

RHODE ISLAND COMMISSION ON THE THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING



FY09 Annual Report

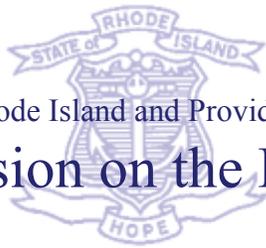
FY09 Annual Report

July 1, 2008 - June 30, 2009

Table of Contents

Letter from the Chairperson of the Commission	1
Commissioners	2
Commissioners' Meetings in FY2006	3
Commissioners' Committee	3
Staff Members	4
Mission Statement	5
Population in RI	5
Overview of RI CDHH	5
Programs/Services at RI CDHH	6-19
RI CDHH Legislative Mandates	20
RI CDHH Long and Short Term Goals	21
RI CDHH Budget	22-23
General Overall Performance Measurements	24-28
Legislation Section	29-31
List of Selective Highlights	32-34
Major Challenges	35
Serve on the Council/Committees representing the RI CDHH	36
Collaborations	36-37
National Association of State Directors for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing	38
New England State Commissions for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing	39
RI CDHH Healthcare Committee	40
Conference Appearances	41
Community Projects	41
Membership	41
Symbols of Deaf and Hard of Hearing	42
Recognition	43
Volunteers	43





State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

• COMMUNICATIONS • OPPORTUNITIES • EQUALITY •

March 17, 2010

The Honorable Donald L. Carcieri
Office of the Governor
State House, Room 222
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Governor Carcieri:

Respectfully, I submit to you the Annual Report of the Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (RICDHH).

As a Commissioner for the past 10 years, I am proud to be part of the RICDHH working alongside the staff, Commissioners, the Office of the Governor and the legislatures to improve RICDHH's service and support to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing constituents.

Patience, diligence and persistence have driven our accomplishments over incredible challenges these past few years. These successes are in spite the economic challenges faced by all. We are committed to preserve, advocate and foster our continuing goals.

Despite enduring challenges and economic constraints, we continue to promote and support the proud example and commitment of the State of Rhode Island both nationally and internationally. The Commissioners continue to be diligent in introducing important groundbreaking legislation. The Rhode Island CDHH is often held in high regard as a premier role model by other states.

There have been several accomplishments over the past year. One of the biggest was the implementation of CART transcript services within the Interpreter Referral Service.

The demands and needs of RICDHH continue to grow and to be challenged. We are about to aggressively review our current strategic plan to address the demands.

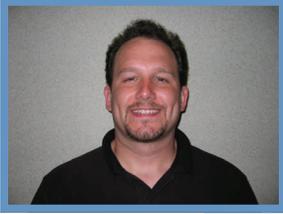
We must be ever mindful of our duty to our constituents, the critical needs of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community and the legacy we leave for future Commissioners. Through our work today, the lives of many Rhode Islanders will be enhanced in ways that they may become valuable and ever productive citizens for years to come.

Respectfully yours,



Department of Administration Building, One Capitol Hill, Ground Level, Providence, RI 02908-5850
(401) 222-1205 (TTY & Videophone) (401) 222-1204 (Voice) (401) 222-5736 (FAX)
E-mail: cdhh@cdhh.ri.gov Website: www.cdhh.ri.gov

Commissioners - 2008 - 2009



Travis R. Zellner (Deaf)
Chairperson
Coventry, RI



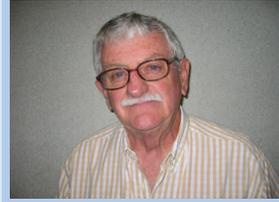
Edgar "Ed" Rawlings (Hard of Hearing)
Vice Chairperson
Wickford, RI



Lisa Liebermann Sack (Hearing)
Treasurer
East Greenwich, RI



Suzanne Goldenberg (Hearing)
Secretary
Cranston, RI



James B. Compton (Hard of Hearing)
East Greenwich, RI



John Dunsmore
Cranston, RI



Andrew Knight (Deaf)
Cranston, RI



John "Jack" Ronan (Deaf)
Johnston, RI



Jordan Sack
(Deaf does not use ASL)
East Greenwich, RI



Christine "Tina" Thompson
(Hard of Hearing)
Northborough, MA



Mary Wambach (Deaf)
Riverside, RI

The Commissioners Meetings in FY2009

Wednesday, **October 15, 2008**

6:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Dept. of Adm. Building
Providence, RI

Wednesday, **December 10, 2008**

6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Dept. of Adm. Building
Providence, RI

Wednesday, **January 14, 2009**

6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Dept. of Adm. Building
Providence, RI

Special Meeting

Wednesday, **February 4, 2009**

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Dept. of Adm. Building
Providence, RI

Wednesday, **March 18, 2009**

6:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Dept. of Adm. Building
Providence, RI

Special Meeting

Tuesday, **April 28, 2009**

6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Dept. of Adm. Building
Providence, RI

Special Meeting

Tuesday, **May 26, 2009**

6:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Dept. of Adm. Building
Providence, RI

Wednesday, **June 17, 2009**

6:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Dept. of Adm. Building
Providence, RI

Commissioners' Committees

Bylaws Committee

Ed Rawlings
Jordan Sack
Lisa Lieberman Sack
Travis Zellner

Membership Committee

Lisa Lieberman Sack
Travis Zellner

Hospice Committee

Ed Rawlings

Healthcare Committee

Suzanne Goldenberg
Christine "Tina" Thompson

Award Committee

Lisa Lieberman Sack

Ad Hoc Committee

Travis Zellner
Mary Wambach
Ed Rawlings
James Compton
Lisa Lieberman Sack
Suzanne Goldenberg

Staff



Steven A. Florio
Executive Director



Pamela Zellner
Program Manager



Paul Barnaby
Interpreter/ CART*
Referral Specialist



Entrance of the RICDHH Office



RI CDHH is located at the
Department of Administration Building

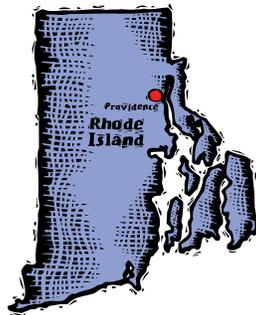
* = CART Referral Service is on a trial basis effective May 2009.

The Mission Statement

To provide innovative leadership in public policy, advocacy, service delivery and accessibility throughout the Ocean State, RI CDHH ensures opportunities for every deaf and hard of hearing person to become an empowered and contributing citizen.

POPULATION IN RHODE ISLAND

Over 90,000* people who are deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind, late deafened, and have other types of hearing loss currently live in Rhode Island.



What is RICDHH?

The Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (RI CDHH) is an advocating, coordinating, and service providing entity committed to promoting an environment in which the deaf and hard of hearing in Rhode Island are afforded equal opportunity in all aspects of their lives. The RI CDHH develops policy; initiates and lobbies for favorable legislation; fosters cooperation and awareness among state agencies and community organizations; and educates and advises consumers, state agencies, and employers about Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) rights to equal access. The RI CDHH also provides direct services in its operation of a Sign Language Interpreter Referral Service, a lending library of books and videotapes, and as a clearinghouse of information and referral on all topics related to hearing loss.

* Data based on Population information from United States Census Bureau 2001, Rhode Island Population = 1,048,319. Calculated by 8.6%, formula obtained from National Percentages from the National Center for Health Statistics, data from the National Health Interview Survey, Series 10, Number 188, Table 1, 1994.

Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Programs/Services

Statewide Sign Language Interpreter and CART Referral Services:**

Interpreter/CART** Referral Services (8:30am – 4:00pm)
Emergency Interpreter Referral Services (4:00pm – 8:00am and 24 hours on weekends))
Tracks the Yearly Services Provided by Unlicensed Certified Interpreters

Public Services:

Needs Assessment*
Coordination for the Commissioners
Volunteer Program
Legislation/Policy
Community Relationship/Partnership*
Standing Committees
Special Projects
Special Activities

Direct Services:

Information and Referral Services
Advocacy
Education/Training Program*
Technical Assistance
Outreach/Public Relations*
Consumers Visit to the Office
Lending Equipment Program for Communication Access*
ADA Compliance Monitoring Program

Internal Organizational Leadership:

Financial Management
Personnel Administration
Program Development and Quality Assurances
Exploration of new Funding Sources

General Business Operations:

Payroll Administration
Operation Management

* = both public and direct services

** = CART Services is on a trial basis effectively on May 4, 2009.

Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Programs/Services

Functions and Duties

Statewide Sign Language Interpreter and CART Referral Services:**

Interpreter/CART Referral Services (8:30am – 4:00pm)**

Purpose:

One of the legislative mandates is to administer the interpreter referral service. (RIGL 23-1.8-2.1). The Statewide Interpreter Referral Service serve to locate and secure the freelance interpreters for assignments requested by the paying parties such as hospitals, civic and criminal courts, law offices, the legislative assembly, press conference held by the Governor, police stations, employers, and numerous other requests.

