851-6099
Web: www.ncdshh.gov/dsdhh

Communication Guide for Law Enforcement Officers with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

This guide is designed to help alleviate communication challenges between law enforcement officers and individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. This guide can be used in a variety of settings - not just traffic stops. This guide is not to replace interpreters.

Communication Tips for Officers

- Get the person's attention first by waving or tapping on his/her shoulder
- Maintain eye contact when speaking
- Ask for their preferred communication mode and do your best to honor their requested communication mode
- Speak clearly and slowly
- Ensure that your face is visible
- Do not:
 - Chew gum
 - Shine a flashlight into their eyes while trying to communicate with them.
 - Exaggerate facial expressions
 - Yell at or talk very loudly to the person

- Helps reduce barriers to basic communication
- Pictures and visual aids for clarity
- Is NOT a substitute for sign language interpreter

International Hearing Loss Symbol

North Carolina drivers have the **OPTION** to include an international hearing loss symbol on their driver's license.

Please Provide

Preferred Communication Method

WRITING	TEXTING
ACTIVE LISTENING DEVICE	SPEECH TO TEXT
SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER	LIP-READING
	Computer assisted remote transcript

Need Help?

VIOLATIONS

- To order more, email NCJABookstore@ncdoj.gov

SOURCE: This pamphlet was developed by NC Justice Academy with assistance and partnership from NC DSDHH.

Resources

- Mobile apps to aid Communication Access with Individuals who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind
<https://files.nc.gov/covid/communication-mobile-apps-sheet.pdf>
- Communicating with People Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing: ADA Guide for Law Enforcement Officers
<https://www.ada.gov/lawenfcomm.htm>
- Communication Access with Police and Law Enforcement – National Association of the Deaf
<https://nad.org/print/issues/justice/police-and-law-enforcement/communication-access>
- First Responder Communication with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Citizens (video from Spokane, WA)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kSKZHZdfImc>

Factors for Consideration

- Does your agency use language translation services to communicate with non-English speaking people?
- Should you get an interpreter when pulling over a Deaf driver during a routine traffic stop?
- Should the officer with sign language skills act as an interpreter while remaining in their role as officer?
- Should you provide an interpreter while a Deaf person is intoxicated and is asked to take a test?
- What to do if the person doesn't respond when you shout for attention?
- When and where is it appropriate to use an interpreter or captioning for Miranda warning?

Contact Information

For more information and/or assistance,
contact the Community Accessibility
Specialist at the DSDHH Regional Center
near you

<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/assistance/hearing-loss/regional-centers-for-the-deaf-hard-of-hearing>

Contact Information

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www.ncdhhs.gov/dsdhh



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