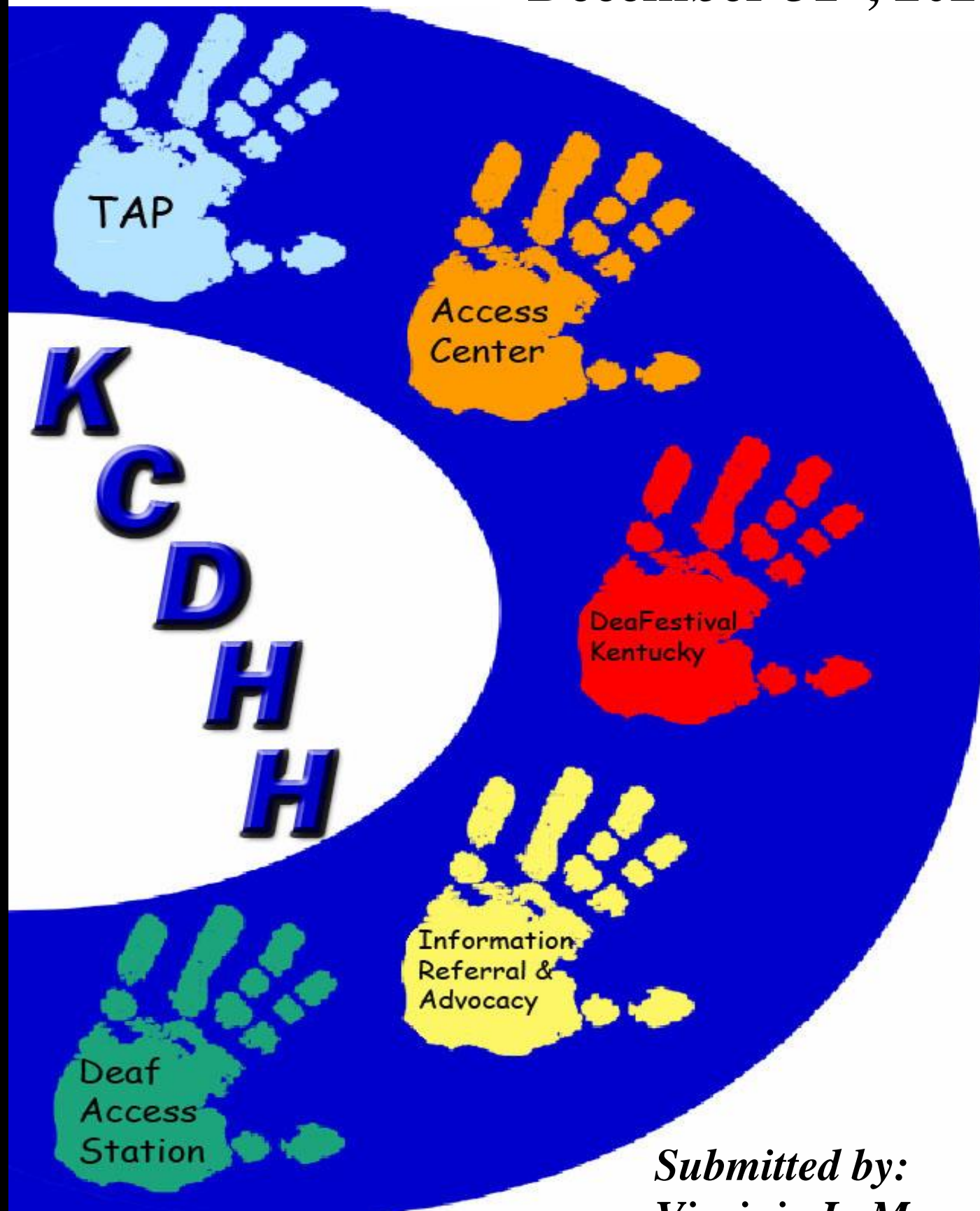


# *Agency Report*

October 1<sup>st</sup> through  
December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021



*Submitted by:*  
*Virginia L. Moore*



## KENTUCKY COMMISSION ON THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

### QUARTERLY ACTIVITIES

October 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021

#### 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



The Kentucky General Assembly will begin its 2022 session on January 4 as each chamber will gavel in at noon for the 60-day session. Although it is considered a “long” session, legislators have much work to do to tackle major priorities before the session ends on April 14.