Functions/Duties:

- Organize requests and data entry into MS-Access Database.
- Follow-up with requesters for clarification or for more information.
- Call interpreters as to their availability.
- Assist to resolve payment disputes.
- Call requesters to let them know that interpreters for their assignments are either all set or unable to be located.
- Advocate Deaf consumers' rights to obtain interpreters.
- Maintain profiles of Deaf and Hard of Hearing consumers indicating interpreter and language/mode preferences.
- Respond to Deaf consumers' calls and concerns.
- Determine to match interpreters' skills with Deaf and Hard of Hearing consumers.

Emergency Interpreter Referral Services (4:00pm – 8:00am)

Purpose:

Part of the same legislative mandate above is to administer the interpreter referral service. (RIGL 23-1.8-2.1). The Emergency Interpreter Referral Service is to respond to all emergency calls made by the emergency rooms at all hospitals, police, Emergency Management Agency, Press Conferences held by the Governor, Mental Health facilities for immediate psychology evaluations, Emergency placement through DCYF, and numerous other requests. The sign language interpreters who are on-call will be able to go to the site to facilitate communication needs.

Functions/Duties:

- Scheduling interpreters to be on-call.
- Send updated schedules of interpreters who are on-call to the Emergency 24-Hour Answering Service.
- Resolving challenges or issues related to the emergency on-call.
- Training requesters and answering service personnel.
- Review and reconcile all invoices sent by on-call interpreters to ensure accurate information.

Track the Yearly Services Provided by Unlicensed Certified Interpreters

Purpose:

One of the other Legislative Mandates (#9) is to track all exempted interpreters who are certified but do not possess a license to work in Rhode Island, according to RIGL 5-71-15(4). They are allowed to work for up to 25 hours a year without a license but they must hold certification as an interpreter.

Functions/Duties:

- Maintain the form for unlicensed interpreters to fill out.
- Update the information in the database.
- Educate and disseminate information about the forms to interpreters and requesters.

** = The CART service is on a trial basis effective on May 4, 2009.

Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Programs/Services

Functions and Duties

Public Services:

Needs Assessment*

Purpose:

One of the legislative mandates is to conduct an ongoing needs assessment to identify issues, problems, and barriers and to seek solutions to these problems, issues, and barriers by making sound and actionable recommendations.

Functions/Duties:

- Investigate needs and issues affecting the Deaf and Hard of Hearing citizens of Rhode Island.
- Dialogue and interview with affected individuals, groups, and organizations.
- Set up a public forum or a town hall meeting to document complaints and/or concerns from the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community.
- Develop recommendations to address complaints/concerns/issues.
- Implement actions to resolve complaints/concerns.

Coordination for the Commissioners

Purpose:

The commissioners need a staff member of the RICDHH to provide support by preparing reports, statistics, and progress updates in order to make decisions on policies and other relevant decision-making. The staff member facilitates communication and requests for all types of activity within the RICDHH's functions.

Functions/Duties:

- Reserve rooms for meetings, trainings, orientations, events, and other activities.
- Meeting Minutes Management
- Put approved meeting minutes online.
- Update meeting minutes after corrections
- Prepare the meeting agenda and notices.

- Documents/Materials Preparation
- Packets for the Commissioners
- Copies of all relevant information and articles
- Coordination of all communications
- Prepare and reserve communication access services and equipment
- Prepare and provide progressive reports, updates, statistics, etc.

Volunteer Program

Purpose:

The RICDHH has consistently remained understaffed while the demand for services has greatly increased. The staff relies on volunteers to assist them in carrying out services and to programs or prepare for all special events. At the same time, the volunteers learn more about the Deaf and Hard of Hearing services available in Rhode Island.

Functions/Duties:

- Recruit volunteers
- Develop action plans for volunteers
- Prepare an overview of the RICDHH
- Train and supervise volunteers to work with the RICDHH
- Prepare sign language instructions for minimizing communication needs.
- Provide sign language sessions

Legislation/Policy

Purpose:

One of the legislative mandates is to initiate and lobby legislation concerning deaf and hard of hearing issues. This is to empower the commissioners and staff members to conduct advocacy activities that will remove communications barriers. Also, increase more communication access opportunities to ensure communication equivalents for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing citizens of Rhode Island.

Functions/Duties:

- Develop and write legislative languages.
- Monitor legislation.
- Review and testify on legislation.
- Meet and follow-up with the legislators.

- Submit responses to federal and state legislation, programs, and services.
- Appear and submit testimony at the hearings
- Update legislative activities to inform the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community.
- Request communication access accommodations at the State House.
- Host meetings and forums concerning legislation/policies.
- Review policies created by employers, policymakers, institutions, etc.
- Write feedback on the development of policies.
- Provide expertise to law and policy makers.
- Create position papers
- Mentoring Program for future community leaders.

Community Relationship/Partnership*

Purpose:

One of the legislative mandates is to bring about greater cooperation and coordination among agencies and organizations now servicing or having potential to serve the deaf and hard of hearing community. The goal is to establish a networking system among the agencies and organizations to work together to improve the quality of life for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people.

Functions/Duties:

- Establish and maintain positive relationships with various organizations and agencies on behalf of deaf and hard of hearing people.
- Represent the RICDHH in affiliation with federal, state, and local, non-profit, multi-agencies, and other organizations.
- Provide consultations, advice, and recommendations concerning deaf and hard of hearing issues.
- Maintain contact and seek feedback from the community.
- Actively participate with the National Association of State Directors for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Actively participate with the New England State Commission Directors for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

Standing Committees

Purpose:

RIGL 23-1.8-3, Committees, mandates maintaining 4 standing committees to oversee and improve services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Rhode Island. Those committees are Healthcare, Employment, Tele-Communication Relay, and Education.

Functions/Duties:

- Provide support to all committees.
- Meeting Minutes Management.
- Reserve rooms for their meetings and activities.
- Reserve and secure communication access accommodations.
- Provide updates and reports that are relevant to these committees.

Special Projects

Purpose:

Legislative mandate, RIGL 23-1.8-2 (7), requires the Commission to take necessary action to improve the quality of life for Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals living in Rhode Island.

Functions/Duties:

- Conduct Emergency Preparedness projects
- Serve on the Rhode Island Emergency Management Advisory Council (Rhode Island General Laws 30-15-6)
- Develop and pursue the deaf and hard of hearing policy for 38 police stations in RI.
- Serve as co-chairperson for Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency's workgroup, Special Needs.
- Provide training on Emergency Preparedness and Hurricane Evacuation for the deaf and hard of hearing community.
- Healthcare Survey Project
- Conduct surveys to the deaf and hard of hearing community
- Conduct needs assessments
- Hard of Hearing Needs Project
- Seek feedback from the Hard of Hearing community.
- Hold community forum to learn more their preferences and suggestions for improvements.
- Conduct numerous projects as needs are identified.

Special Activities

Purpose:

To take advantage of opportunities to participate in conferences, meetings, gatherings, and events to educate and update various audiences about the issues and needs that need to be addressed on behalf of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community.

Functions/Duties:

- Create powerpoint presentations
- Create topics pertaining to the audience's needs.
- Make presentations at national and statewide conferences, meetings, and gatherings.
- Serve on several councils, advisory committees, and workgroups representing deaf and hard of hearing people.

Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Programs/Services

Functions and Duties

Direct Services:

Information and Referral Service

Purpose:

One of the legislative mandates, RIGL 23-1.8-2 (4), is to provide information and act as a referral service to promote awareness about deafness and hearing loss. Consumers with hearing loss as well as the general public actively seek resources on Deaf and Hard of Hearing issues to increase their understanding or to receive assistance they need. The RICDHH is known as a one-stop resource center in the State providing extensive information pertaining to Deaf and Hard of Hearing issues.

Functions/Duties:

- Record information and referral requests.
- Respond to information and referral requests.
- Investigate and research information to satisfy requests
- Make appropriate referrals.
- Maintain a lending resource library of books, DVDs, videos, periodicals, magazines, and others.
- Update database on all information and referral activities.
- Respond to general consumers and consumers with hearing loss at the office.
- Make calls to receive more information or clarification.
- Identify and monitor current literature and other resources.
- Identify existing services available in RI.
- Create and develop fact sheets and resource files.
- Prepare 'Welcome to Rhode Island' package for new residents who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.
- Prepare monthly and yearly statistical report on Information and Referral Services.

