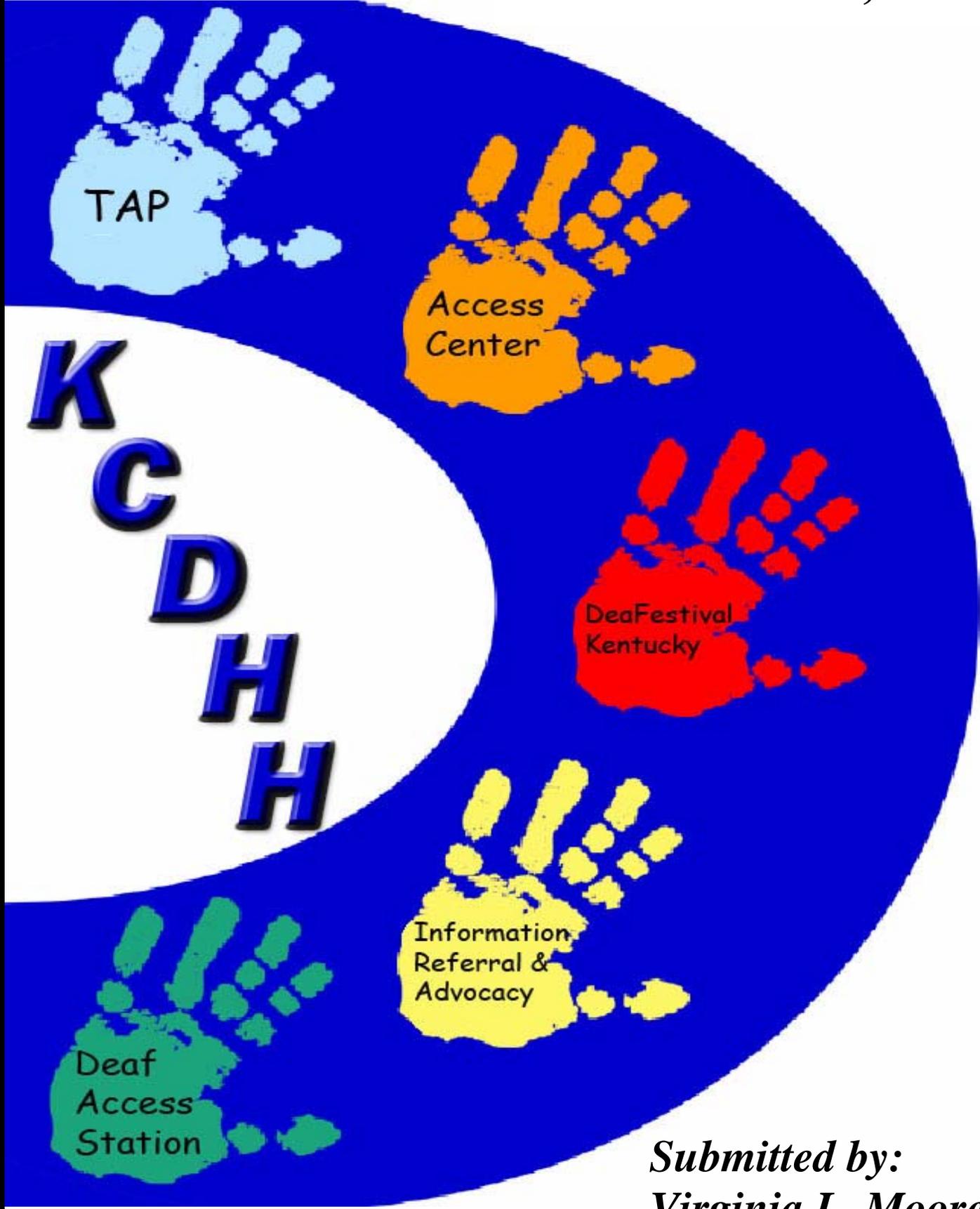


Agency Report

October 1st through
December 31st, 2020



TAP

Access
Center

DeafFestival
Kentucky

Information
Referral &
Advocacy

Deaf
Access
Station

Submitted by:
Virginia L. Moore



KENTUCKY COMMISSION ON THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

QUARTERLY ACTIVITIES

October 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020

GOVERNING MANDATES

KRS 163.510

- 1) The commission shall advise the Governor and the General Assembly concerning policy and programs to enhance the quality and coordination of services for the deaf and hard of hearing.
- 2) The commission shall cooperate with and assist local, state and federal governments and public and private agencies in the development of programs for the deaf and hard of hearing.
- 3) The commission shall review legislative programs relating to services to deaf and hard of hearing persons and shall conduct studies of conditions affecting the health and welfare of the deaf and hard of hearing.
- 4) The commission shall oversee the provision of interpreter services to the deaf and hard of hearing and may provide services if necessary.

KRS 163.525 (5)

- 5) The Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing shall establish procedures for application and distribution of specialized telecommunications equipment by the promulgation of administrative regulations in accordance with provisions of KRS Chapter 13A.