Key issues to watch during this session include:

- Redistricting – Every ten years, the Kentucky General Assembly undertakes redistricting, the process to redraw the state’s legislative districts to reflect population changes in the state based on the decennial U.S. Census.
- Budget – During the sixty-day “long” session of 2022, the General Assembly will craft a new two-year spending plan (budget).
- Disaster Aid – Lawmakers will focus on bringing disaster aid to areas that were affected by the devastating tornados in December 2021.

Over 100 bills were pre-filed before the session began.

## Regulations

On November 30, the Executive Director met with the Interim Cabinet Secretary (ICS) to discuss hearing screening for deaf or hard of hearing students, and the need to have legislation or regulation changes in the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) requirements for children starting school K-12 that includes hearing screening requirements. The ICS indicated she would request a meeting with KDE to discuss the issues.

*(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.)*

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

## CMV/Bella’s Bill Committee Meeting



On November 15, the Executive Staff Advisor attended the Congenital Cytomegalovirus (CMV)/Bella’s Bill Legislation meeting via Zoom. It was announced that Senator Max Wise is willing to sponsor the bill again so a recap of what happened during the last legislation meeting was given and the CMV/Bella’s Bill committee plans to continue to meet in order to work toward presenting the bill during the 2022 legislative session.

*(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.)*

## ***Budget***

KCDHH's Budget priorities were shared with the Cabinet Secretary's office and include KCDHH's request for a 15<sup>th</sup> position, Interpreter Supervisor. The Secretary's office considers each of the agencies priorities and provides this to the Governor's office. The Governor's Office ranks the priorities for each Cabinet and during the second week of January, proposes a state budget to the General Assembly that includes the highest ranked priorities.

## ***Education Workforce Development Cabinet Merges with Labor Cabinet***

The Governor announced the merger of the Labor Cabinet and Education and Workforce Development Cabinet in November. His administration has taken several steps to address the weaknesses in the unemployment insurance (UI) system, which has suffered from years of funding and staffing cuts. A new UI system is needed, including an identification process to eliminate fraudulent claims, and additional staffing is needed to effectively run the system. The Governor States this is fourth in his priorities of initiatives.

Governor Beshear states, "We've had an opportunity to talk to numerous folks about this and we believe, and our feedback is, that education and workforce are inseparable. They are inseparable whether we're talking about training, whether we're talking about K-12, and then going into the workforce, whether we're talking about K-16 or graduate school and then going into the workforce. The labor force is a continuum, and it's been recognized as such by the country. Kentucky has had a hard time competing for grants because of the current structure of the workforce ladder. So, we believe that this is a positive step that will make us more competitive, and also more resilient."

## ***Personnel***

KCDHH currently has three vacant positions:

- Administrative Secretary – Three applications have been received and interviews will be scheduled in early January.
- Document Processing Specialist – This position has been open to the public and 16 applications have been received. Each is being reviewed and qualified individuals will be interviewed in January.
- Policy Specialist – Paperwork has been completed requesting the advertisement of this position. Personnel will determine when it will officially be open to the public.

## ***Tornados in Western Kentucky***

The worst tornados to ever hit Kentucky came to the Western Kentucky area the first week of December. More than a 212-mile swath was torn through the area, and many cities, such as Dawson Springs, Mayfield, and Bowling Green were devastated, along with destruction in 20 other counties. The Governor's Office swiftly applied for a state of emergency and it was approved by the President of the United States (POTUS), allowing for much needed assistance and financial support to be available to the area. POTUS toured the disaster area a few days

after the event and pledged 100% financial help to residents for 30 days, including debris removal.