Education/Training Program*

Purpose:

This is part of the legislative mandates, 23-1.8 as some mandates are overlapping. The educational series is provided to deaf and hard of hearing consumers to gain self-advocacy skills, to parents of deaf children to learn about raising Deaf and Hard of Hearing children, to interpreters for skill advancement, and to service providers and employers to learn how to work with their employees and clients who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing more effectively.

Functions/Duties:

Education/Training for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children

- Develop and prepare presentation materials.
- Research issues that apply to their needs.
- Monitor federal and state laws pertaining children with hearing loss.
- Respond to agencies (DCYF, Dept of Education, RISD, Northern RI Collaborative, Dept of Health, Dept of Human Services, etc.) concerning Deaf and Hard of Hearing children's welfares.
- Write position papers.
- Maintain contact with the RISD Board of Trustees concerning Deaf and Hard of Hearing children.
- Disseminate information to Deaf and Hard of Hearing children.

Education/Training for Parents of Children with Hearing Loss.

- Develop fact sheets about raising Deaf and Hard of Hearing children on communication opportunities, legal rights, resources, technology use, etc.
- Develop and prepare presentation materials.
- Provide materials designed for parents.
- Provide information on mainstreaming, bi-lingual bi-cultural education, audio verbal therapy, etc.
- Research issues that apply to their needs.
- Provide resources on communication needs and accommodations at home.
- Update with parents who may be interested in receiving information about deaf and hard of hearing issues on a regular basis.
- Provide the list of laws protecting Deaf and Hard of Hearing children's rights to education and services.

Education/Training for Adults who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing

- Develop and prepare presentation materials.
- Research issues that apply to their needs
- Invite and coordinate guest presenters
- Seek financial sponsorship for presenters.
- Monitor federal and state laws pertaining deaf and hard of hearing adults.
- Develop resources for deaf and hard of hearing adults generally as to how to develop effective self-advocacy.
- Disseminate information on current trends of technology, services, and opportunities that are beneficial to deaf and hard of hearing adults.
- Conduct workshops and trainings on various topics.

Education/Training for Hearing People in General/Employers

- Develop and prepare presentation materials
- Prepare equipment and materials for demonstrations.
- Disseminate information on current trends pertaining deaf and hard of hearing people.
- Conduct workshops and trainings on various topics

Education/Training for Interpreters

- Develop and prepare presentation materials.
- Invite and coordinate guest presenters
- Seek financial sponsor for presenters.
- Monitor federal and state laws pertaining interpreters.
- Disseminate information on current trends for the deaf and hard of hearing community and interpreters.
- Conduct workshops and trainings on various topics.
- Work in partnership with the Rhode Island Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf in providing training sessions.

Technical Assistance

Purpose:

This purpose is to provide technical assistance on how to use assistive equipment appropriately such as TTY, using the relay service, using videophones, using CapTel, and other assistive devices. This enhances the skills and knowledge of individuals who want to use the special devices and equipment.

Functions/Duties:

- Develop materials for technical assistance.
- Develop instructions if necessary.
- Prepare equipment and devices for demonstration.

Outreach/Public Relations*

Purpose:

One of the legislative mandates, RIGL 23-1.8-2 (2) and (4), is to promote awareness and accessibility for the deaf and hard of hearing citizens of Rhode Island. The outreach and public relation activities increase awareness among the public about the services available at the RICDHH and/or about the opportunities to remain functionally independent as a deaf or hard of hearing person.

Functions/Duties:

- Develop and conduct informational presentations on topics
- Revise RICDHH brochures
- Participate in the writing, preparation, and production of public outreach materials.
- Participate in developing and staffing display tables featuring the RICDHH.
- Arrange special events (Deaf Awareness Week, Better Hearing, Coffee Hour, etc.)
- Develop powerpoint presentations.
- Create and design the RICDHH website.
- Maintain and update information on the RICDHH website.
- Maintain and update e-mail addresses for distribution purpose.
- Collect stories and articles to increase public awareness.
- Write press releases.

Consumers Visit to the Office

Purpose:

The office is open between 9:00am and 3:30pm , Monday through Friday, for the consumers to stop by. The staff provides immediate assistances to consumers when possible.

Functions/Duties:

- Respond to unexpected consumer visits.
- Provide public videophones.
- Address consumers' needs and provide assistance.
- Demonstrate communication equipment as to how to use.
- Facilitate communications in sign language.

Lending Equipment Program for Communication Access*

Purpose:

The RICDHH provides assistive listening devices and equipment to individuals for us on a trial basis or as a temporary replacement for the individual's malfunctioning equipment. Equipment is also provided upon request for use at conventions, workshops, and other events.

Functions/Duties:

- Conduct Inventory of all assistive listening devices including FM loops, Personal FM, and FM Portables.
- Conduct Inventory of all TTYs.
- Conduct Inventory of all interpreters' equipment.
- Handle requests for lending equipment.
- Follow up with the requesters.
- Demonstrate how to use equipment.
- Check all equipment and devices to ensure that they are working.
- Conduct quality of testing for assistive listening devices.

ADA Compliance Monitoring Program

Purpose:

One of the legislative mandates, RIGL 23-1.8-2 (2), is to promote greater accessibility to services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. The American with Disabilities Act was passed in 1990 and many sectors in RI are still not familiar with this law as it applies to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

Functions/Duties:

- Test all TTYs numbers within the State Government system.
- Test 911 calls to see if the operators respond promptly.
- Advocate the Deaf and Hard of Hearing's rights to obtain accommodations.
- Investigate all state and public sites to ensure that the agency is in compliance with the ADA.
- Responding in writing to violators and offer them assistance in correcting the violations.
- Assist agencies that are not in compliance by offering education/materials if unfamiliar with ADA.
- Refer to Governor's Commission on Disabilities for its mediating services if required.

Legislative Mandates

- **Provide networking among agencies and organizations.**

CDHH promotes agency cooperation and coordination by networking with all entities that currently serve or have the potential to serve the needs of Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and other RI citizens with hearing loss.

- **Engage in advocacy to promote accessibility of services.**

CDHH actively promotes accessibility to employment, education, health, and other services by recommending action to remove barriers to services, providing technical assistance when requested, intervening as a knowledgeable party when access is denied, and encouraging effective self-advocacy on the part of the consumer.

- **Conduct an ongoing needs assessment.**

CDHH understands and assesses the needs of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing population in order to identify service gaps and recommend improvements on an ongoing basis.

- **Promote awareness and provide information and referral.**

CDHH provides general awareness of the unique issues of Deaf and Hard of Hearing people by promoting the positive and productive aspects of their lives, and to provide information specific to this populations, its culture and concerns.

- **Initiate and lobby for legislation.**

CDHH initiates and lobbies for legislation benefiting Deaf and Hard of Hearing people, and monitors related legislation at local, state and national levels in order to lobby for favorable outcomes.

- **Administer a sign language interpreter referral service.**

CDHH provides the sign language interpreter referral service for the State of Rhode Island.

- **Work to improve the quality of life addressing: education, employment, health care, parenting issues and technology.**

CDHH takes any necessary action to improve the quality of life for Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and other RI citizens with hearing loss by addressing the unique needs of these populations in areas including, but not limited to, education, employment, health care, parenting and technology.

- **Develop a Statewide Coordinating Council which will coordinate the implementation of statewide strategic plan for Deaf/Hard of Hearing children in RI.**

CDHH establishes a statewide Coordinating Council in collaboration with the Department of Education and other agencies to implement a comprehensive strategic plan to promote the education and well-being of RI children who are Deaf or have a hearing loss.

- **Tracks the yearly service rendered by the non-licensed interpreters. (Added in 2006)**

CDHH tracks and monitors the number of hours allowed by the non-licensed interpreters. New RI General Law that was added after the Legislative 2006 session allows interpreters to work in Rhode Island without a license for a maximum of 25 hours a year. These interpreters are still required to be certified by National RID and/or other certification entities that are recognized by the Board of the Interpreter with the Department of Health.

*Information can be found at the Rhode Island General Laws, Section 23, 1.8 on
RI Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing*

RI CDHH has identified two long-term (5 years or more) goals in 2004:

Establish a one-stop center, which will provide a variety of services to deaf and hard of hearing people directly on site. The center is also able to provide educational trainings and sessions and hosts a variety of social and leadership/empowerment activities. The center shall be totally accessible for the deaf and hard of hearing people including visual and effective communications.

Facilitate opportunities for the development of a nursing home that is fully accessible for the deaf and hard of hearing by ensuring that the facility or placement is appropriate and is in a deaf-friendly environment where it has visual communications in place, all staff members are fluent and/or trained in communicating with deaf and hard of hearing, and providing appropriate service supports. This is done by convening the key state, private, and nonprofit players to dialogue on an ideal nursing home and conducting state agency research to document the need for such an entity.

