



2015 Fiscal Year Annual Report

July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2015

Douglas Ducey
Governor



Sherri L. Collins
Executive Director

1400 W. Washington * Room 126 * Phoenix, AZ 85007

acdhh.org

The Honorable Douglas Ducey
Governor, State of Arizona
1700 W. Washington
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Dear Governor Ducey:

In accordance with A.R.S. §36-1944, I am pleased to submit the 2015 Annual Report on behalf of the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing (ACDHH).

The ACDHH staff, under the leadership of Executive Director Sherri Collins, worked tirelessly this past year to achieve the overall goal of improving the quality of life for Arizona's Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Deaf-Blind and persons with speech difficulties. Numerous accomplishments are highlighted in this report.

On behalf of Arizona's more than one million Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Deaf-Blind and persons with speech difficulties, I thank you for your strong support of the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing.

Respectfully,

Sue Kay Kneifel

| Sue Kay Kneifel
Acting Chairperson
Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing

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About ACDHH

The Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing (ACDHH) was established in 1977 to improve the quality of life for deaf and hard of hearing residents. ACDHH serves as a statewide information referral center for issues related to people with hearing loss, oversees the Arizona Relay Service (AZRS), the Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program (AZTEDP) and licenses American Sign Language Interpreters. In addition, the agency serves citizens who are deaf-blind and who have speech difficulties as well. The agency name was changed in 1985 to the Arizona Council for the Hearing Impaired, and in 2000 was again changed to its present name.

ACDHH aspires to be a national leader in communication access, support services and community empowerment throughout the state. ACDHH staff members serve as the statewide resource on issues concerning the deaf and the hard of hearing communities by:

- Providing information and referral
- Conducting training and outreach events
- Distributing Telecommunications Equipment
- Overseeing Arizona Telecommunications Relay Service
- Staying abreast of local, state and national trends
- Licensing American Sign Language Interpreters
- Certifying American Sign Language Teachers

Keeping the deaf and hard of hearing community and the general public informed and connected are key services at ACDHH. It is for this reason a weekly email newsletter, a comprehensive resource library, proactive media relations efforts and agency social media outlets are provided. These resources keep the public well-informed on issues of importance.

Mission

The purpose of the ACDHH is to ensure, in partnership with the public and private sectors, accessibility for the deaf and the hard of hearing to improve their quality of life.

Vision

The energetic and innovative ACDHH team aspires to be a national leader in the provision of communication access, support services and community empowerment throughout the Grand Canyon State.

Statute and Regulatory Requirements:

The ACDHH Statute:

To remain at the forefront of service delivery for deaf and hard of hearing Arizonans, ACDHH continues to work towards its specific regulatory obligations:

The Commission shall act as a bureau of information to the deaf and the hard of hearing, state agencies and institutions providing services to the deaf and the hard of hearing, local agencies of government and other public or private community agencies and programs. In this capacity, the Commission shall:

- Inform the deaf and hard of hearing of the programs and activities of the Commission and other services available to them at all levels of government.
- Develop and foster a framework for consultation and cooperation with the rehabilitation services bureau of the Department of Economic Security and with all institutions represented on the Commission.
- Study issues relating to the deaf and the hard of hearing, review the administration and operation of various programs and make recommendations concerning these issues to the programs and to the agencies represented on the Commission.
- Submit an annual report to the Governor and the legislature concerning its findings and recommendations.
- Review the problems of the deaf and the hard of hearing as they relate to the need for effective and appropriate auxiliary aids in public places.
- Maintain contractual compliance for Arizona Relay Service and enhance public awareness of relay service.
- Review and compile information on the development of acoustical technology for the hard of hearing and advocate the use of this technology if it deems appropriate.
- Make recommendations to state agencies, political subdivisions and institutions on how to meet the needs of the deaf and the hard of hearing.
- License American Sign Language Interpreters and certify teachers of American Sign Language.
- Make recommendations to the legislature regarding statutory changes needed to implement a statewide newborn child hearing loss screening program.

- Establish and administer a statewide program to purchase, repair and distribute telecommunication devices to residents of this state who are deaf, severely hearing or speech impaired.

2015 Fiscal Year General Highlights

- The Commission reached more than six million individuals through print and online media, telephone contacts, email correspondence, Facebook, Twitter and the weekly E-news distribution. Numerous newspapers around the state featured ACDHH, AZTEDP and AZRS in various sections of their publications. These articles were a result of proactive media relations efforts to promote the staff's ongoing efforts to provide trainings on deafness and hearing loss, educational seminars on telecommunication devices for the deaf and the hard of hearing, conference exhibits and professional development for American Sign Language interpreters.
- The Commission continues to provide training to healthcare professionals as a result of the statewide healthcare providers' curriculum implemented in 2013. The goal of the curriculum is to train all healthcare providers in best practices for providing equal access to effective communication for Arizonans who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, Deaf-Blind and citizens who have speech difficulties.
- For a second year, the Commission has employed a Youth and Family Resource Specialist on a part-time basis. In this second year assistance to parents has increased as well as collaborative efforts with the AZ Department of Education, AZ Department of Economic Security specifically with Child Protective Services. The staff has met with audiologists, pediatricians and other medical professionals to emphasize the need to inform parents on the importance of hearing healthcare.
- A Public Safety Curriculum was completed in February 2015. This curriculum focuses on educating professionals on the unique needs of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing consumers. An initial training was provided to representatives from law enforcement, ADA coordinators, court representatives and the AZ Attorney General's Office in April. Approximately 60 professionals in the above mentioned offices have been trained since April 2015. Four trainings are scheduled for the spring of 2016.
- The Commission's Outreach and Professional Development Coordinator has provided four professional development sessions for ASL interpreters.