During the time of the disaster, KCDHH pulled together a resource page, which included how an individual can replace any telecommunication device and hearing aid. Several V-Logs were posted and shared on Facebook, Instagram, and the KCDHH website.

The Kentucky Education and Labor Cabinet (ELC) pulled together the following resources and disaster assistance:

- Unemployment Insurance (UI)
- Working with USDOL on: Dislocated Worker Funds Grant
- Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) Application
- Assistance from other states to supplement Kentucky's UI staffing and resources, including mobile UI office units
- Identified five local libraries to accommodate centralized, temporary UI offices: Hardin Co., Butler Co., Trigg Co., and McCracken Co. Also working on a fifth location in a former Walmart building in Mayfield
- Working with ID.me to address ID verification challenges due to lost documents.
- Working on transportation options to assist individuals who have lost options.

**The Kentucky Department of Education is:**

- Currently working on damage assessments of all school facilities, equipment, etc.
- Meeting with School Superintendents to address storm and COVID needs, school calendars, emergency days, as well as feeding students.
- Schools currently without internet/phone service: Caldwell, Fulton, Graves, Mayfield, and Dawson Springs
- Working with Mayfield Middle School, which suffered more damage than the High School
- Working with Personnel on closure leave for staff at Area Technology Centers in Fulton Co., Mayfield/Graves Co., and Warren Co.
- Discussing Workplace Safety
- KY Occupational Safety & Health have compliance staff on-site at various locations to address workplace and first responder safety matters

***Database Meeting***

The KCDHH Staff continue to work with the Database team at the Commonwealth Office of Technology (COT) to make changes to improve collection of statistical information.

*(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.)*

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

***Communication Access during COVID-19***

The Executive Director, Executive Staff Interpreter and the Interpreter Referral Specialist continue to provide interpreting services for the Governor's COVID updates. The new Omincrom



variant of COVID is spreading faster than the other variants but seems to be less dangerous to those who are vaccinated.

### ***Presentations by the Executive Director***



On October 5, the University of Kentucky's College of Communication and Information's (UKCI) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee welcomed KCDHH's Executive Director for a presentation via Zoom. The presentation was titled "Virginia Moore—Communicating for All Kentuckians." She spoke about accessibility and inclusivity during the global pandemic.

*(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.)*

### ***2021 Kentucky Leadership, Equality, Accessibility, and Diversity Conference***



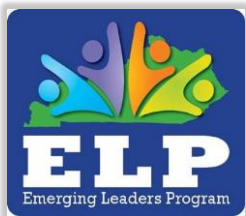
The 35th Annual Governor's Leadership, Equality, Accessibility and Diversity (LEAD) Conference, one of the largest conferences of its kind in the region and the largest in the state, hosted over one thousand virtual attendees on November 18-19. The two-day virtual conference featured an all-star lineup of regional panelists and speakers from both the private and public sectors, including the KCDHH Executive Director, who participated in a panel discussion, "Addressing Physical, Technological, and Attitudinal Barriers to Create a Disability-Inclusive Workplace."

Attendees, including the Information Office Supervisor, were presented with new ways to think about diversity initiatives, as speakers addressed topics such as diversity and the arts, characteristics of an inclusive leader, women in the workplace, barriers creating a disability-inclusive workplace, resilience in the workplace, understanding and thriving in today's multigenerational workplace, understanding micro-aggressions and implicit bias, combatting pay equity, and the evolution of legal remedies for past discrimination.

*(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.)*

### ***Emerging Leaders Program Meetings***



The Program Coordinator attended the monthly Emerging Leaders Program (ELP) via Zoom on October 1. She watched a Legislative Process presentation given by the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet's (EWDC) Deputy Chief of Staff. She also participated in a coaching session and received feedback on her project.