RI CDHH has identified five immediate goals, which will be the priority for the next 1-3 years:

Providing specialized and awareness trainings for police and fire departments throughout Rhode Island as well as EMT, FEMA/RIEMA, 911 center, and employers.

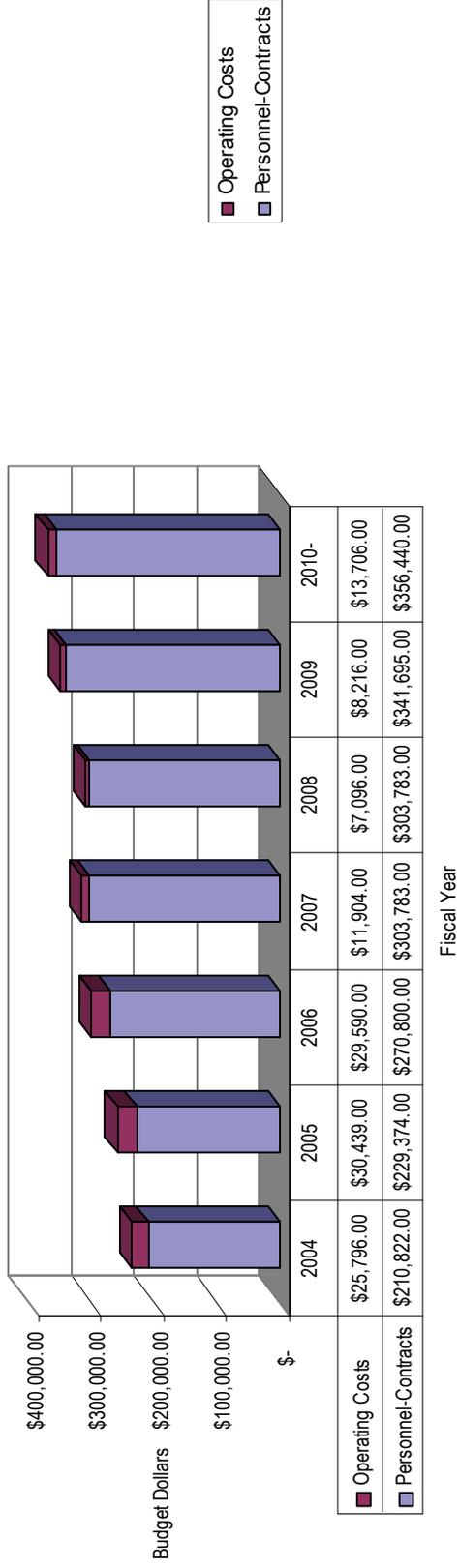
Enhancing the quality of communication access by increasing advocacy effort to ensure that announcements at the public places be visible to the deaf and hard of hearing, activities/presentation given by the state government officials be accessible to deaf and hard of hearing, medical service providers like hospitals and doctor's offices be accessible to deaf and hard of hearing and many more.

Enhancing educational opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing youths and children by collaborating with the Rhode Island Dept of Education to ensure the effective implementation of the strategic plan and enforce it; providing quality assurance on educational interpreters; and ensure that all programs abide by the federal and state laws pertaining to the education for youth and children.

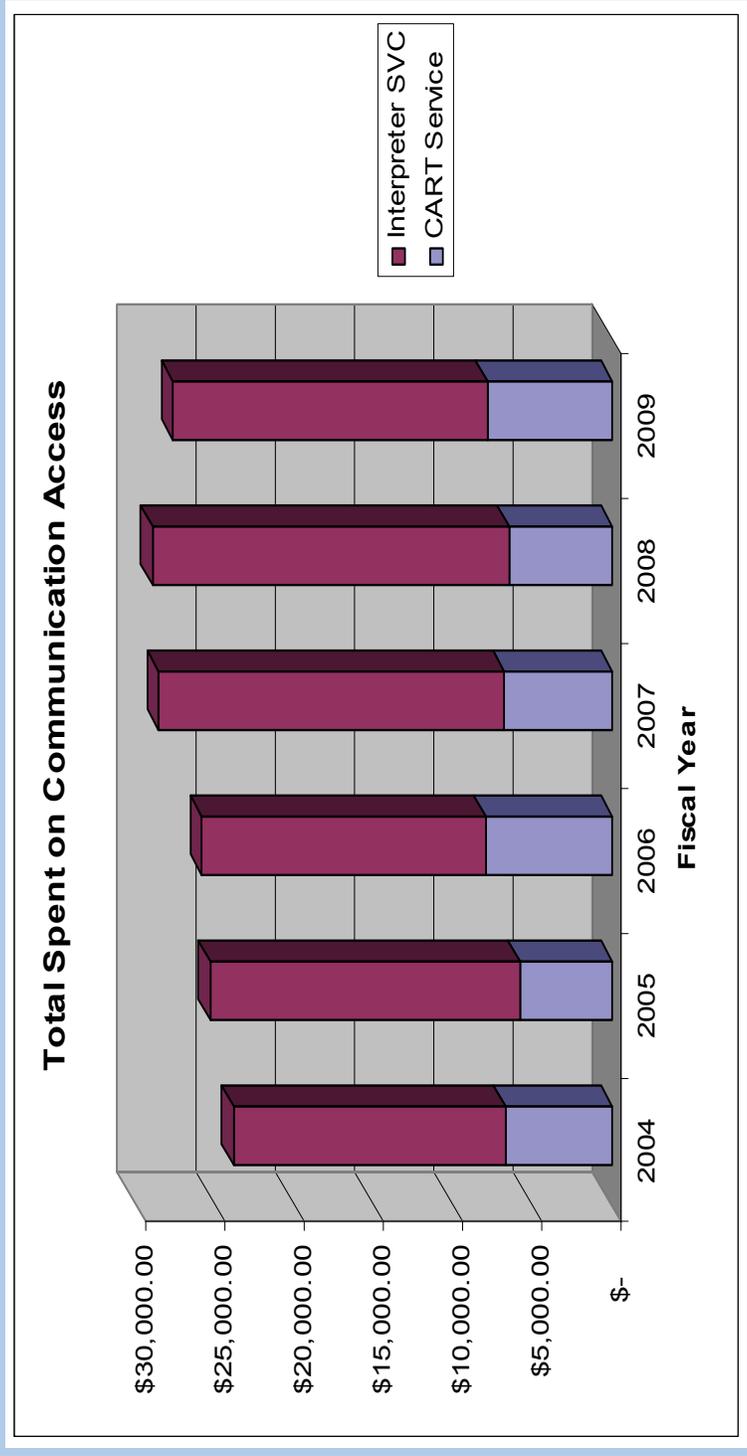
Providing Deafblind services in Rhode Island by collaborating with the state agencies, private, and non profit sectors to ensure that deafblind live independently with appropriate support services such as Support Service Providers, visual services, survey information to identify the number of deafblind individuals in RI.

Expanding and enhancing employment opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing by coordinating with state agencies and private and nonprofit job search centers to be more accessible to the deaf and hard of hearing when job positions are available. Educating employment agencies and libraries about these opportunities for the deaf and hard of hearing. Ensuring that all state job positions is sent to RI CDHH for distribution.

RI CDHHS Budget



NOTE: Personnel-Contracts include 3 Full-Time Employees, CART Services, Interpreting Services, and Emergency Interpreter Referral Service.



NOTE:

The demand for CART services had mushroomed and is expected to increase. It is frequently used along with sign language interpreters and assistive listening devices that provide communication access for people with specialized hearing aids and cochlear implants. Therefore, the RICDHH added CART to the RICDHH's Interpreter Referral Service which is now known as Interpreter and CART Referral Service effectively in May 2009 on a pilot basis. It is seen as greatly reducing the number of calls needed to make arrangement for communication access for the same meeting or assignment. The cost of CART in FY2010 and FY2011 is projected up to \$8,000.00 a year. However, it may increase over \$8,000 due to unforeseeable circumstance that may occur in FY2010 and FY2011.