2020-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

- Goal 1:** Develop, propose and lobby for legislation to improve services for the deaf and hard of hearing.
- Goal 2:** Work with government, public, and private agencies to develop programs and provide services for the deaf and hard of hearing.
- Goal 3(a):** Review statewide programs, established through legislation, which relate to services for the deaf and hard of hearing.
- Goal 3(b):** Research conditions affecting the quality of life of the deaf and hard of hearing.
- Goal 4:** Oversee the provision of qualified interpreters and captioning services.
- Goal 5:** Provide information and referrals to consumers regarding equipment provided by other entities.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

Legislation



In addition to monitoring legislative activity for potential impact on the deaf and hard of hearing community, KCDHH is revisiting the hearing screening bill as well as the language acquisition bill for possible submission during the 2021 legislative session. KCDHH has also been asked to provide support for a bill which will add cytomegalovirus (CMV) to the list of heritable disorders for which a newborn must be screened under KRS 214.155. This bill would mandate the development and distribution of public educational resources regarding CMV to pregnant women and women who may become pregnant.

On December 28, the Policy Specialist attended the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet's (EWDC) Legislative Session / Bill Review / Kentucky Legislative Information and Reporting (KLIR) Preview virtual workshop hosted by the EWDC Legislative Director. The session provided an overview of the KLIR system, the bill review process and agency responsibilities and expectations during the legislative session.

(1.1 Develop, propose and lobby for legislation to ensure equal access to appropriate education for deaf and hard of hearing students, from birth to post-secondary.)

(1.2 Lobby for and support legislation developed by other entities that directly impacts the lives of deaf and hard of hearing individuals.)

(3.1(a) Monitor and support legislation promoting equal access to appropriate education for deaf and hard of hearing students, from birth to post-secondary education.)

(3.2(a) Advise state agencies and private committees, boards and taskforces in matters related to deaf and hard of hearing issues.)

(3.3(a) Monitor legislative issues that affect deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians.)

Budget

The preliminary 8% budget reduction plan submitted in the previous quarter was waived for this fiscal year. However, the legislature only approved a one-year budget, so the budget for fiscal year 2021 has yet to be determined. The 2021 legislative session will be watched closely for possible budget cuts.

Personnel

The Administrative Specialist II and Executive Administrative Secretary positions remain vacant; however, the search for a new secretary is underway, and the position request packet for the Administrative Specialist II position will be submitted in January 2021.

Communication Access during COVID-19

After being diagnosed with uterine cancer in early October, the Executive Director honored the Governor's request to create a video informing viewers of her condition, and used this opportunity as a platform to encourage viewers to take care of their health needs and wear a mask during this pandemic. Her message was shared by 14 media outlets in Kentucky as well

as other states, resulting in an overwhelming show of support, including over 300 cards from well-wishers all over the country. While the Executive Director was initially the sole provider of interpreting services for the daily briefings when they began in March 2020, she was later joined by the Executive Staff Interpreter and the Interpreter Referral Specialist who continued to provide continuity of services during the Executive Director's recovery and will continue to be part of the interpreting rotation going forward. When the Executive Director rejoined the Governor for his afternoon updates in late November, 14 media outlets from Kentucky and other states were once again on hand to report the story.

As the Governor continued his daily briefings from October through December announcing updates, restrictions and recommendations to curb the spread and recent surge of COVID-19, requests for interviews, speaking opportunities and meetings with the Executive Director also continued. On December 14, the Executive Director interpreted the Governor's press briefing where five healthcare doctors and nurses became the first Kentuckians to receive the COVID-19 vaccination.

On December 14 and 18, the Executive Director interviewed with two Lexington television stations. She discussed her health scare and recovery, returning to interpret for the Governor, the importance of reaching the 700,000 plus deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians and the ClearMask project.

(2.1 Work in partnership with media, state and local entities/agencies, and public/private organizations to create awareness about hearing loss and the needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals.)

(2.4 Create and promote awareness about programs and services to benefit the deaf and hard of hearing community.)

Mask Distribution Project Continues



The mask distribution project is wrapping up, but a few requests are still trickling in. Education-related requests for masks continue to be routed through Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD) Outreach for distribution, while mental health requests are being funneled through the Kentucky

Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities (KDBHDID) Program Administrator of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, but the bulk of the remaining requests from medical providers (i.e. audiologists, etc.), Kentucky licensed interpreters, businesses, daycares, and family members are being distributed by KCDHH. Partnerships with the Kentucky Hospital Association (KHA) and the Kentucky Office of the Ombudsman will remain in place, but there have been no additional bulk requests for distribution through those organizations. As no deadline has been set for accepting applications, KCDHH will continue to provide masks while supplies last.

(2.1 Work in partnership with media, state and local entities/agencies, and public/private organizations to create awareness about hearing loss and the needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals.)

(2.4 Create and promote awareness about programs and services to benefit the deaf and hard of hearing community.)

(2.5 Educate state agencies, government branches, organizations and the public on federal and state laws regarding hearing loss.)

The Commonwealth Education Continuum

During a special press conference, the Lt. Governor announced the creation of the Commonwealth Education Continuum, which is designed to address educational gaps.

