

# Resources for Veterans with Hearing Loss



Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

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## General Information

The Hearing Health Foundations reports that tinnitus and hearing loss are the number one and two health conditions, respectively, among military veterans at U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical centers.

According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), more than 2.7 million veterans currently receive disability benefits for hearing loss or tinnitus, a ringing in the ears.

Veterans are 30 percent more likely than nonveterans to have severe hearing impairment, according to a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention analysis.

## Intensity of Sounds Measured in Decibels (dB)

- Normal conversation is considered to be “safe” at a sound level of 60 decibels.
- On flight decks, noise levels are around 130 decibels.
- Helicopter noise is around 100 decibels.
- A soldier near an M60 machine gun is exposed to 150 decibels
- Within 50 feet of an exploding grenade, 160 decibels.

## Support Groups

### **Veterans Crisis Line: Support for Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

Online Chat, Text Message, Phone call, and TTY service

<https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/get-help/hard-of-hearing-veterans>

Professional, caring VA responders through online chat, text message (838255), and TTY service 800-799-4889

### **Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA)**

The Nation’s Voice for People with Hearing Loss

<https://www.hearingloss.org/hearing-help/communities/veterans/>

membership@hearingloss.org

301-657-2248

### **Association of Late Deafened Adults (ALDA)**

The Association of Late-Deafened Adults is about communication and acceptance of every deafened individual.

[www.alda.org/hearing-loss/](http://www.alda.org/hearing-loss/)

info@alda.org

815-332-1515

## Assistive Technology and Financial Assistance

Today, there is a multitude of assistive devices available to help give individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing gain more independence. These devices are designed to help in all areas of life, such as amplified phones, doorbells and telephone ringers, baby cry signalers, visual and vibrating alarm clocks, smoke detectors, etc.

### **Kentucky Department of Veteran Affairs**

If you are a veteran with hearing loss you may be eligible for compensation. Please contact your local KDVA Field Benefits Representative or call 502-595-4447 for more information.

[www.veterans.ky.gov](http://www.veterans.ky.gov)

### **KCDHH Telecommunications Access Program**

(KY Residents)

The Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) provides residents of Kentucky, who are deaf/hard of hearing or speech impaired with landline or wireless equipment to make communication on the telephone more accessible.

[www.kcdhh.org/ifyky/](http://www.kcdhh.org/ifyky/)

### **Kentucky Assistive Technology Service Network**

The KATS Network mission is to make assistive technology obtainable. They also oversee the Statewide Hearing Aid Assistance and Reuse Program (SHARP).

[www.katsnet.org](http://www.katsnet.org)

### **U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs**

Rehabilitation and Prosthetic Services: Hearing Aids

[http://www.prosthetics.va.gov/psas/Hearing\\_Aids.asp](http://www.prosthetics.va.gov/psas/Hearing_Aids.asp)

### **Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program**

Wounded Service Member Support

Assistive listening devices (ALD's) are available for service members who have sustained hearing loss and damage, including tinnitus, hearing loss in one ear, and variable degrees of hearing loss.

[www.cap.mil/Programs/WSM.aspx](http://www.cap.mil/Programs/WSM.aspx)

### **Heroes with Hearing Loss Program**

Hamilton CapTel makes it possible to listen and read word-for-word captions of everything said to you on the phone.

[www.hamiltoncaptel.com/veterans/](http://www.hamiltoncaptel.com/veterans/)

### **Williams Sound: RALD Program**

Williams Sound has proudly teamed with the Military Audiology Association (MAA) to offer the Retiree Assistive Listening Device (RALD) program to both retired and active-duty U.S. military service members and their families.

[www.williamssound.com/rald](http://www.williamssound.com/rald)

## Resources

### **American Tinnitus Association**

ATA is a global leader in the effort to find a cure for tinnitus. We bring together patients, researchers, healthcare professionals, industry partners and lawmakers to develop tinnitus management tools and fund vital tinnitus research.

[www.ata.org](http://www.ata.org)

### **Department of Defense: Hearing Center of Excellence**

The Hearing Center of Excellence fosters and promotes the prevention, diagnosis, mitigation, treatment, rehabilitation and research of hearing loss and auditory injury.

[hearing.health.mil](http://hearing.health.mil)

### **America's VetDogs® --The Veteran's K-9 Corps®**

A 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization that serves the needs of veterans with disabilities from all eras who have honorably served our country.

[www.vetdogs.org](http://www.vetdogs.org)

## What KCDHH Can Do for You

Federal and state laws are in place to protect individuals with disabilities from discrimination. These laws were designed to give equal access and opportunities to all persons with disabilities, including individuals with hearing loss.

For an individual with a hearing loss, equal access typically means effective communication. Effective communication usually requires some form of accommodation and due to the diverse needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals, the specific accommodation will depend on the individual.

What this all means is that you have the right to effective communication when it comes to employment, education, housing, government as well as public and private services.

KCDHH as an information, referral and advocacy agency can help educate you and others about your rights, how to ensure effective communication and advocate on your behalf when your needs are not being met.

KCDHH also produces the biennial Kentucky DeaFestival and the following materials: Directory of Services, Communicator newsletter, and brochures on topics of interest to deaf and hard of hearing persons and their families. KCDHH maintains a library of books, periodicals, DVDs and CDs which are available for research and general information. The KCDHH Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) provides devices such as amplified phones, wireless devices and CapTels to eligible deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians.

Please visit our website or contact us for additional information. [www.kcdhh.ky.gov](http://www.kcdhh.ky.gov)

Thank You for your service to our country! Please know that you are not alone and we are happy to help in any way we can!