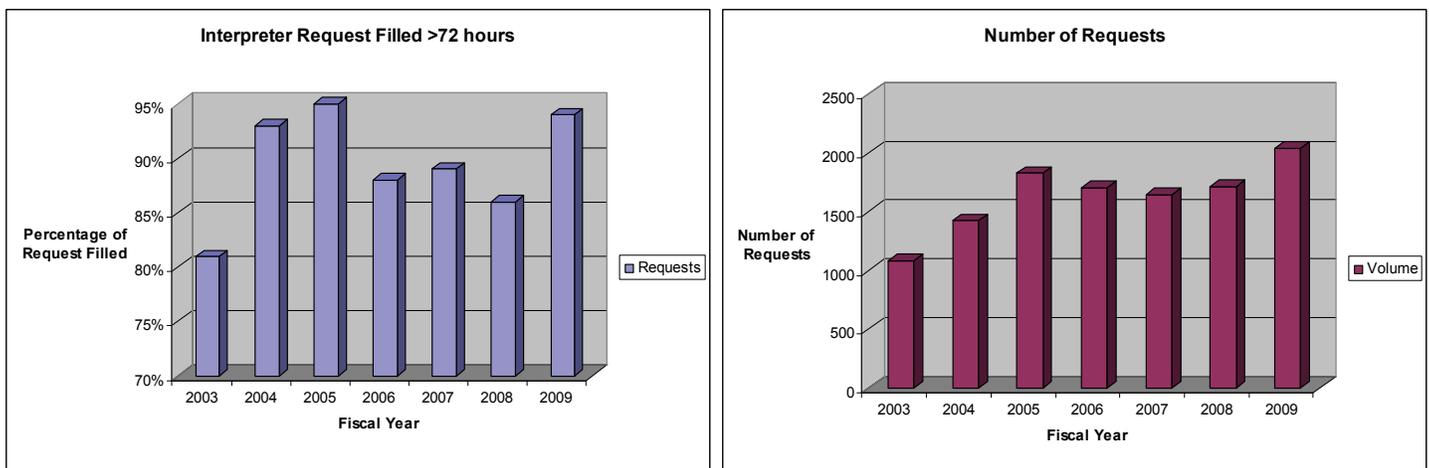
CART is one of the most effective communication tools available for deaf and hard of hearing people in various settings.

Also, the expenditure of freelance sign language interpreters had decreased slightly due to low activity with the legislative process, when compared to the expenditure for FY2008, and other factors as well in FY2009. However, the expenditure is projected to be spent up to the range between \$20,000 and \$22,000 because an increasing number of activities forseen in the FY2010.

GENERAL OVERALL PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS

Objective #1: Interpreter/CART Referral

Providing the RICDHH Statewide Interpreter and CART Referral Service* is always a challenge. The RICDHH added Computer Aided Real-time Translation (CART) to the Interpreter Referral Service on a pilot basis starting on May 4, 2009. This would reduce the number of phone calls made by paying parties so that they only need to make one call for the same meeting or assignment. The Interpreter/CART Referral Specialist was able to handle requests for CART services. It was an instant hit and it turned out to be smooth. Between May 4, 2009 and June 30, 2009, the number of requests for CART service was 11. The RICDHH anticipated that the number would be increased as it continues doing the referrals for the CART service in FY2010 and FY2011.



As you can see the bar graph above, the RICDHH received more than 2,037 interpreter requests in FY2009. (***This was the largest number of requests received ever.***) the percentage of requests filled was significantly improved to 94% from 85% because the RICDHH had the position of Interpreter/CART Referral Specialist filled for the whole year to handle the referral service. Unlike FY2009, the position for the referral service was vacant for more than 5 months in FY2008 that affected the number and percentage of requests filled.

The RICDHH is committed to recruiting interpreters in order to fill in the requests. Several freelance sign language interpreters have switched to a regular full-time interpreting job and others have moved out of the State. Often times, many of the vendors who request an interpreter for one assignment secure the interpreter for follow-on assignments outside of the service that are not included our number of requests for FY2009. It is important to note that the number of requests is not necessarily a valid indicator of the overall need for interpreters. Many requests are filled outside of the referral service. The demand for interpreters continued to grow because more interpreting opportunities are created such as VRS centers in neighboring states that lure interpreters to work more at the VRS center and less on the community interpreting needs. Speaking of a record high numbers of requests, it is a vital evidence of the increasing awareness among state agencies, schools, and private businesses to provide communication accessibility in the recent past.

Of concern as well are the many requests that go unfilled (6%) even with sufficient advance notice. This is attributed to the shortage of freelance interpreters who can be called upon as needed. Most interpreters

worked as independent contractors who bill on an hourly fee-for-service basis. Because there are few salaried interpreter positions with benefits, many interpreters are forced to take full-time non-interpreting jobs and accept interpreter assignments on the side. Full-time freelance interpreters often take predictable, ongoing assignments working in educational institutions. As a result, interpreter availability in Rhode Island is low during regular business hours when most requests are made, especially during the school year. This frequently results in a serious situation in which the consumers may not be able to obtain their civil rights to have a full communication equivalent.

Court and hospital settings may require interpreters with specialized training, and there are very few who work in RI. Long assignments often require at least two interpreters who take turns, increasing the demand but not the resources. And also, a number of deaf certified interpreters participating the team interpreting has been growing significantly so the deaf consumers can communicate more effectively and accurately.

RICDHH continued to hold a positive reputation of successfully securing interpreters and of better communication on all requests.

Objective #2: Emergency Interpreter Referral

The RI CDHH is able to set the objective for the Emergency Interpreter Referral Service after implementing the service on November 10, 2005.

The performance measurements can be set this way to determine the quality of the Emergency Interpreter Referral Service.

Goal #1: 100% of shift slots to be filled by “on-call” interpreters.

Result in FY2006*: 54% of shift slots were filled.

Result in FY2007: 79% of shift slots were filled.

Result in FY2008: 41% of shift slots were filled.

Result in FY2009: 41% of ‘A’ shift slots were filled in FY2009 but there was a lower percentage of shift slots filled for ‘B’ . The RICDHH continues working with Interpreters to keep them interested to serve as Emergency On-Call Interpreters. It is difficult to identify interpreters who are interested to be on-call overnight on a steady basis especially they have jobs on the same day or next morning. The RICDHH continues exploring alternative options for the hospitals to provide communication access in case an on-call interpreter was not found.

Goal #2: 100% of times “on-call” interpreters respond to emergency calls.

Result in FY2006*: 83%

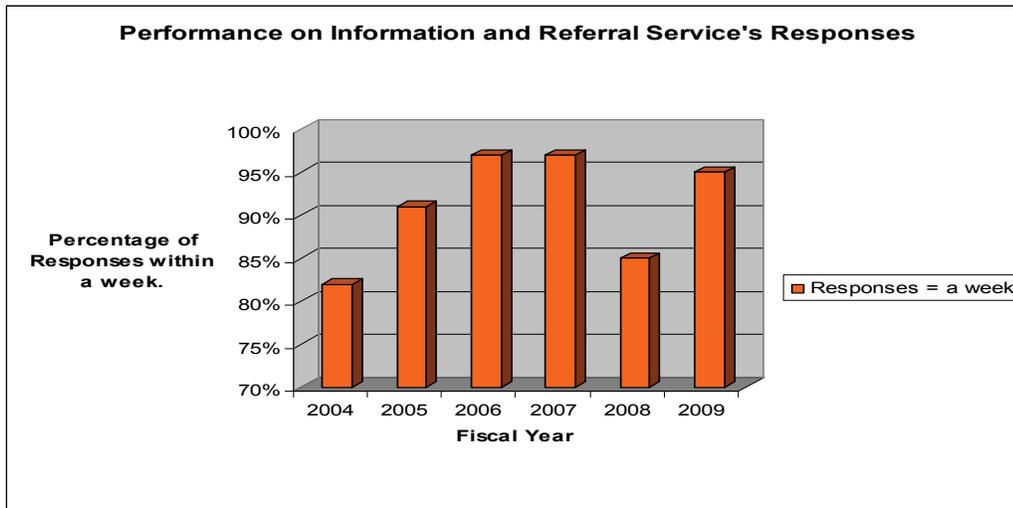
Result in FY2007: 89%.

Result in FY2008: 75%

Result in FY2009: 77%

Without a doubt this is very valuable service for the deaf and hard of hearing people who communicate in ASL during the emergency situation.

Objective #3: Information and Referral



The objective is 100% of all requests for information received a time response within a week. As predicted, FY2009 was a comeback to the superior form in responding to requests for information and referrals. In FY2009, 95% of requests were responded to within a week. That was a 10% increase from FY2008. Clearly, FY2008 was the most difficult year for the Information and Referral service as the staffing was required to cover the Interpreter Referral Service for approximately 6 months between August 2007 and February 2008 due to a FTE that was not given an approval to be filled immediately after the position became vacant. It was a huge decrease from 97% in FY2007 to 85% in FY2008. Information and Referral service is currently in a good shape as long as all 3 FTEs are filled. Please review the past performance on RICDHH's performance in the Information and Referral program: 82% in FY2004, 91% in FY2005, 97% in FY2006, 97% in FY2007, and 85% in FY2008. The goal is to meet at least 95% because the cost effective and efficient computerized database for information and referral service are now in use.