Following the announcement, the KCDHH Executive Director contacted the Lt. Governor to request that a representative from the Commission or someone with a strong background in deaf and hard of hearing education be added to the Board. The Lt. Governor responded that they are working to put the Board together, and there will be subgroups created for specific areas of interest. This presents a unique opportunity to address the educational gaps experienced by deaf and hard of hearing children, which are created by a lack of language acquisition. The Executive Director will continue to stay abreast of the Board's development progress and work to ensure that a Commission representative is assigned to an appropriate subgroup if a seat on the Board is not an option.

(2.1 Work in partnership with media, state and local entities/agencies, and public/private organizations to create awareness about hearing loss and the needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals.)

(2.6 Advocate for equal access to education for deaf and hard of hearing individuals, cradle to grave.)

KCDHH Executive Director Presents to Humana Employees

The Executive Director and Information Office Supervisor met with Humana's Senior User Interface Design Engineer & Digital Accessibility Lead on October 2 and November 2 for a trial run prior to her virtual presentation on November 6. The presentation included information and



statistics on the number of people impacted by hearing loss in Kentucky and in the United States, primary causes of hearing loss and deafness, and populations impacted the most by hearing loss. The Executive Director also covered a wide range of other topics related to hearing loss,

such as the use and importance of American Sign Language (ASL), communicating with hearing people through masks, providing information on hearing aids covered by insurance, using technology, telehealth and virtual medical appointments. She also talked about how to get support when a deaf or hard of hearing person has a problem with a Humana-related product/site/app, working with deaf and hard of hearing employees during the pandemic and ways Humana can improve collaboration with associates to provide support for members who may have hearing loss.

(2.1 Work in partnership with media, state and local entities/agencies, and public/private organizations to create awareness about hearing loss and the needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals.)

(2.4 Create and promote awareness about programs and services to benefit the deaf and hard of hearing community.)

(2.5 Educate state agencies, government branches, organizations and the public on federal and state laws regarding hearing loss.)

Governor's LEAD Conference



The 34th Governor's Leadership, Equality, Accessibility and Diversity (LEAD) Conference, one of the largest conferences of its kind in the region and the largest in the state, hosted over a thousand virtual attendees on November 18-20. The two-day virtual conference

featured an all-star lineup of regional panelists and speakers from both the private and public sectors, including the KCDHH Executive Director, who presented "Embracing Disabilities in an Inclusive Workforce."

Attendees, including the Information Office Supervisor and the Policy Specialist, were presented with new ways to think about diversity initiatives, as speakers addressed topics such as

unconscious bias, LGBTQ+ rights, best practices in regard to diversity within the legal and educational sectors, ADA inclusivity and more.

(2.1 Work in partnership with media, state and local entities/agencies, and public/private organizations to create awareness about hearing loss and the needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals.)

(2.4 Create and promote awareness about programs and services to benefit the deaf and hard of hearing community.)

NASADHH Meeting



On December 9, the Executive Director attended the National Association of State Agencies of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NASADHH) Virtual Conference. Thirty-eight other state agencies were also in attendance. The meeting began with a discussion of national public policy issues led by three national organizations. Barbara Kelly, Executive Director of Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), discussed the over the counter hearing aid bill indicating regulations are still being written. HLAA is closely monitoring the marketing of hearing amplification devices. The next presenter was Howard Rosenblum, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the National Association of the Deaf (NAD). NAD is currently working with the new President-elect Biden's administration to make sure deaf and hard of hearing issues are included in their agenda. They also informed the new administration of the importance of providing interpreters every time the President-elect has a news briefing. The last presenter was Eric Kaika, newly appointed CEO of Teletypewriter's for the Deaf, Inc. (TDI), a nonprofit organization which works to shape America's public policy in telecommunications, media and information technology to advance the interests of all people who are deaf, hard of hearing, late-deafened, deafblind, and deaf-plus (with other disabilities). The CEO indicated his goal is to make the Blue Book, which lists all of the agencies serving deaf and hard of hearing individuals across the US, available in electronic format on their website. He plans to continue to enhance TDI's website and ensure they stay abreast of the most current technology.

(2.1 Work in partnership with media, state and local entities/agencies, and public/private organizations to create awareness about hearing loss and the needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals.)

(2.4 Create and promote awareness about programs and services to benefit the deaf and hard of hearing community.)

KCDHH Participates in EWDC Virtual Training on Personnel Policies



KCDHH staff attended the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet's (EWDC) Legal and Human Resources team's mandatory training on December 2-3 to learn about the nine newly published policy updates. The EWDC used the basic principles and requirements established by the Kentucky Personnel Cabinet and added cabinet-specific requirements to ensure each agency's needs and expectations are fully represented. A link to these policies will be included in the KCDHH Policy Handbook. These policies include:

1. Employee Conduct Expectations 1.01
2. Time and Attendance Expectations 2.01
3. Corrective Action and Disciplinary Action Request Process 3.01
4. Volunteer Policy 4.02
5. Anti-Harassment Statement 5.04
6. Social Media and External Communications Expectations 6.01

- 7. Dress Code Policy 7.02
- 8. ADA Accommodation Request Process 8.02
- 9. Telecommuting Procedure 9.02

(2.1 Work in partnership with media, state and local entities/agencies, and public/private organizations to create awareness about hearing loss and the needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals.)