The Program Coordinator also attended the monthly ELP, via Zoom, on November 3 and watched the presentation on EWDC's policies given by the Executive Director, Office of Administrative Services; Budget/Finance Basics presentation given by the Fiscal Manager,

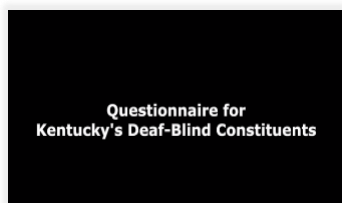
Division of Financial Management; Performance Evaluation Overview: Their Importance and the Process , given by the Assistant Director, Human Resources; and the Hiring and Selection Process, given by the Human Resources Branch Manager, Office of Administrative Services.

The Program Coordinator attended ELP via Zoom on December 1 and participated in the group session and gave updates on her 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.)*

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

### **Deaf-Blind Accessibility Study group**



The Deaf-Blind Questionnaire was made available to the public October 1 – 29, and the results were compiled prior to the Kentucky Deaf-Blind Community study group subcommittee meeting on November 1. During the meeting, results were discussed and it was noted that KCDHH will follow up as needed. On November 2, an informational video interview was recorded with the Helen Keller

National Center Southeast Regional Representative, which was followed by another video interview on November 16 with a representative from the HKNC iCanConnect equipment distribution program. These informational videos, as well as the three other video interviews conducted in September, have been posted on the Deaf-Blind pages of the KCDHH website, which were made available to the public on December 1. The entire study group met for a final time on December 7 to review the group's activities in light of the goals and objectives set when the study group was formed. The Executive Director expressed her appreciation of the Chair's leadership and the group's hard work, especially regarding the development of the Deaf-Blind pages, which offer a wealth of information and resources regarding deaf-blindness. The Study Group's final report will be provided at the January quarterly Commission meeting.

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

### **Deaf-Blind Web Pages Added to KCDHH Website**

The Network Analyst II launched KCDHH's new Deaf-Blind web pages on December 1 as part of the KCDHH website. The new Deaf-Blind tab, [kcdhh.ky.gov](http://kcdhh.ky.gov), provides access to a wealth of information and resources for Deaf-Blind consumers, family members, educators, and service providers. Coffee Chat videos, located under the "Awareness and Advocacy" section of the Deaf-Blind pages, also feature Deaf-Blind Kentuckians, as well as representatives from the Helen Keller National Center, the Kentucky Deaf-Blind Project, and the



Kentucky Department of Education.

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

## ***Residence at Courtyard Crossings, in Honor of KCDHH Commissioner, Offers Barrier-Free Living for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Individuals***

On October 15, the KCDHH Executive Director was on hand for a ribbon-cutting ceremony to see former KCDHH Commissioner Betty Timon's dream become a reality with the opening of the new Spire Development Residences at Courtyard Crossing, in Independence, KY. The Residences offer barrier-free living for deaf and hard of hearing individuals. The Community Room is named after Ms. Timon, in honor of her enduring advocacy for deaf and hard of hearing consumers.



For over 45 years, Betty Timon advocated for deaf and hard of hearing individuals. Her own journey with a hearing loss began when she was 35 years old, when she was diagnosed with a significant hearing loss, and over the years, it progressed to a profound loss. Betty became a Kentucky resident in 1990 and served on the KCDHH

Commission Board for over 18 years. One of her many passions was advocating for senior citizens. Ms. Timon worked tirelessly during her time as a Commissioner to promote accessibility in nursing homes, and began working with KCDHH and developers to establish a living space where individuals could live, socialize, and support each other without barriers.

The new Courtyard Crossings, located at 133-B McCullum Pike, Independence, KY, offers 30 one-bedroom apartment homes and 17 two-bedroom apartment homes equipped with open floor plans, visual strobe fire and carbon monoxide alarms, bed shakers synced with alarm clocks and life-safety systems, matte paint to reduce visual glare, video-based entry systems, and wireless smart monitoring systems to alert residents about open doors, temperature issues, motion activity, voltage issues, and water issues. The common areas include a community room with a kitchenette, supportive services room, laundry room, and features Real Time Text (RTT) and TTY technology. Betty's memory is honored and accessibility provided in this facility.