The topics included domestic violence, court interpreting and certification preparation for the written portion of the process. The domestic violence and court interpreting sessions have been two to three day intensive training sessions. Approximately 45 people have been trained in these sessions.

- The Commission completed the first cohort of its new Interpreter Mentoring Program. ACDHH is overseeing the community interpreter portion of this program in which four mentors and mentees participated. ACDHH provided initial support for the educational interpreter track of the AZ Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf Mentoring Program of which eight mentees and five mentors participated.
- The Commission has partnered with the University of Arizona to develop a curriculum for educating Support Service Providers (SSPs.). The pilot program for this project will begin in January 2016.
- The partnership with the Commission and the Arizona Center for Disability Law continues to grow. Upon completion of the second year ACDL continues to assess consumer claims of service providers who fail to provide equal access to effective communication. Issues have included: venue accessibility, medical accessibility, inmate accessibility, educational rights and tenant/landlord issues.

Information and Referral

- The Commission provides a weekly E-News email distribution for sharing information with the community. The announcements range from community events, agency activities and special agency projects and much more. There are almost 2,000 subscribers for ACDHH E-news! The E-News distribution totaled 74,100 contacts during FY '15.
- The Commission provided 6,562,152 Information and Referral contacts.
- Website visits totaled 145,221.
- Training was provided to 22,000 individuals during FY '15
- Social media interactions totaled 1,426,062 for Facebook and 4,690,949 for Twitter.

Interpreter Licensure

- During FY 2015 the total number of licensed American Sign Language interpreters totaled 367.
- A total of five (5) complaints were filed.

Arizona Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program

- The Arizona Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program provided 824 telecommunication devices to citizens in need of TTYs, captioned telephones, amplified telephones or amplified telephones with accompanying large visual display.
- 245 equipment demonstrations were provided.
- The program maintained a 98% satisfaction rating.

Arizona Relay Service (AZRS) General Highlights AT&T provided excellent Arizona Relay Services from July 1, 2014 through December 30, 2014. Sprint became the new provider January 2015 through June 30, 2015 and continued to provide excellent services to the citizens of AZ.

AZRS is funded by a surcharge on all Arizona ratepayers' landline telephone statements. The funds are administered by ACDHH.

Outreach and education activities were conducted to inform the general public about the Arizona Relay Service and to interact with relay users to obtain their input and feedback.

- AZRS completed 1,200,000 call minutes.
- AZRS maintained a 99.5% customer satisfaction rate for the year.
- AZRS experienced approximately 2 million encounters via Facebook and Twitter.
- AZRS was featured in a total of 94 articles with an approximate readership of one million viewers.

Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing

Fiscal Year 2015 Budget

Revenue:	\$4,481,145
Appropriation:	\$4,021,200
Supplemental Appropriation-AZRS (AZ Relay Service)	\$ 255,000
Total Appropriation	\$4,276,200
Expenditures:	
Personal Services/Employee Related Expenses	\$1,145,969
AZRS (Relay) Contract	\$1,260,538
AzTEDP (Equipment Distribution Program)	\$ 129,999
Professional and Outside Services	\$ 573,664
Other Operating Expenses	\$ 651,100
Total	\$3,761,270

Board of Commissioners

The Board oversees the policymaking, budget planning, and strategic planning of ACDHH, in addition to evaluating the ongoing performance of the executive director. Each board member also acts as an advocate for ACDHH and the particular group they represent.

The ACDHH Board consists of 14 members appointed by the Governor to three-year terms. Of the representatives, four are deaf; four are hard of hearing; one parent of a deaf or hard of hearing child; one Arizona licensed American sign language interpreter, one licensed hearing aid dispenser; one clinical audiologist; one representative from the Department of Economic Security; one representative from the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind in Tucson or the Phoenix Day School of the Deaf.

The Board meets four times a year, one of which serves as their retreat.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Term expiration</u>
Sherry Appleby-Klein	Chairperson Hard of Hearing Representative	8/26/2017
Sue Kay Kneifel	Vice Chair Department of Economic Security	8/26/2017
Elizabeth Booth	Hard of Hearing Representative	8/26/2015
Jeffrey Hebert	Hard of Hearing Representative	8/26/2017
Vacant	Deaf Representative	
Dr. Marv Lamer	ASDB/PDSD Representative	8/26/2016
ElizaBeth Garcia	Hard of Hearing Representative	8/26/2017

Vacant	Deaf Representative	
Raymond Baesler	Secretary	8/26/2017
	Interpreter for the Deaf Representative	
Vacant	Licensed Clinical Audiologist	
Kathy Roadlander	Parent of a Deaf Child	8/26/2016
Robert Baber	Licensed Hearing Aid Dispenser Representative	8/26/2015
Natalie Ludwig	Deaf Representative	8/26/2017
Chris Schneck	Hard of Hearing Representative	8/26/2015

Commission Staff

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>
Sherri L. Collins	Executive Director
Carmen Green	Deputy Director
Curtis Humphries	Business Manager
Shari Burda	Business Operations Coordinator
Beca Bailey	Deaf Specialist
Jeremy McCown	Technical Operations Analyst
Noneshi Anderson	Information & Referral Coordinator
Aimee Mousavi	Deaf Specialist
Giselle Galindo	Business Operations Assistant
Emmett Hassen	Licensing and Certification Coordinator
Christine Milano	Equipment and Inventory Technician
Michele Michaels	Hard of Hearing Specialist
Vicki Bond	Outreach and Development Coordinator
Melinda Villela	Assistant/Executive Director
Vicki Thompson	Telecommunications Program Planner