(2.4 Create and promote awareness about programs and services to benefit the deaf and hard of hearing community.)

KCDHH Express Virtual Signing Santa



Families with deaf and hard of hearing children boarded the KCDHH Express for a North Pole experience with Signing Santa on Saturday, December 19. This Zoom event was an opportunity for families to schedule their own personal time with signing Santa, which included a virtual photo opportunity. Signing storytellers, including Crom Sanders, who is a deaf artist, performer, presenter, writer and teacher featured during KCDHH's DeaFestival, were also on hand to delight attendees with a guided tour of Jessen Reindeer Ranch.

(2.1 Work in partnership with media, state and local entities/agencies, and public/private organizations to create awareness about hearing loss and the needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals.)

(2.4 Create and promote awareness about programs and services to benefit the deaf and hard of hearing community.)





ACCESS CENTER ACTIVITIES

CASLI Testing Site



On October 9, after careful consideration and implementation of appropriate safety measures, including imposing a strict testing schedule limited to the Fridays prior the scheduled cleanings and a limit of two tests on each testing date, KCDHH administered two National Interpreter Certification (NIC) Interview and Performance Exams. Unfortunately, on October 13 KCDHH was notified that one of the test candidates tested positive for COVID-19. KCDHH staff followed appropriate safety protocols, sanitizing all exposed surfaces in addition to notifying the Center for the Assessment of Sign Language Interpretation (CASLI) that the testing site was closed until further notice. The Interpreter I is maintaining a waiting list of test candidates who have expressed an interest in testing at the KCDHH location and will begin rescheduling when the site reopens. CASLI also has a new website <https://www.casli.org/> with updated information on tests for deaf and hearing interpreters.

(4.2 Partner with national, state and local organizations to provide national certification opportunities.)

DCBS Collaboration Group Meeting

The Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) Collaboration Group consist of members from DCBS, Kentucky Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities (KDBHDID) and KCDHH. The group has set goals to meet the objective of improving services with deaf and hard of hearing membered families within DCBS.

On November 4, the Interpreter Referral Specialist met with the Program Administrator of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) Services KDBHDID, the DCBS DHH liaison and Out of Home Care Branch Manager, two liaisons from the Private Child Caring/Child Placing (PCC/CP) Branch, and another Program Administrator within the KDBHDID. This meeting was to update various branches involved with children placement regarding concerns identified within the system, progress on group goals and achievements.

One of the group's goals is to recruit individuals that are interested in becoming involved with the foster care system and to provide support and resources to families that foster a deaf or hard of hearing child. On October 1, the Jefferson Region's Diligent Recruitment Team provided a focused informational session via Zoom about becoming a foster parent and how to be involved in other areas such as respite care, becoming a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer and other areas of volunteer service. This session was geared toward those who are interested in supporting deaf and hard of hearing children.

Another goal is to develop training for sign language interpreters on the DCBS process. On November 12, the Interpreter Referral Specialist and the Program Administrator of DHH Services KDBHDID provided a virtual workshop hosted by the Kentucky Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (KYRID) entitled “Considerations Interpreting in DCBS Situations”. Attendees received three hours of continuing education units (CEUs) for this training.

On December 17, via Zoom, the Interpreter Referral Specialist, the Program Administrator of DHH Services KDBHDID and the DCBS Out of Home Care Branch Manager met with the Supervisor of the Southern Bluegrass Recruitment and Training Team. The group met to plan for the next informational meeting and discuss other ways to recruit those who are interesting in working with deaf membered families.

In the spirit of the Christmas season, the DCBS collaboration group developed a plan to collect gift items for deaf membered families within the DCBS system, specifically foster care. Members of the KCDHH staff also participated, assisting with purchasing some of the gifts. Those items were distributed to the families on December 18.

(4.1 Use a comprehensive approach to coordinate communication access services.)

(4.3 Educate interpreters and promote current interpreting standards.)

(4.4 Partner with public, private and state entities to improve policies regarding communication access.)

KBI Meeting

On December 3, the Interpreter Referral Specialist attended the Kentucky Board of Interpreters (KBI) quarterly meeting. During this meeting the Board discussed the amended regulations that were supposed to be filed with the previous administration in January 2020. The new Board attorney will review the amended regulations, and the Board will hold a special meeting to discuss the regulations on January 28, 2021. The Board also discussed the pros and cons of requiring mentors of temporary licensees to submit their transcripts each time someone applies for a temporary license and lists them as their mentor. The Board voted to require mentors to submit their transcripts for every cycle showing they are active and in good standing. The Board also voted to elect new officers, as the terms for the current Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary are expiring at the end of the year.

(4.3 Educate interpreters and promote current interpreting standards.)

Access Center Assignments

Requests	Filled /pending assignments	Cancelled assignments	Interpreting Hours	Average # of contacts per assignment request
Request for Interpreting	109	1	697	11
Request for Captioning	5	0	31	6
Request for Videoconference	0	0	0	0

(4.1 Use a comprehensive approach to coordinate communication access services.)



TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACCESS PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

KATS Network Advisory Council Meeting



The Program Coordinator attended the Kentucky Assistive Technology Services (KATS) Network Advisory Council meeting on December 15 via Zoom. Updates included committee appointments, Assistive Technology (AT)

Center and Statewide Hearing Aid Assistance and Reuse Program (SHARP) activities as well as Coordinating Center activities and the Coordinating and Assisting the Reuse of Assistive Technology (CARAT) project. Brief updates were also provided by Protection & Advocacy, Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation (KATLC), Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) and KCDHH. The primary topic of interest was the impact of the increase in COVID-19 cases on these programs. As more business is taking place curbside as opposed to in person, additional precautions are now being taken regarding curbside and ramp projects. In addition, the groups planning the next AT conference in the summer of 2021 announced that they are taking a break and will not meet again until March 11.

(5.2 Maintain Partnerships with national organizations and the current Telecommunications Relay Provider to supply the most current and technologically advanced equipment and apps.)

TAP Advisory Board Meeting

On October 20, the Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) Advisory Board met via Zoom for the first time in 2020. Some of the members did not have access to a computer or to Zoom, so the Board did not have a quorum. The Program Coordinator provided a statistical report of the TAP's activities since its last meeting in October 2019 and informed the Board that there was a decrease in the number of requests as well as the amount of equipment ordered due to COVID-19 safety guidelines. She also explained that the TAP department operating procedures have been modified while telecommuting recommendations are in place, and the Document Processing Specialist I works in the office twice a week, picking up and dropping off mail and files as needed. TAP staff is also working on implementing the new procedures for the new Database. In person phone installations and troubleshooting are not permitted during the pandemic, and as a result, the Program Coordinator is now using email and phone calls to help resolve issues. The Hamilton Relay Representative also shared a Power Point, which included their new COVID-19 safety guidelines, developed in accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations. They also reported that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) issued a waiver for the phone answering requirement. In addition, the Hamilton Relay Representative informed the Board that the Kentucky Outreach Coordinator position has been filled and the new Coordinator is fluent in sign language.

(5.2 Maintain Partnerships with national organizations and the current Telecommunications Relay Provider to supply the most current and technologically advanced equipment and apps.)

Telecommunication Access Program Statistics

Request	Applicants Receiving Equipment	Pieces of Equipment Distributed	Pending Order / Waiting List
Applying for STE	0	0	326

(5.1 Provide specialized telecommunications equipment to deaf, deaf/hard of hearing with low vision, hard of hearing, and speech impaired consumers.)

The Telecommunications Access Program...

IT'S FOR YOU!

KC DHH
Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing



INFORMATION, REFERRAL & ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES

Information, Referral and Advocacy Department Meetings

KCDHH's Information, Referral and Advocacy (IRA) Department met on October 5, November 30, December 2 and December 10 to discuss a new "e-newsletter" format for the Communicator as well as requests, referrals and working remotely. The Information Office Supervisor researched specific e-newsletter software and programs offered nationally and collected other Kentucky state agency e-newsletters for the department to review. Following the review, the Network Analyst II was contacted, and he recommended using a modified template he had created for e-blasts. The department agreed with this course of action, and the e-newsletter format for the Communicator was subsequently developed and presented to the Executive Director after undergoing some additional modifications. IRA staff explained that, based on their research and reviews, moving from a printed version to an e-newsletter will make the publication immediately accessible and convenient and will allow KCDHH to publish monthly instead of quarterly. The staff cited the following advantages of transitioning to an e-newsletter:

1. An e-newsletter can drive viewer traffic to the KCDHH website and/or our partners' websites, as links are used in most stories;
2. It provides readers with useful, factual, relevant and current information and updates that establish KCDHH's expertise with other state agencies, businesses and individuals; and
3. It cuts costs and saves time – no paper, printing or postage is required and there is no need for staff members to spend hours of time preparing newsletters for mailing.

(3.7(b) Research and expand opportunities to address information deprivation and isolation among deaf and hard of hearing individuals.)

(3.8(b) Compile information regarding programs, services and barriers that impact the deaf and hard of hearing community.)

ADA Coordinator Training: Emergency Preparedness

On October 21, the Executive Staff Advisor participated in an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator training related to emergency preparedness. Federal, state and local entities as well as communities are increasingly developing emergency management and preparedness plans to handle disasters, which can be very concerning for individuals with disabilities. Successful outcomes for people with disabilities *during* disasters depend on the inclusivity of the plans that are made *before* emergencies happen. This session focused on strategies for successful emergency management planning and the inclusion of individuals with disabilities at various levels (federal, state, and local).

(2.1 Work in partnership with media, state and local entities/agencies, and public/private organizations to create awareness about hearing loss and the needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals.)

ADA Coordinator Training: Accessibility Field Review

The Executive Staff Advisor participated in an ADA Coordinator training related to performing accessibility field reviews on October 22. This session reviewed topics relating to doing a field

review of existing site conditions for compliance with accessibility codes and standards. The focus was on the tools and methodologies used to gather data regarding elements subject to compliance, such as how to ascertain distances, slopes, heights, etc. There was also a brief discussion on important information needed prior to performing the review and how to craft any results in a manner that will best suit the purpose of the survey.