Objective #4: Favorable Legislation

In FY2009, RICDHH monitored 16 bills including 11 bills proposed by the RICDHH that potentially impacted deaf and hard of hearing people. That was an increase from merely 5 bills in FY2008. However, due to critical budget crisis, the 2009 legislative session went for an unusual route where a large number of bills were not passed or they were delayed and any bills that had direct impact on budget were actively discussed and moved forward through the legislative process. However, the RICDHH intended to propose the same bills both in the Senate and House hopefully to get them passed in the 2010 Legislative Session. The RI CDHH becomes comfortable with the legislative process and would seek more proposed legislative bills in FY2010. As this Annual Report was being produced, 4 bills from the 2009 Legislative Session were passed in November 2009.

RICDHH Information and Referral Report Fiscal Year 2009

Number of Requests	605	Number of Business Days:	261
Average Number of Calls Per Business Day:	2	Requests Completed	574

Loan Programs

Books	105	Videos	119
FM/Loop System	14	TTY	0

Requests From	Total	Percentage %	Requests From	Total	Percentage %
Deaf	283	49	Hearing	242	42
Hard of Hearing	33	6	Unknown	18	3
Third Party	1	0			

Type of Requests

Type of Requests	Total	Percentage %	Total Time on Request	Average Time per Request
Voice Calls	36	8	20	1
Caller ID	0	0	0	0
TTY Calls	7	2	45	6
Relay	1	0	5	5
Fax	0	0		
Answered Call with Interpreter	43	9	455	11
Third Party	0	0	0	0
Mail	1	0		
Email	143	31		0
Office Visit	221	48	9885	45
Outreach	3	1	30	10
Instant Message	6	1	20	3
Video Netmeeting	0	0	0	0

RICDHH Information and Referral Report Fiscal Year 2009

Day of Request

	Total	Percentage %
Monday	138	23
Tuesday	121	20
Wednesday	133	22
Thursday	102	17
Friday	98	16
Saturday/ Sunday	11	2

Time of Request

	Total	Percentage %
8-9 AM	4	1
9-10 AM	56	9
10-11 AM	71	12
11-12 AM	99	16
12 -1 PM	86	14
1-2 PM	74	12
2-3 PM	88	15
3-4 PM	108	18
After Hours	19	3

Type of Information Requested

Total	%	Topic	Total	%	Topic	Total	%	Topic
10	1	ADA	17	1	Educational Issues	15	1	Publications
46	3	Advocacy	66	5	Employment	80	6	Rhode Island Relay
33	2	American Sign Language	17	1	Family Concerns	38	3	School for the Deaf
58	4	Assistive Devices	38	3	Hearing Aids	110	8	Social Services/ Programs
254	19	CDHH	153	11	Interpreting			
40	3	Deaf/HoH Issues	14	1	Legislation	0	0	Statistics
77	6	Deaf/HoH Organizations	3	0	Late-Deafened Issues	44	3	Workshops/Training
110	8	Borrow Items from CDHH	14	1	Mental Health	110	8	Other
5	0	Early Intervention	3	0	Please Face Me Pins			

Duration

	Total	Percentage %
1-7 Days	543	95
8-13 Days	18	3
14-20 Days	7	1
21+ Days	6	1

The Legislation Section

The bills listed below are monitored by the RICDHH



1) Revamp the contexts of public finance campaign and it would exclude CC on Political TV advertisements (Passed)

[House Bill 5806](#)

[Senate Bill 0327](#)

This bill is to replace the entire context of public financing campaign program for public officials and legislators that would exclude Captioning on political TV ads.

2) Budget for FY2009 Revision - RI CDHH and RISD (Passed)

Article I

[House Bill 5019](#)

RI CDHH Budget for FY2009 - \$371,300

Rhode Island School for the Deaf Budget for FY2009 - \$7,226,584

Article I—Section 3

Scoop \$385,246 from the PUC Dual Party Phone Relay Fund to the General Treasury.

3) Budget for FY2010 - RI CDHH and RISD (Passed)

[House Bill 5983](#)

RI CDHH Budget for FY2010 - \$380,146

Rhode Island School for the Deaf Budget for FY2010 - \$7,217,438

4) Mandated Insurance Coverage on Cochlear Implant Surgery. (Failed)

[House Bill 5703](#)

This bill is to amend by adding the section that movie theaters with 5 or more screens are required to provide captioning for patrons who are deaf and hard of hearing and audio descriptions for patrons who are blind or visually impaired.

The 2009 RICDHH Legislative Package

The bills listed below are originated from the RICDHH.

1) Communication Access as a permitted use of campaign funds. (Passed in the 2nd Quarter of FY2010)

[House Bill 5570](#)

[Senate Bill 0383](#)

This bill is to amend the language that communication access expenses recognized as a permitted use of campaign funds to ensure participation by deaf and hard of hearing individuals.

2) Movies—Captioned for Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Audio Descriptions for Blind. (Failed)

[House Bill 5601](#)

[Senate Bill 0538](#)

This bill is to amend by adding the section that movie theaters with 5 or more screens are required to provide captioning for patrons who are deaf and hard of hearing and audio descriptions for patrons who are blind or visually impaired.

3) Wireless Surcharge and Fund established by RICDHH for Emergency and Public Use. (Failed)

[House Bill 5612](#)

This bill is to allow wireless telecommunications providers to bill their subscribers for access to telephone information services. This act would also establish the emergency communication and public telecommunication access fund to create an emergency communication program for the deaf and hard of hearing.

4) Video/Audio clips on State and Local Websites are required to be accessible. (Failed)

[House Bill 5638](#)

[Senate Bill 0750](#)

This bill is to add the new section that all video clips and voice-recorded clips on state and public-sponsored websites be made accessible to people with hearing loss.

8) Education on T-Coil, RICDHH, and ATEL must be occurred by the hearing aids dispensers. (Passed in the 2nd Quarter of FY2010)

[House Bill 5655](#)

[Senate Bill 0553](#)

This bill is to require that the hearing aids dealers to inform the clients about the benefits of using T-Switch, ATEL, and RICDHH for further resources on hearing loss.

9) Educational videos/DVD/downloaded vides Purchased must come with captioning. (Failed)

[House Bill 5614](#)

[Senate Bill 0394](#)

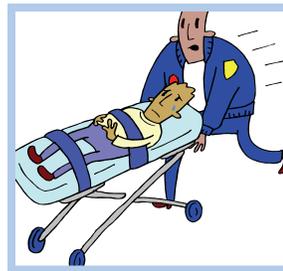
This bill is to require the purchasers to check all materials if they are accessible to deaf and hard of hearing students before making the purchase.



List of Selective Highlights

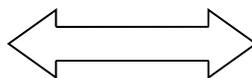
Emergency Interpreter Referral Service Maintained

Since Lt. Governor Charles J. Fogarty, Travis R. Zellner, Chair, Edgar Rawlings, Vice-Chair, Steven A. Florio, Executive Director, and Curtiss James, Interpreter Referral Specialist officially cut the yellow ribbon to launch the Emergency Interpreter Referral Services on November 9, 2005, the service continues. The average of emergency on-call interpreters responding to emergency calls since FY2006 is 81%. The deaf patients or family members were able to have communication access during emergencies. Even though, the budget for Emergency Interpreter Referral Service has been slightly cut, this was considered a success because it enabled the communication access between the deaf and hard of hearing individuals who use sign language and emergency personnel/responders.



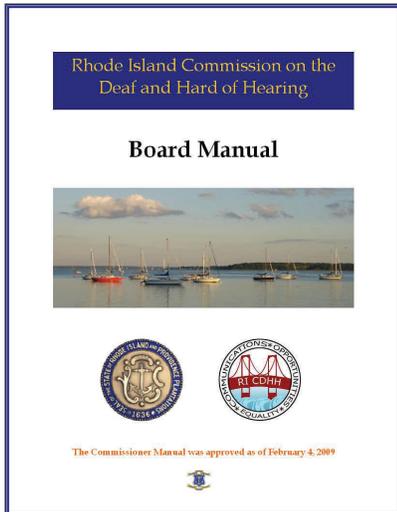
RICDHH Healthcare Task Force Established

The Task Force that was established by the RICDHH Healthcare Committee has been seriously studying all aspects of healthcare services and programs in Rhode Island. Prior to the establishment of the Task Force, the Needs Assessment Report was prepared by Dr. Diane Martell, associate professor at RIC with assistance from Gina Philips, a graduate student at the School of Social Work at the Rhode Island College. The report was available for public's review on the quality of healthcare services for people with hearing loss. In this report, it heavily emphasized Deaf patients' needs that have not been significantly met since the last survey conducted in 1982 by the Department of Health. The Task Force's goal is to make tangible progress in raising awareness about the laws and communication needs of Deaf and Hard of Hearing patients, family members, and visitors.



