

New Jersey Department of Human Services'  
Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DDHH)  
Language Instruction Program

# Early Intervention Referral Packet



State of New Jersey  
Phil Murphy, *Governor*  
Sheila Oliver, *Lt. Governor*

Department of Human Services  
Sarah Adelman, *Commissioner*



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# DDHH's Language Instruction Program

It is important for deaf or hard of hearing children to have access to early language exposure during the most critical years of brain development- birth to age 3- to avoid irreversible delays in learning. The New Jersey Department of Human Services' Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DDHH) supports families in their journey to provide their child with the tools needed for full language acquisition and development. DDHH uses a child and family-centered approach to language instruction for infants and children using American Sign Language (ASL). Families can use ASL alone or in conjunction with spoken language development to ensure early language acquisition and development. Language instruction services benefit all children who are deaf or hard of hearing including those who have cochlear implants, hearing aids, or are receiving spoken language therapy. DDHH's language instruction program aims to provide language and literacy development skills during your child's critical early years which will provide a foundation for positive educational outcomes once a child transitions to elementary school. These services are provided at no cost to the family.

The Language Instruction Program is a partnership with the New Jersey Department of Human Services, Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Division of Family Development, and Child Care Resource & Referral centers.

## Program Structure

### Overview

Families are matched with an ASL Deaf Language Associate to work with the family for up to 25 hours a week in childcare centers, pre-school programs, summer camps, home settings, or other settings as applicable. Deaf adults who are fluent in American Sign Language (ASL) and can serve as language models for young children are employed by our program. They are called ASL Deaf Language Associates. ASL Deaf Language Associates are screened and work through the local Child Care Resource & Referral Center as independent contractors. It is important to note that families are welcome to use ASL alone or in conjunction with spoken language to ensure early language acquisition and development through this program.

# DDHH's Language Instruction Program

## Language Instruction Program Staff

Language Instruction Program Coordinator: Coordinates and oversees all aspects of the Language Instruction Program. The coordinator serves as a liaison to child care agencies, pre-school programs, ASL Deaf Language Associates, other service providers, and the families.

## About ASL Deaf Language Associates

ASL Deaf Language Associates (DLAs) are deaf, hard of hearing or deafblind adults who are fluent in American Sign Language (ASL) with experience working with infants, toddlers, and young children. ASL Deaf Language Associates work to support the child's visual language development which can, if applicable, be used in conjunction with the child's spoken language development.

ASL Deaf Language Associates possess the following:

- Strong communication skills and can interact and develop rapport with children, adults in the childcare setting, and the parents/caregivers of the child;
- Knowledge of and regular participation in Deaf community events;
- The ability to comply with curriculum guidelines and facilitate learning with the guidance of the teacher.
- The ability to work collaboratively with teacher(s) and aide(s).
- Assisting in keeping devices such as hearing aids on the child.
- Acts as a language and socialization model.
- Translates stories/poetry into ASL.
- Encourages and assists the child to participate in group activities.
- Encourages bilingualism in child care center and preschool settings.

ASL Deaf Language Associates provide supplementary services to support the child's educational plan and development. ASL Deaf Language Associate are available to communicate with the child's parent/guardian, collaborate with the child's early intervention team, and support the child's educational team as needed.

In addition to these services, DDHH is available to provide training for your staff on topics such as deaf and hard of hearing sensitivity training (virtually or in-person) as well as information about accessibility for deaf and hard of hearing individuals. To enhance our collaboration and build relationships, we strongly encourage your staff to attend this training.

## **Eligibility**

All deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind children between the ages of 0-5 residing in New Jersey are eligible to participate in the language instruction program. DDHH asks for proof of New Jersey residency as well as evidence of hearing loss.

Parents/Caregivers are asked to also provide the child's birth date, parent/caregiver names, contact information, childcare center/pre-school information to determine eligibility.



