

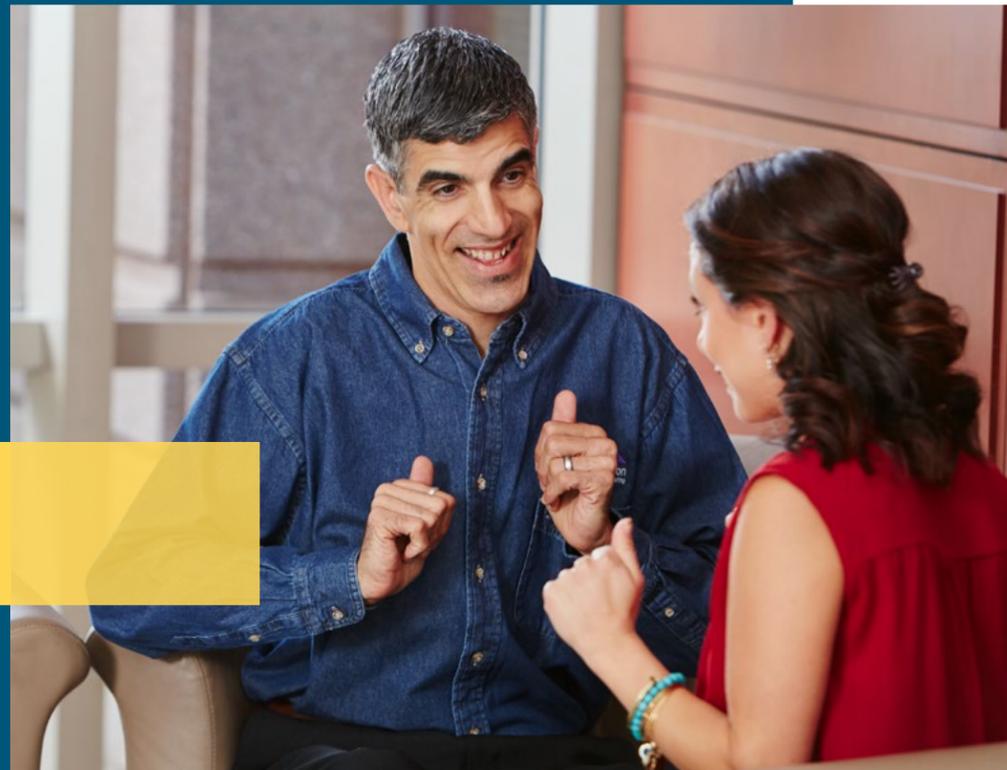
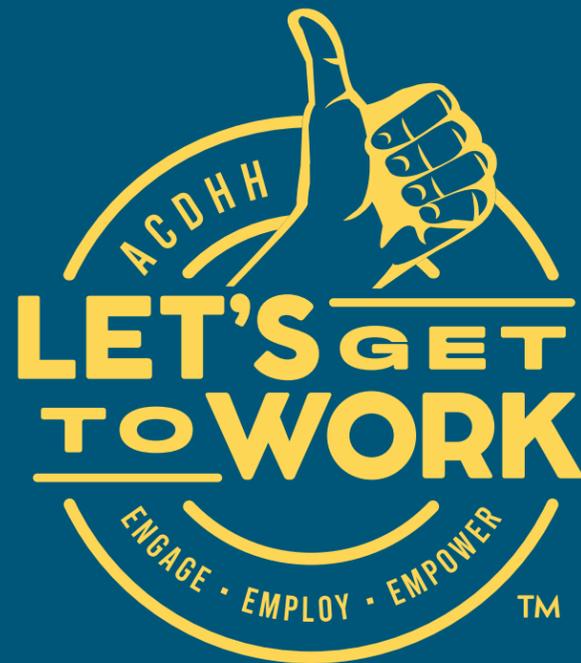
WE'RE READY FOR



Employer Guide for Hiring People from
Arizona's Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and DeafBlind Community

IF WE CAN CHANGE THE WORK CULTURE,

WE CAN CHANGE AN ENTIRE CULTURE.



The Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind (D/HH/DB) community remains one of the most misunderstood and misrepresented communities in society today. While research shows they are likely to overachieve in the workplace, they remain disproportionately underemployed¹.

To help our D/HH/DB community members overcome their employment challenges, the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing has started the **Let's Get to Work** initiative.

As an advocate for the D/HH/DB community and a resource for the community at large, we are seeking to bridge the gap between potential employees and employers.

This statewide effort is designed to enrich the employment opportunities for D/HH/DB people by informing employers of the very tangible benefits they bring to the workplace. From work ethic to work quality to work quantity.

We also hope you come to recognize the resources the Commission can provide to employers to make recruiting, interviewing, employing, and promoting D/HH/DB people as easy as possible.

So, yes, let's get to work. **Starting right now.**

¹ Source: www.hearinglikeme.com/top-benefits-of-hiring-deaf-and-hard-of-hearing-people

BELIEVE THE FACTS, NOT THE STEREOTYPES.



Research shows that members of the D/HH/DB community make excellent employees¹.

Not only do they excel at quality and quantity of work, but are also valued for dependability, orientation to detail, and problem-solving capabilities.

Concerned the costs of accommodating their needs will offset the value they bring to the company?

It's simply not so.

Ample resources — from technology to training — are available to you and your organization through the Commission and our network of partners. You may even be entitled to certain tax advantages when you hire from the D/HH/DB community.

¹ Source: www.ed.gov/category/subject/disabilities?page=1



UNEMPLOYED. UNDEREMPLOYED. UNACCEPTABLE.

The employment data for members of the D/HH/DB community is sobering. In 2017, nearly half had no job. A rate that hadn't changed during the previous 10 years².

Those that do find work are often underemployed, suffer from pay inequality, are slower to get promoted, and quicker to be terminated³.

Not only is this unacceptable, it is also unsustainable. We all must work together to address and solve these challenges.

Our ask is simple: Include members of the D/HH/DB community in your recruiting and hiring processes.

The D/HH/DB community numbers more than 1.1 million in Arizona and covers all ages, genders, ethnicities, and skillsets. They possess unique talents and perspectives that will improve your organization beyond the job at hand.

^{2, 3} Source: www.nationaldeafcenter.org/news/employment-report-shows-strong-labor-market-passing-deaf-americans

INVESTING IN DIVERSITY PAYS HUGE DIVIDENDS.

Diversity is no longer a business buzzword. It's a business standard.

Time and research have revealed workplace diversity has tangible and enduring benefits for businesses who embrace it¹. And that diversity encompasses all walks of life, including those with varying forms of hearing levels.



You enhance the reputation of your organization. Existing and prospective employees want to work for companies that embrace all members of society.

You reduce employee turnover. Diversity makes work environments more dynamic and more desirable than less diverse workplaces.

You hire better. Diversity attracts diverse candidates. Which means you'll be able to choose from among the very best at every position. And that gives your business a distinct competitive advantage.

INTERVIEWS WILL CHANGE YOUR VIEWS.

With every interview you have with a member of the D/HH/DB community, you're one step closer to finding your next star employee, and realizing all the benefits they offer you and your organization.

The Commission is more than happy to help you establish best practices for interviewing, hiring, and advancing D/HH/DB employees. Some basic best practices follow shortly.

Simply call 602-542-3323 to schedule a presentation for you and your hiring team.

OUR EMPLOYER BENEFITS PACKAGE

Aside from fulfilling the needs of a specific job, a D/HH/DB employee brings other valuable benefits to the workplace that don't always show up on their resumes¹.

Highly adaptable

Members of the D/HH/DB community spend much of their lives finding ways to adapt to the hearing culture. This translates to patience and flexibility within the workplace.

Impressive mediators

Members of the D/HH/DB community excel at bridging communication and cultural gaps in everyday situations. This is reflected in their strong problem-solving and interpersonal skills.

Fresh perspectives

The backgrounds and life experiences of members of the D/HH/DB community are inevitably different than those of their hearing colleagues. A D/HH/DB employee is likely to suggest services, business, or marketing solutions outside the norm.