**Communication Access
in the healthcare
settings in Rhode Island**

Approval of Commissioners' Board Manual (New) on February 2, 2009:



RICDHH Board Manual (New)

Section I - Introduction

Section II - Overview on RICDHH

Section III - Responsibilities and Roles of the Commissioners

Section IV - Responsibilities and Roles of the Executive Director

Section V - Meeting Process

Section VI - Selective Statutes and Laws on RICDHH

Section VII - Selective Rhode Island General Laws

Section VII - Personal Notes

Section VIII - Appendix

Purchase of a portable Assistive Listening Device:

- Microloop II FM System with Wireless Microphone

This portable Microloop II FM system is very reliable and it is good for a small meeting room up to approximately 30 people within the loop. This device is to enable individuals to hear the speaker's voice clearly with 'T' or known as 'T-coil' on their hearing aids. This ideal is meetings, designated area at the conferences, workshops, trainings, etc.



Interpreter/CART Referral Service Reached a Record-High Number of Requests

2,037 requests is the number of requests that we received for the Fiscal Year 2009. 94% of requests were filled with sufficient advanced notices.



RICDHH actively engaged with the Emergency Management Projects

There is still a long way to go but the RICDHH representatives had been actively participating in the Emergency related activities such as conference, trainings, a series of meetings, etc. One of the examples, Department of Health and Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency launched the Emergency Registry for Rhode Islanders With Special Needs. As for Deaf and Hard of Hearing residents in Rhode Island, they can supply information online whether they need to have physical mobility, need to have communication access accommodations including rechargers for mobile pagers, cochlear implant processors, and many other needs pre-, during, and post-emergencies or disasters. This can be found at www.health.ri.gov.

Rhode Island Department of Health
 David R. Gifford, MD, MPH, Director
 Donald L. Carlieri, Governor

Rhode Island Special Needs Emergency Registry
 For people with disabilities, chronic conditions, and special healthcare needs

General Information

New Registration Updated Registration

Date: Sex: Male Female

Name * (Last, First, Middle) Year of Birth

Address * Apartment/Suite * none

City * state = zip *

Home Telephone * TDD/TTY none

In what language do you prefer to receive emergency communications or assistance?
 English Portuguese French
 Spanish Hmong Lao
 Chinese Cambodian Vietnamese

Ethnicity Do you consider yourself Hispanic or Latino? Yes No

Check all that apply.

Race
 White Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
 Asian African American/Black
 American Indian/Alaskan Native Other

Fields marked with an asterisk (*) are mandatory.

Mobility
 Are you confined to bed? Yes No
 Can you walk without assistance? Yes No
 Which of the following do you use? (Check all that apply)
 Wheelchair/Mobility Vehicle
 Walker/Cane
 Crutches
 Assistive Animal
 Prosthesis
 Other:
 None of the above

Life Support Systems
 Which of the following life support systems do you use? (Check all that apply)
 Oxygen
 Respirator/Ventilator
 Dialysis
 Electrical (Pacemaker, Defibrillator)
 Other:
 None of the above

Are you insulin-dependent?
 Yes No

Vision, Hearing, Speech, and Other Disabilities
 Are you... (Check all that apply)
 Visually Impaired
 Legally Blind
 Hard of Hearing
 Deaf
 Speech Impaired
 Non-verbal
 Cognitively/Developmentally delayed
 Other:
 None of the above

NOTE: By submitting this form to the Emergency Management Agency, I agree to permit my information to be shared with local and state emergency responders. I understand that while the Emergency Management Agency will share this information in order to better assist me during an emergency, they cannot guarantee assistance in all cases. I also understand that this is a voluntary program.

I do not agree.
 I agree.

Ongoing Challenges

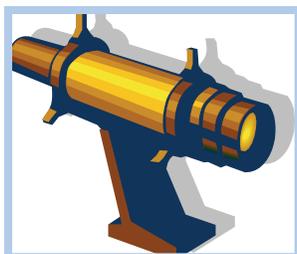
Shortage of Interpreters/CART

Since we had the high record number of requests in FY2009. 6% of the requests were not filled. This was due to various factors, not limited to but including service providers, the paying parties, are now becoming aware of the importance of having communication equivalent at any public accommodations including hospitals, State House, Dunkin Donut Center, Providence Airport, and many more. The shortage of interpreters/CART captioners is, in fact, an ongoing nationwide challenge. Most challenging is to fill in the requests with "less than 72 hours" notice. Unfortunately, Rhode Island is the only one of the New England States that does not have an Interpreter Training Program which would produce more professional interpreters annually. The closest training program available is at Northeastern University in Boston, Mass. RICDHH continues to explore more viable technologies to accommodate communication needs such as Video Remote Interpreting and Remote CART services for appropriate and certain situations



RICDHH Limited Using Its Resources.

Due to economic climate and fiscal challenges in FY2009, the RICDHH limited its resources with its 3 FTEs to respond to various deaf and hard of hearing issues especially for the Hard of Hearing population. Interpreters are available at the RICDHH Office for only 6 hours a week (an average). The RICDHH Office does not have the receptionist to handle phone calls and scheduling. The RICDHH continues finding remedies through collaborations and partnerships.



Serve on the Council/Committees representing the RI CDHH

National Association of State Directors for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency
Rhode Island Emergency Management Advisory Council, added in FY2008.
Rhode Island Statewide Independent Living Conference
Rhode Island Rhodes to Independence
Rhode Island Hearing Assessment Program
Rhode Island Office of Rehabilitation
Rhode Island School for the Deaf's Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) - February - June 2009
Governor's Commission on Disabilities' Election Assistance Committee
Dorcas Place Disability Advisory Committee

Collaborations at the different levels:

List of State Agencies:

The Office of Governor
The Office of Lieutenant Governor
The Office of Attorney General
The Office of the Secretary of State
Rhode Island General Assembly
Rhode Island Joint Committee on Legislative Services
Rhode Island Department of Administration
Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Rhode Island Department of Health
Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth, and Families
Rhode Island Department of Elderly Affairs
Rhode Island Department of Education
Rhode Island Department of Mental Health, Retardation, and Hospitals
Rhode Island Department of Public Safety
Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency
Emergency 911 Center
Rhode Island Public Utility Commission
Rhode Island Commission for Human Rights
Rhode Island State Police
Rhode Island Adaptive Telephone Equipment Loan Program
Rhode Island Assistive Technology Access Partnership
Rhode Island Board of Interpreters
Rhode Island Commission on Women
Rhode Island Governor's Commission on Disabilities
Rhode Island Office of Rehabilitation Services
Community College of Rhode Island
Rhode Island College
Rhode Island School for the Deaf

Rhode Island State Council on the Arts
Rhode Island State Courts
Sherlock Center on Disabilities
University of Rhode Island
RI.GOV
NetworkRI

List of State/Local organizations of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Alumni Association of the Rhode Island School for the Deaf
Corliss Center
Cochlear Implant Support Group in Narragansett, RI
Hearing Loss Association of Rhode Island
Providence Club of the Deaf
Rhode Island Association of the Deaf
Rhode Island Chapter of the Alexander Graham Bell for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Rhode Island Deaf Senior Citizens
Rhode Island Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf

Other State/Local agencies/organizations:

39 Municipal Police Stations
Blue Cross & Blue Shields of Rhode Island
Hospital Association of Rhode Island
Bradley Hospital
Brown University – American Sign Language Program and Research on Health Wellness
Butler Hospital
Care New England Health System
Goodwill Industries of Rhode Island
Hamilton Relay
Hasbro's Hospital
Home and Hospice Care of Rhode Island
Kent Hospital
Kent House Treatment Center
Lifespan Corporate Services
Memorial Hospital
Miriam Hospital
Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island
Newport Hospital
Ocean State Center for Independent Living
PARI
Perspectives Corporation
Rhode Island Disabilities Law Center
Rhode Island Hospital
Rhode Island Speech-Language-Hearing Association
Roger Williams Medical Center
Saint Joseph Health Service of RI
Sorenson Relay
South County Hospital

Sprint Relay
United Healthcare of Rhode Island
Westerly Hospital
Women and Infant Hospital
ZVRS

National Association of State Directors of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Purpose

This association was established in early 1980's to exchange ideas and to work toward common solutions on issues. They meet every two years at the national organization's conference.

Meeting: July 8, 2008 in New Orleans, LA

20 State Directors including Steven A. Florio, RI Executive Director were convened at the Marriott New Orleans for an half-day conference.

They discussed issues to be addressed, exchanged ideas, and improved communication among themselves after the conference.

They appointed Steven A. Florio, RI Executive Director to coordinate the meeting agenda and logistics in Philadelphia, PA on July 6, 2010.