(2.1 Work in partnership with media, state and local entities/agencies, and public/private organizations to create awareness about hearing loss and the needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals.)

Health and Medical Preparedness Advisory Committee Meetings



The Policy Specialist and Information Office Supervisor attended the Health and Medical Preparedness Advisory Committee (HMPAC) meetings on October 12, November 9 and November 16. These meetings updated and presented Kentucky's COVID-19 Vaccination Plan. This plan incorporates the assumptions, guidance and requirements in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID-19 Vaccination Program playbook. The HMPAC Vaccination plan focuses on the key areas of ordering, distribution, communication and data reporting of COVID-19 vaccinations in Kentucky.

(3.8(b) Compile information regarding programs, services and barriers that impact the deaf and hard of hearing community.)

RIT/NTID Workshop on Opioids



The Executive Staff Advisor and the Information Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing attended the Opioid and Stimulant–Overview for Deaf Community workshop on November 10, presented by the Director of Substance and Addiction Intervention Services for the Deaf (SAISD) at the Rochester Institute of Technology/National Technical Institute for the Deaf (RIT/NTID). The workshop was provided by the Kentucky Opioid Response Effort (KORE) and Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS). The purpose of the workshop was to learn more about the effect of opioids and stimulants in general as well as their effect on the deaf community.

(3.7(b) Research and expand opportunities to address information deprivation and isolation among deaf and hard of hearing individuals.)

(3.8(b) Compile information regarding programs, services and barriers that impact the deaf and hard of hearing community.)

EHDI Family Committee Meeting

On November 16, the Executive Staff Advisor participated in a meeting of the Kentucky Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Advisory Board parent work group. This goal of this meeting was to discuss various issues that the group would like to bring to the Advisory Board as a potential focus for the upcoming year. Members gave their input, and the consensus was that gaps in early intervention and family-to-family support were the issues the Board felt were most important. An update was given on the work that Kentucky Hands & Voices has done to date regarding trying to establish legislation related to CMV screening. CMV is the most common non-genetic cause of sensorineural hearing loss as well as the most common viral cause of birth defects and developmental disabilities in the U.S., yet newborns are not currently screened for this infection. The legislation that is being worked on would require newborn screening as well

as create an awareness campaign and provide information and resources to pregnant women and families of infants who are born with CMV. If passed, this legislation will be known as the Bella Dawn Streeval Law in honor of Bella Streeval, a beautiful, 3-year-old Kentuckian who passed away last year due to CMV.

(1.2 Lobby for and support legislation developed by other entities that directly impacts the lives of Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals.)

(2.1 Work in partnership with media, state and local entities/agencies, and public/private organizations to create awareness about hearing loss and the needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals.)

(3.4(a) Partner with and advise local, state and national organizations to improve early identification of hearing loss.)

Kentucky EHDl Advisory Board Meeting

On December 14, the Executive Staff Advisor participated in the Kentucky EHDl Advisory Board meeting. The Office for Children with Special Health Care Needs (OCSHCN) staff discussed recent staff changes and position updates. Because there were multiple changes, the staff will send a printed organizational chart to Advisory Board members. The remainder of the meeting focused on four topics that the members want to pursue in the new year:

1. Inconsistencies in First Steps' usage of "Established Risk" for deaf and hard of hearing children eligibility;
2. "Opt-In" requirement for family-to-family support;
3. Updates to parent and pediatrician letters sent by OCSHCN; and
4. Plans for future teleintervention for First Steps and other clinical uses.

These four issues will be the focus of the Advisory Board, both the parent and the professional work groups, with the goal of making family-to-family support and early intervention more readily accessible to parents.

(2.1 Work in partnership with media, state and local entities/agencies, and public/private organizations to create awareness about hearing loss and the needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals.)

(3.4(a) Partner with and advise local, state and national organizations to improve early identification of hearing loss.)

KATLC Quarterly Meeting



The Information Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing attended the quarterly board meeting for the Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation (KATLC) on December 9. KATLC has partnered with Fifth Third bank for 20 years to provide nontraditional loans for Kentuckians with disabilities.

Unfortunately, the contract will end at the end of 2020. The process of transferring to and working with another financial institution will begin after the New Year. When a new financial institution is chosen, staff will notify the Board.

While the total number of loans requested has dropped during the pandemic, loans for vehicles, hearing aids and other devices are still being granted. The Board voted to approve all accepted, denied, incomplete and not accepted loans in this quarter. Newly appointed members had the opportunity to ask questions in regard to this program. The next quarterly meeting is scheduled for March 9, 2021.

(2.1 Work in partnership with media, state and local entities/agencies, and public/private organizations to create awareness about hearing loss and the needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals.)

(3.2(a) Advise state agencies and private committees, boards and taskforces in matters related to deaf and hard of hearing issues.)