## DDHH Resources and Programs

The mission of DDHH is to provide education, advocacy, and direct services to eliminate barriers and promote increased accessibility to programs, services, and information routinely available to the state's general population. In addition to the above language instruction program, DDHH offers a variety of other resources and programs. For assistance with other topics not listed in this handbook, please email or call the DDHH office. As a central hub for information and referral for deaf and hard of hearing services, DDHH routinely links families to other resources such as access to SNAP benefits, mental health services, and vocational rehabilitation services.

### DDHH Equipment Distribution Program

Families may apply for DDHH's equipment distribution program for devices that will help their child access important safety information in the home and connect with language development opportunities. The cost of assistive communication devices can be very expensive. Since 1993, DDHH has operated a program to ensure that New Jersey residents with hearing loss have access to telecommunications and visual alerting home safety equipment needed to live independently. The "Equipment Distribution Program" is now offering wireless devices. Offering these devices works to ensure that deaf and hard of hearing residents have access to critical information, services and supports being delivered remotely through online platforms that include telehealth services, emergency information, telecommunications, and other vital communication needs. Upon meeting eligibility requirements, individuals may receive communication devices free of charge from the DDHH. [www.nj.gov/humanservices/ddhh/assets/documents/EDP - Jan 2022.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/humanservices/ddhh/assets/documents/EDP - Jan 2022.pdf)

### DDHH Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialists

DDHH's deaf and hard of hearing specialists provide information and referral services to assist families in finding resources as well as limited case management services for families. Email [DDHH.communications2@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:DDHH.communications2@dhs.nj.gov) or call our office at **(609) 588-2648** for assistance.

# DDHH Resources and Programs

## DDHH Sign Language Interpreters and CART Directory

DDHH maintains a directory of certified interpreters and CART providers. Families may need sign language interpreters or captioning services at a child's pediatrician's office, summer camp activities, or family events. DDHH assists with coordinating these services and advocates for communication access with providers and organizations.

[www.nj.gov/humanservices/ddhh/services/caption/](http://www.nj.gov/humanservices/ddhh/services/caption/)

## Deaf and Hard of Hearing Sensitivity Training

DDHH offers free on-site or virtual sensitivity training that covers various topics including how to communicate with deaf and hard of hearing individuals. If you would like for your child's educational program, or other service providers, to receive our training, please refer them here:

[www.nj.gov/humanservices/ddhh/education/dst/](http://www.nj.gov/humanservices/ddhh/education/dst/).

## Additional information and resources

The DDHH maintains a website at [www.nj.gov/humanservices/ddhh/](http://www.nj.gov/humanservices/ddhh/). DDHH has a variety of resources available for children and families.

## Campaign for Language & Literacy Excellence

The Campaign for Language & Literacy Excellence (CLLE) is a statewide project collaboration with The College of New Jersey's Center for Sensory & Complex Disabilities and DDHH, to promote early language development in deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind children ages 0–5. CLLE will focus on language and literacy development, parent resources, and opportunities for parents/caregivers to learn ASL. For more information, please contact [cle@tcnj.edu](mailto:cle@tcnj.edu) or visit [njcsd.tcnj.edu/programs/campaign-for-language-and-literacy-excellence/](http://njcsd.tcnj.edu/programs/campaign-for-language-and-literacy-excellence/).

# Application Requirements

Department of Human Services  
Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing  
Language Instruction Program

The New Jersey Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing provides free language instruction services to deaf, hard of hearing or deafblind children ages 0 – 5 that meet eligibility requirements.

If you need help filling out forms, please contact the DDHH office at **(609) 588-2648** or email at [DDHH.communications2@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:DDHH.communications2@dhs.nj.gov).