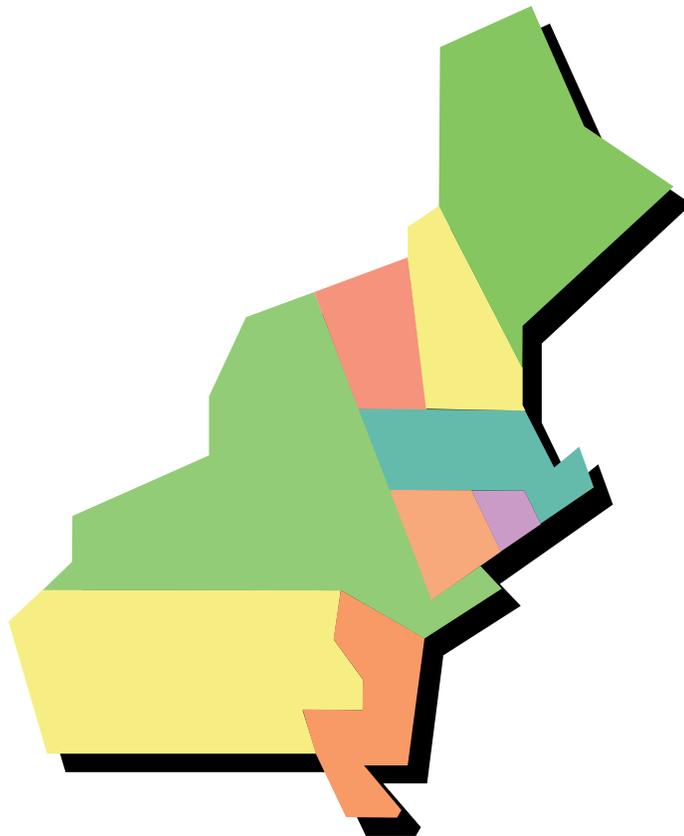
New England State Commissions for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Purpose

This group is representing all state directors from the neighboring states in New England. The purpose is to share resources and to create new programs/resources through partnership. The first meeting was held in Providence, RI on November 10, 2005.

Meetings: April 24, 2009 in Hartford, CT

Steven A. Florio, Executive Director of Rhode Island
Heidi Reed, Commissioner of Massachusetts
Stacie Mawson, Executive Director of Connecticut
Carrie Foster, Director of Vermont
H. Dee Clanton, Director of New Hampshire
John Shattuck, Director of Maine



RI CDHH Healthcare Committee

Purpose

To enhance the healthcare services to be more accessible to the deaf and hard of hearing consumers.

Suzanne Goldenberg, RI CDHH Commissioner
Martha Brunzos, Perspectives Corporation
Bonnie Abols, Ocean State Center for Independent Living (OSCIL)
Christine Harkins, Kent House
Debra Raiche, Kent House
Christine Thompson, Hearing Loss Association of Rhode Island (HLA-RI)
James Simon, Perspectives Corporation
Steven A. Florio, RICDHH
Pamela Zellner, RICDHH

Healthcare Meetings:

July 31, 2008—Providence, RI
September 16, 2008—Providence, RI (Brainstorm Session)
January 13, 2009—Providence, RI

RI CDHH Healthcare Task Force:

Purpose: The Task Force is established by the RICDHH Healthcare Committee to focus on selective projects that are believed to made an impact especially through education and training among the healthcare professionals.

The RICDHH Healthcare Task Force's Mission Statement is *to achieve parity for healthcare access for Deaf and Hard of Hearing patients, family members, and visitors in Rhode Island.*

James Simon, Perspectives Corporation, Co-Chair
Christine Thompson, Hearing Loss Association of RI (HLA-RI), Co-Chair
Christine Harkins, Kent House
Debra Harkins, Kent House
Steven A. Florio, RICDHH
Pamela Zellner, RICDHH

Task Force Meetings in FY2009 in Providence, RI:

March 11, 2009 April 8, 2009 April 22, 2009
June 3, 2009 June 15, 2009

Conference Appearances

National:

National Association of the Deaf Conference in New Orleans, LA
National Association of State Directors for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Meeting in New Orleans, LA

Regional:

Telecommunication for the Deaf, Inc. (TDI) hosted a 2-day Northeast region advocacy training seminar in South Boston, MA on September 20 -21, 2008

State:

ATAP Assistive Technology Conference in Providence, RI (November 20, 2008)
Deaf Awareness Week in Providence, RI (September 22-28, 2008)
Disability Awareness Day Hosted by the Newport Disability Access Committee in Newport, RI (May 13, 2009)
Hearing Loss Awareness Expo in Providence, RI (May 14, 2009)
Rhode Island Hearing Assessment Program Annual Seminars in Providence, RI (March 23, 2009)
RI Registry of the Interpreter for the Deaf's State Conference in Warwick, RI. (August 9-11, 2008)
Rhode Island Emergency Management Conference on Hurricane in Warwick, RI (June 18, 2009)
Statewide Independence Living Council Conference in Providence, RI (September 5, 2008)
The Institute for Addiction Recovery Mental Health Coalition Seminar (Dec. 15, 2008) in Providence, RI

Community Activities/Projects

American with Disabilities Act Public Form (July 21-25, 2008)
Annual Coffee Hour at the State House (November 13, 2008)
Cochlear Implant Group in Narragansett, RI (June 24, 2009)
Deaf Awareness Week (September 22-28, 2008)
Digital TV Transition Presentations (January 16, 22, 27, and 29, 2009)
Hearing Loss Awareness Expo (May 14, 2008)
Rhode Island School for the Deaf Ground Breaking Ceremony (December 16, 2008)
Rhode Island Senior Citizens' 25th Anniversary Celebration Banquet
RISD Students Day at RICDHH Office (May 21, 2009)
18th Anniversary Celebration of ADA at Corliss Center (July 26, 2008)

Membership

National:

Alexander Graham Bell for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (AGBDHH)
American Association of the Deaf-Blind (AADB)
American Society for Deaf Children (ASDC)
Association of Late Deafened Adults (ALDA)
Conference of Educational Administrators of School and Programs for the Deaf (CEASD)
Deaf Seniors of America (DSA)
Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA)
National Association of the Deaf (NAD)
National Association of State Directors of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Telecommunications for the Deaf, Inc. (TDI)
Deafness Research Foundation (DRF)

State:

Hearing Loss Association of Rhode Island (HLA-RI)
Rhode Island Association of the Deaf (RIAD)
Rhode Island Chapter of the Alexander Graham Bell for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (AGB-RI)
Rhode Island Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RIRID)



International Symbol of Deaf/Hard of Hearing

This symbol indicates individual(s) who is deaf, hard of hearing, or having **some degrees of hearing**



Closed Captioning (CC)

This symbol indicates a choice for whether or not to display captions for a television program, videotape, or DVD.. TV sets that have a built-in or a separate decoder are equipped to display dialogue for programs that are captioned when selected by the viewer. The Television Decoder Circuitry Act



Opened Captioning (OC)

This symbol indicates that captions, which translates dialogue and other sounds in print, are always displayed on the videotape, DVD, movie or television program. Open Captioning is preferred by many including deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals, and people whose second language is English. In addition, it is helpful in teaching children



Assistive Listening Systems

These systems transmit amplified sound via hearing aids, headsets or other devices. They include infrared, loop and FM systems. Portable systems may be available from the same audiovisual equipment suppliers that service conferences and meetings.



Telephone Typewriter (TTY)

This device is also known as a text telephone (TT), or telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD). TTY indicates a device used with the telephone for communication with and between deaf, hard of hearing, speech impaired and/or hearing persons.



Sign Language Interpretation

The symbol indicates that Sign Language Interpretation is provided for a lecture, tour, film, performance, conference or other program.



Volume Control Telephone

This symbol indicates the location of telephones that have handsets with amplified sound and/or adjustable volume controls



Recognitions at the RICDHH Annual Coffee Hour at the State House on November 13, 2008.

The RI CDHH Recognition 2008 Award –

Richard Jaffe, Trinity Repertory Company

The RI CDHH Certificate of Merit 2008 Award -

Jan Luby, Goodwill Industries of Rhode Island

Volunteers

Here is the list of volunteers:

Dawonn Dakins
Cara Dalton
Tajaray Ferland
Lisa Gonzales
Hayley Jamroz
Jennifer Kao
Jessica Tunison-Morgan
Bridgid Myers
Lynn Rajotte
Lisa Ripa
Nicolette Rodriquez
Winnie Tunison



Mission Statement:

To provide innovative leadership in public policy, advocacy, service delivery and accessibility throughout the Ocean State, RI CDHH ensures opportunities for each deaf and hard of hearing person to become an empowered, contributing citizen.