Funding Opportunity for Domestic Violence Program

The Information Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing was invited to meet virtually with the Program Administrator of DHH Services KDBHDID and other stakeholders on December 10. There are funding opportunities available from the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) to potentially establish a statewide domestic violence program for the deaf and hard of hearing. The first step is finding an agency or non-profit that would be willing to accept the grant and assist with establishing the program. KCDHH and the Knowledge Center on Deafness (KCD) were mentioned as potential candidates that could take on the responsibility for this program. The Information Coordinator stated that the decision will ultimately be made by the Executive Director. Other agencies and non-profit organizations were also mentioned and will be explored in the days to come. No future meetings have been established at this time.

(3.7(b) Research and expand opportunities to address information deprivation and isolation among deaf and hard of hearing individuals.)

(3.8(b) Compile information regarding programs, services and barriers that impact the deaf and hard of hearing community.)

Kentucky Colonels 2021 Good Works Grant Training Webinar



The Information Office Supervisor participated in the Kentucky Colonels Good Works Webinar hosted by the Grant Administrator, Executive Director and a Trustee on December 10. KCDHH, in partnership with the Knowledge Center on Deafness (KCD), received a grant in 2020 to purchase clear masks for parents and professionals working with deaf and hard of hearing students. This webinar was a required training for organizations who wish to reapply in 2021. The webinar covered the 2021 timeline, application guidelines and changes to the 2021 application and also released dates for the 2021 grant cycle, eligibility, letter of intent, application, submissions and grant awards and notifications.

(2.1 Work in partnership with media, state and local entities/agencies, and public/private organizations to create awareness about hearing loss and the needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals.)

University of Louisville LGBTQA Panel



The Information Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing attended the Deaf Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Asexual/Aromantic (LGBTQA) panel for the University of Louisville's (UL) American Sign Language (ASL) Department on November 19. They provided Zoom panels for different groups within the deaf community to give the UL ASL and Interpreter Training Program (ITP) students the opportunity to learn and ask questions while continuing to follow COVID-19 safety protocols. The panel was developed in an effort to provide an appropriate avenue for students to "socialize" with the Deaf community and fulfill the department's requirement for "social" hours. There were approximately 45 UL students in attendance.

(2.1 Work in partnership with media, state and local entities/agencies, and public/private organizations to create awareness about hearing loss and the needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals.)

Eyes for Hope Taskforce Meeting

The Information Coordinator for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing participated in the Eyes for Hope Taskforce meeting on November 20. The Eyes for Hope Taskforce's purpose is to gather and pool different resources for deaf addicts in Kentucky. The Information Coordinator joined the Taskforce to be proactive and advocate for better services as KCDHH begins to respond to requests from those seeking treatment. Because Kentucky is lacking in providing accessibility, the Information Coordinator believes serving on the Taskforce will lead to more resources and contributions by KCDHH. The Taskforce consisted of deaf leaders, a Seven Counties Counselor, two deaf individuals in recovery and two social work interns from Gallaudet University.

(2.1 Work in partnership with media, state and local entities/agencies, and public/private organizations to create awareness about hearing loss and the needs of deaf and hard of hearing individuals.)

Governors Early Childhood Advisory Council



On November 19, the Executive Staff Advisor attended the Early Childhood Advisory Council meeting. The new Commissioner of Education spoke about how everyone is working through how we process and implement the governor's executive order. He explained that the early childhood and preschool programs are able to continue in person at this time for several reasons, including evidence that the virus transmission rates among young children is lower than in other age groups, and their symptoms are much less severe if they do come in contact with it. It is also easier to keep groups of preschool and elementary students together than the higher grades. This group is especially vulnerable, as there are a high number with special needs from disadvantaged, low income or historically underserved backgrounds, and it is vital to continue their development of foundational and basic skills.

The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) Associate Director discussed the new instructional resources page that KDE has provided to support teaching and learning, containing information and resources related to collaboration and co-teaching models, specially designed instruction, transition to postsecondary readiness, social/emotional and preschool. KDE has also created a Preschool Coordinator Advisory Group with the purpose of identifying the unmet needs of the Kentucky preschool program, including special education and general education issues.

The Governor's Office for Early Childhood Executive Director brought everyone's attention to the fact that Kentucky has, for the past five years, hovered at 50% of children being ready for kindergarten, which means that our third grade math and reading proficiency scores are flat. She stated that it is common knowledge that when children start behind, they stay behind. She feels that we are not being proactive enough because we're waiting until kindergarten to say that 50% of our kids are not ready. She indicated that we should be using as much data as we can on a regular basis, starting well before kindergarten, to improve outcomes for our children. Obviously, this is not something anyone can resolve quickly, but the advisory council will continue to work toward addressing this issue.

(2.6 Advocate for equal access to education for deaf and hard of hearing individuals, cradle to grave.)