*(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 Meeting***



On October 26, the Policy Specialist and Information Office Supervisor attended the quarterly meeting of the Health and Medical Preparedness Advisory Committee (HMPAC) via Zoom. After the Countermeasures Program Manager called the meeting to order, the Senior Deputy Commissioner for Clinical Affairs in the Department of Public Health (DPH) shared that COVID-19 cases were declining at that time, which could be attributed in part to the increased number of vaccinated individuals. She emphasized the importance of vaccinations and referred attendees to the vaccination tab on the ky.gov website.



The State Health Operations Center (SHOC) Logistics Chief indicated they were back down to level one activation and were working to support the vaccination effort as well as testing and increased use of monoclonal antibody treatment. A representative of the local health departments reported that they were waiting for federal guidance regarding the rollout of COVID-19 boosters. In the meantime, they have been working to increase testing availability in addition to continuing regular services throughout the pandemic.

The Naxolone Distribution/Mobile Harm Reduction Program Administrator provided a program update as well as a First Responders – Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (FR-Cara) Subcommittee report. In addition, the Kentucky Board of Emergency Medical Services (KBEMS), the Kentucky Pharmacist Association, and the Kentucky Hospital Association (KHA) also shared updates. In closing, the SHOC Logistics Chief thanked all those in attendance for their hard work and encouraged everyone to continue to promote vaccinations throughout the Commonwealth.

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

### **DeaFestival 2022 Planning Committee Meetings**



The KCDHH DeaFestival planning committee has decided that DeaFestival 2022 will take place at Norton Center for the Arts at Centre College, in Danville. The team met with staff from the Norton Center on November 9 and December 7 via zoom to discuss production timelines, logistics, and festival needs. On December 20, the committee met with local hotels and alternate lodging attractions in the Danville area to secure the blocks needed for that weekend. An official “Save the Date” postcard has been posted on KCDHH’s Facebook page and the DeaFestival website will be updated with information for the public when ready.

*(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 Meetings**



In October, the Executive Director had a follow-up meeting with the Legislative Director of the National Association for the Deaf (NAD) in relationship to the meeting with Advancing States. NAD is in the process of looking at national legislation to better assist deaf and hard of hearing senior citizens. KCDHH will continue to monitor this initiative.

In October, November, and December, the Executive Director (ED) worked with the CEO of the NAD and the Executive Director of the Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services regarding the Law Enforcement training (LE Training). As a result of the national push for police training and racism and COVID, the LE training has been derailed. Meetings between NASADHH and NAD were to look for a way to put this training need back on track. One suggestion is to have a round table discussion regarding the need to understand deafness and race. From there, the group is hoping training

can be designed for police regarding communicating with Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals. This round table discussion is to take place in mid-February.

*(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.)*

### **Vocational Rehabilitation**

On November 22, the Executive Director met with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) Deputy Executive Director, Assistant Director, and the Division Supervisor to discuss the need to look ahead on how to collaborate and include job opportunities for the deaf and hard of hearing population. Kentucky is seeing its largest economic boom with business moving into and expanding in Kentucky during the next three years. Some of these jobs will require specialized training. KCDHH is also involved in the ELP program, which will be developing a manual on how to work with deaf and hard of hearing candidates for jobs. OVR was very interested and is asking to be involved with the development of the hiring manual for the deaf and hard of hearing community.

On December 8, the Executive Director met with the Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director, Executive Staff Advisor, and four Workforce Development consultants, Office of Employer & Apprenticeship Services, Kentucky Career Center to discuss the need to include deaf and hard of hearing in the outreach effort for new jobs coming into Kentucky. They appreciated the partnership to pull in more qualified employees, with over new 1,800 jobs coming to Kentucky. There was also discussion about the new resource manual on hiring deaf and hard of hearing individuals. The group was very interested in learning more on how to recruit deaf and hard of hearing individuals. Future meetings were discussed.