Please follow this checklist to complete this application:

- Proof of identity and residency. See options from List A or provide one from List B and one from List C
- A copy of your child's birth certificate
- A copy of your child's audiogram
- Completed application
- Return all documents to:

**DDHH Language Instruction Program**  
PO Box 074  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0074  
**(609) 588-2648**  
[DDHH.communications2@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:DDHH.communications2@dhs.nj.gov)

# Application Requirements

## Required Documents

To be eligible for DDHH's Language Instruction Program, proof of identity and residency in New Jersey is needed. Please see the table below. Either provide one (1) document from List A or one (1) from List B and one (1) from List C

<b>List A</b> <i>Documents that establish both identity and residency</i> Please select one from the list below	<b>List B</b> <i>Documents that establish identity</i> Please select one from the list below	<b>List C</b> <i>Documents that establish residency</i> Please select one from the list below
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NJ or Municipal ID card with full name and address</li> <li>• NJ Driver's License with full name and address</li> <li>• NJ Student identification card from a school located in NJ</li> <li>• Utility, cell phone or internet bill showing your name and NJ address</li> <li>• Bank/insurance statement showing your name and NJ address</li> <li>• Current Tax Return showing name and NJ address</li> <li>• Paystub from employer showing your name and NJ address</li> <li>• Rent receipt, lease, mortgage statement showing your name and NJ address</li> <li>• Letter from social service agency, health care provider, or government agency showing name and NJ address from the past 12 months</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student identification card from any school</li> <li>• Passport from any country</li> <li>• Consulate identification card</li> <li>• Birth certificate from any country</li> <li>• A child's U.S. birth certificate listing the applicant as a parent</li> <li>• Work issued identification</li> <li>• International driver's license</li> <li>• Individual Taxpayer Identification Number issuance letter from the IRS or ITIN card</li> <li>• Department of Corrections ID</li> <li>• Marriage certificate or divorce record from any country</li> <li>• High school or college transcript from any country</li> <li>• U.S. court document where the applicant is named as a party</li> <li>• U.S. Union ID</li> <li>• U.S. professional license</li> </ul>	<p>Signed and dated letter stating the full name and phone number of the person writing the letter from any of the following entities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landlord acknowledging NJ residency</li> <li>• Representative from your place of worship</li> <li>• Medical provider, service provider, or shelter</li> </ul>

# Application

New Jersey Department of Human Services  
Division of Deaf and Hard of Hearing  
Language Instruction Program  
Application

## Family Contact Information

Child's Name:

Date of Birth: (Please attach copy of Birth Certificate)

Gender: Male  Female

Primary Language of the Home: English  Spanish   
Other

Parent/Guardian Name:

Parent/Guardian Phone: Home:  Cell:

Parent/Guardian Email:

Street Address:

Street Address Line 2:

City:  Zip:  County:

2nd Parent/Guardian Name:

Parent/Guardian Phone: Home:  Cell:

Parent/Guardian Email:

Street Address (if different from above):

Street Address Line 2:

City:  Zip:  County:

# Application Requirements

## Referral Source Information

Person Making Referral:

Name:

Phone: Office:  Cell:  Other:

Email:

Street Address:

Street Address Line 2:

City:  Zip:

**Is your child currently enrolled at a childcare center or a preschool program?** If yes, please list:

## Diagnosis Information

Date of Testing/Hearing Status Identified:

Parents informed of hearing level/diagnosis: (Audiogram) Yes  No

Right Ear DB Range:  Mild  Moderate

Severe  Profound

Left Ear DB Range:  Mild  Moderate

Severe  Profound

Additional Information:

**Other Diagnosis:** (please explain)

## Audiological information included with referral:

Audiology Report  ABR Report  Audiogram

**Signature**  **Date:**

## Language Instruction Program Contact Information

For more information about language acquisition and development services, contact:

**DDHH Language Instruction Program**

PO Box 074

Trenton, NJ 08625-0074

**(609) 588-2648**

[DDHH.communications2@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:DDHH.communications2@dhs.nj.gov)

[nj.gov/humanservices/ddhh/services/leveling/](http://nj.gov/humanservices/ddhh/services/leveling/)



## **Contact DDHH**

**800-792-8339** (Toll Free in New Jersey)

**(609) 588-2648**

**(609) 558-2528** (Fax)

**[DDHH.communications2@dhs.nj.gov](mailto:DDHH.communications2@dhs.nj.gov)**