The Office of Information Services made **3,548** new contacts associated with **590** closed requests during this quarter, broken down by category:

Nature	Contacts	Closed Requests	Pending Requests
AC: Evaluations	15	2	0
AC: Request for Captioner	30	2	2
AC: Request for Interpreter	939	117	19
ADV: Correctional	7	1	0
ADV: Education	25	2	0
ADV: Employment	18	3	0
ADV: General	15	3	0
ADV: Medical	25	5	0
ADV: Mental Health	7	1	0
IRA: ASL & Linguistics	11	3	0
IRA: Coping with Hearing Loss	24	7	0
IRA: Education	2	1	0
IRA: Employment	10	3	0
IRA: Families & Children	22	6	0
IRA: General Services	41	10	0
IRA: Hearing Aid Banks	98	32	0
IRA: Hearing Loss	6	2	0
IRA: Interpreting	39	12	0
IRA: Mental Health Services	7	2	0
IRA: Social & Recreation	1	1	0
IRA: Technology	64	22	0
IRA: Veterans	6	2	0
TAP: Received Application	785	0	0
TAP: Application Status Check	36	0	0
TAP: Other	72	0	0
TAP: Equipment Problems	31	0	0
TAP: Request Application	203	0	0
DeaFestival	5	2	0
KCDHH: Mailing List	18	6	0
PUB : ICE CARDS	9	3	0
PUB: Visor Cards	29	8	0
Special Projects	948	359	3
Report total:	3548	590	24

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(2.6 Advocate for equal access to education for deaf and hard of hearing individuals, cradle to grave.)

(3.2(a) Advise state agencies and private committees, boards and taskforces in matters related to deaf and hard of hearing issues.)

Public Relations Output

The Office of Information Services focuses on Public Relations (PR) efforts and outreach activities to increase awareness of services offered by KCDHH. This quarter, **804,177** informational and public relations items were distributed.

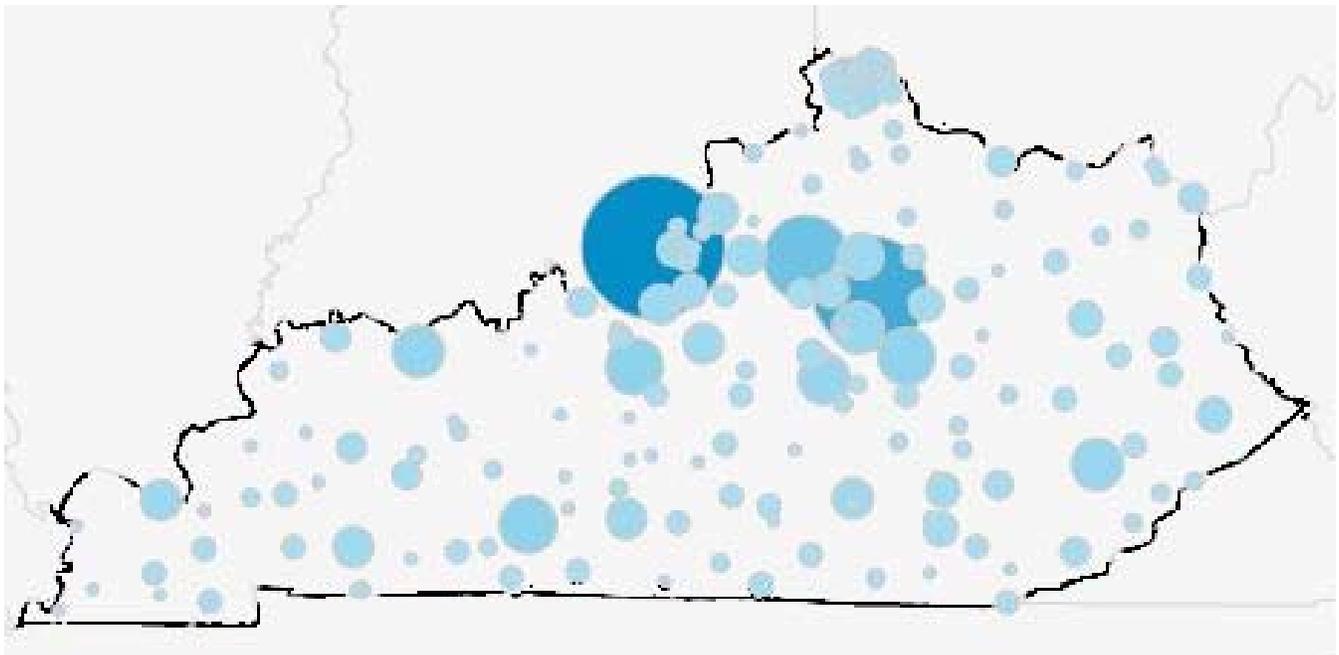
PR Dissemination	
<i>Method of Dissemination</i>	<i>Number Disseminated</i>
Hard Copy	90
Blitz	5,920
Social Media	798,167
TOTAL	804,177

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(3.2(a) Advise state agencies and private committees, boards and taskforces in matters related to deaf and hard of hearing issues.)

KCDHH Web Counter Hits: October 1 – December 31, 2020

The following image depicts the various cities and towns throughout Kentucky from which consumers visited our Web site. The bigger the circle, the more visits that circle represents.



We have had 17,766 visitors from Kentucky this quarter, which represents a 203% increase of visitors over the previous quarter (4,896). This explosive increase is largely due to the Executive Director's coronavirus vlogs, which attracted nearly 5,200 visitors alone. Interest in the request forms as well as the Telecommunications Access Program and DeaFestival web pages remain about the same as previous quarters. Interest in the clear mask distribution was high at the beginning of the quarter but appears to have waned toward the end, as the distribution of these clear masks seem to have reached its saturation point.