*(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.)*

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





## ACCESS CENTER ACTIVITIES

### ***DCBS Collaboration Group Meeting***



The Department for Community Based Services (DCBS) Collaboration Group consists of members from DCBS, Kentucky Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities (KDBHDID), KCDHH, and the Aetna SKY program. This past quarter, the group met on October 20. The group held an extensive discussion on the data breakdown of out-of-home placement for deaf and hard of hearing children. The data was broken down regionally by the type of placement and the average age of children. The group discussed the Foster Care Project and the Program Coordinator with KBDHDI has been working diligently in putting vendors in place with the different components, such as screeners, language mentors, communication skills, and assessments, etc.

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

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

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

### ***Kentucky Board of Interpreters Meeting***



The Kentucky Board of Interpreters (KBI) met on November 2 to swear in the recently elected and appointed board members. During this meeting, the board discussed filing an extension for temporary licensees due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor. The board decided to table the issue to see if the State of Emergency is over or if the Governor will extend it on January 15. The board met again on December 2 to discuss licenses issued since the last regular meeting, regulations, statutes, and website accessibility. The previous board and legal counsel had made suggestions to the regulations. However, since the previous legal counsel is no longer with the board, the board decided to table any further discussion until their replacement has had an opportunity to review the regulations along with the previous board comments. The board discussed statute KRS 309.301, related to non-resident interpreters working in the Commonwealth less than twenty (20) days per year. The board would like to change this verbiage to meet a stricter jurisdiction for those who work in video remote settings who live in other states and those working in Kentucky from surrounding states that do not adhere to Kentucky's licensure laws. The KBI website team is working on the website to make sure it is accessible to, not only interpreters, but to deaf and hard hearing constituents.

*(4.3 Educate interpreters and promote current interpreting standards.)*



## TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACCESS PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

### ***TAP Advisory Board Meeting***

On October 21, the Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) Advisory Board met via Zoom. The Board had the lowest quorum to date. The Program Coordinator and Administrative Specialist II gave a statistical and activities update from the last Board meeting in April 2021. The Program Coordinator informed the board that there has been a consistent delay with iPhone and iPads due to Apple's prolonged shortage of chips and there have also been issues with the supply chain and demands.

The Program Coordinator also informed the Advisory Board that KCDHH is adopting a new policy for TAP; ensuring funds are available through the monthly budget to order equipment. TAP is working to finalize a new Request for Proposal (RFP), which has been extended under emergency order and will hopefully be extended for an additional year. The delay in approval of the RFP has been due to COVID. The Program Coordinator explained that she and the Administrative Specialist II attended the Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program Association (TEDPA) business meeting via Zoom and presented the app of MyXX B App for DeafBlind Applications. The Board was amazed by the app. Three applicants also introduced themselves at the meeting.

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

### ***Training Session***

The Program Coordinator conducted a training session on December 3 with the new point of contact for the Louisville TAP Demonstration cabinet. The point of contact was thrilled to receive training on how to test the phone equipment with consumers.

*(5.1 Provide specialized telecommunications equipment to deaf and hard of hearing consumers through the Telecommunications Access Program.)*

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

### ***Demo Session***

On December 6, the Program Coordinator did trouble shooting for a consumer with their iPad and iPhone. She found it easier to explain to the consumer in person, who was caretaker for her husband.

*(5.1 Provide specialized telecommunications equipment to deaf and hard of hearing consumers through the Telecommunications Access Program.)*

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

### ***KATS Network Advisory Council Meetings***



The Program Coordinator attended the Kentucky Assistive Technology Services (KATS) Network Advisory Council meeting on December 9, which included updates on the KATS Coordinating

Center, Assistive Technology (AT) Center, and Statewide Hearing Aid Assistance and Reuse Program (SHARP) activities, as well as Coordinating Center activities, and the Coordinating and Assistance Reuse of Assistive Technology (CARAT) project. The Spotlight video this quarter was on Redwood Assistive Technology Resource Center.

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







## INFORMATION, REFERRAL & ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES

### ***Governor's Office of Early Childhood Shared Accountability Committee Meeting***

On October 8, the Executive Staff Advisor attended the Governor's Office of Early Childhood (GOEC) Shared Accountability Committee meeting. Since this committee is attempting to locate gaps in data collection and reporting within the Kentucky Early Childhood programs, a large portion of this meeting focused on the federal requirements for Child Find which is part of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and has been a law since 1976. Initially, Part B, Special Education, was entirely responsible for identifying all children who were potentially eligible for services and later when Part C, Early Intervention, was put into place, part of the responsibility was transferred to that system. Kentucky's Part C Coordinator explained that Child Find within Part C can be very confusing because the federal law lets each state Part C program set their own eligibility requirements. Because states differ in their eligibility requirements, there is no set standard, which can make it difficult to draw the line in determining exactly which children are in fact eligible for Child Find. Kentucky Part C currently accepts referrals from various programs, as well as self-referrals from families, but they still struggle with the birth to age one group since they often have to wait until a development delay is noticed before they can assess and provide services. Still, it was reported that in 2019, pre-COVID, Kentucky's Part C program was serving 18,000 children.

*(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.)*

### ***Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Conference Planning Committee***



The Executive Staff Advisor continues to participate in monthly meetings with the Annual Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHQDI) Conference planning committee during this quarter on October 11 and November 8. Final selection of plenary speakers was announced. Discussion was had related to states who may currently have out of state travel banned for state employees and officers due to discrimination against individuals on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. It was decided that the EHQDI Annual conference would continue in spite of difficulties this may present.

*(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 Association of Government Communicators Luncheon***



The Information Office Supervisor attended a luncheon meeting via zoom with the Kentucky Association of Government Communicators on October 20. The luncheon featured guest speaker and anchor of WLEX-Television, Lexington. She spoke on the strange world of broadcasting during the pandemic.

*(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.)*

## **Kentucky Colonels Webinar**



The Information Office Supervisor participated in a Kentucky Colonels Webinar via Zoom on November 18. The webinar presented information on changes to the grant guidelines for the 2022 grant cycle. A letter of interest is due any time after December 1 and funding will be limited to items and/or projects that can be seen or touched.

*(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.)*

## **Owensboro Public School Presentation**



On November 29, the Executive Staff Advisor met with students and staff from Owensboro Public School to talk about her experiences growing up with a hearing loss and being the parent of two children with a hearing loss. The Executive Staff Advisor also talked about her position at the Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and its programs and services.

A Q&A session was held and many students asked a variety of questions.

*(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.)*

## **KATLC Quarterly Meetings**



The Information Coordinator attended the quarterly board meeting via Zoom on December 1. The board reviewed the current outstanding loans on the books with the previous lender. The board is pleased to see loans are being paid off or before the scheduled date. New loans will not be administered until the new lender is established. Two of the board members are up for reappointments or can choose to opt out

for new public members to be appointed. Decisions will be made in January. The next board meeting will be March 9, 2022, via Zoom.

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

## **Records Retention Meeting**



The Information Office Supervisor met with the Executive Administrative Secretary/Records Retention Officer for the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet, Office of Legal and Legislative Services on December 14. She updated the Information Office Supervisor on staff requirements to delete non work-related emails in outlook or to set up outlook to delete emails after two years. She also updated her on storage policies at the Kentucky Department of Library and Archives (KDLA).

*(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.)*

## **RETAIN Meeting**

On December 16, the Information, Referral, and Advocacy department met with team members from RETAIN (Retaining Employment and Talent After Injury/Illness Network) to learn how their program can benefit the deaf and hard of hearing community. RETAIN Kentucky, a federally funded program, implemented by the University of Kentucky, is expanding services to help

thousands of newly injured and ill employees across the Commonwealth stay in the workforce. RETAIN Kentucky is expanding to serve more than 3,000 employees across Kentucky. The free program is open to employees 18 and older who have non-occupational illnesses or injuries that prevent them from performing their jobs. Participants will get support to identify their stay-at-work and return-to-work goals and take steps to achieve those goals.

*(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 Meeting



On December 16, the Executive Staff Advisor attended the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) meeting. The Governor's Office of Early Childhood Executive Director opened the meeting by showing a short video with messages from ECAC members that were shown at the Early Childhood Institute (ECI) in November, as well as data that was collected from attendees related to current and future ECI events. The Executive Directors for the Cabinet for Health and Family Services/Division of Child Care and the Head Start Collaboration Office gave updates on the impact of the Governor's recent State of Emergency declaration related to the tornados on child care provisions in the impacted areas. The Kentucky Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Early Learning announced the statewide expansion of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library book gifting program to Kentucky. This program will gift books each month to children 0-5 years old, free of charge to families, through funding shared by Dolly, the state of Kentucky and local community partnerships.

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

## 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, **390,233** informational and public relations items were distributed.

PR Dissemination	
<i>Method of Dissemination</i>	<i>Number Disseminated</i>
Hard Copy	500
Blitz	7,465
Social Media	382,268
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>390,233</b>

*(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.)*

## Vlogs

In the last quarter, KCDHH released the following informative vlogs in ASL with captioning:

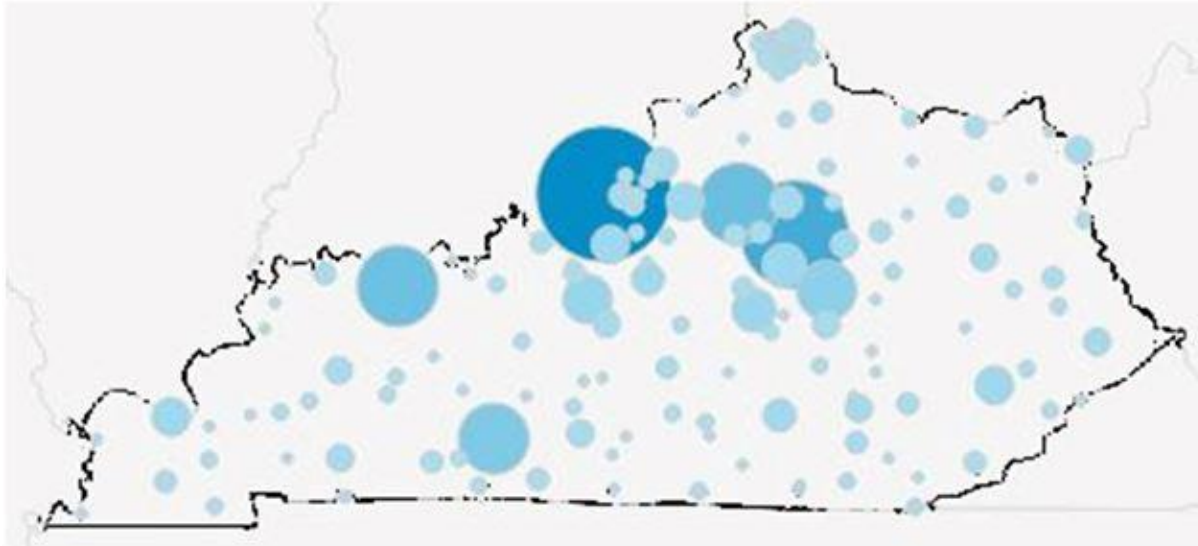
- Donation request for Western Kentucky deaf and hard of hearing tornado victims
- Using Video Phone/Telephone number for FEMA registration
- Information related to Red Cross/FEMA resources for those impacted by tornados
- KCDHH Executive Director's briefs related to the Western Kentucky tornado events

- TAP Advisory Board vacancies
- New Deaf-Blind Webpages available
- Courtyard Crossing Grand Opening
- Deaf-Blind Questionnaire

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

### **KCDHH Web Counter Hits: October 1, 2021- December 31, 2021**

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.



KCDHH had 12,385 visitors from Kentucky this quarter, which represents a 258% increase in visitors over the previous quarter (3,457). The top 5 pages of our website that attracted the most attention this quarter were the front page of our website, the Vlog, the DeaFestival, the request forms, and the KCDHH staff page.

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

# TEAM KENTUCKY