Exceedingly safe and reliable

Studies have shown that members of the D/HH/DB community are viewed as dependable, loyal, and responsible. They also tend to have overall positive

job performance ratings. One study found that D/HH/DB employees rank among the highest safety ratings in the workforce.

Incredible work ethic

Since D/HH/DB candidates often face discriminatory hiring practices, it can be a challenge just to get a foot in the door. Not surprisingly, D/HH/DB employees tend to work hard to secure their position and seek opportunities for career advancement.

Enhance the work culture

A workplace that employs D/HH/DB individuals enriches the culture of the entire organization. Employing D/HH/DB individuals provide all employees the opportunity to work on communication and cooperation skills while challenging people to explore new perspectives.

Increase your exposure

Arizona's D/HH/DB community totals more than 1.1 million people. And they're a close-knit group. Employers and businesses that hire from and help support the community will become well-known and earn business from D/HH/DB community members.

**PROVIDE THE
DIGNITY OF
WORK.
ENJOY THE
BENEFITS OF
TAX BREAKS.**

Like every American, members of the D/HH/DB community deserve the dignity that comes with being meaningfully employed.

And every business that hires from Arizona's D/HH/DB community deserves something as well: tax benefits.

There are a variety of programs available. Here are some that you may be entitled to when you hire members of the D/HH/DB community. Please talk to your tax adviser for full details.

For more information, visit [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov)



Disabled Access Credit:

Available to eligible small businesses that pay or incur expenses to provide access to persons with disabilities to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Small businesses can obtain a tax credit for 50% of the allowable amount for eligible expenditures.

Barrier Removal Tax Deduction:

Businesses may be able to take an annual deduction for expenses related to removing physical, structural, and transportation barriers for people with disabilities.

Work Opportunity Tax Credit:

This credit provides employers with an incentive to hire persons from certain population groups having a particularly high unemployment rate or other special employment needs, such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients, vocational rehabilitation referrals and veterans with disabilities.



IT STARTS WITH THE INTERVIEW. BE SURE TO START THINGS OFF RIGHT.

Interviewing a member of the D/HH/DB community may require changes from the standard interview process, from the use of technology to the inclusion of a qualified, licensed interpreter. Following are some examples of requests for reasonable accommodations you should be prepared to address during the interview process.

Please remember that a D/HH/DB candidate is seeking an opportunity like any other candidate. So relax. This list of tips and accommodations is simply a way to level the playing field for everyone.

For further guidance on providing access for all employees — including after the hiring is complete — please visit [ChangeYourPerception.org](https://www.changeyourperception.org), or contact the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing.

Interviewing the Deaf

- ✔ Once the candidate reveals or it is otherwise known to you that they are Deaf, discuss freely any reasonable accommodations needed for the interview, including the use of a qualified, licensed interpreter.

- ✔ Inform the receptionist and all other interviewers that you are expecting a Deaf candidate with an interpreter, or Communication Access Realtime Translation (**CART**) provider, so they are prepared in advance.
- ✔ Position the interpreter or CART provider (if present) next to the interviewer so the candidate can clearly see both individuals and be sure only one person is speaking at a time.
- ✔ Provide a written copy of interview questions for the candidate and interpreter, if one is present.
- ✔ Speak clearly and slowly — do not shout, because shouting distorts speech.
- ✔ Maintain eye contact with the candidate and direct your questions to them, not the interpreter.
- ✔ Keep your hands away from your mouth and face while speaking. An accomplished lip reader will be able to understand only 20-30% of what you are saying.
- ✔ Use paper and pencil or other low cost, no cost auxiliary aids to communicate if necessary.



Interviewing the Hard of Hearing

- ✓ Once the candidate reveals or it is otherwise known to you that they are Hard of Hearing, discuss freely any reasonable accommodations needed for the interview, including the use of a Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) provider.
- ✓ Inform the receptionist and all other interviewers that you are expecting a Hard of Hearing candidate, with possible Communication Access Realtime Translation (**CART**) services, so they are prepared in advance.
- ✓ Choose a well-lit room that has little to no background noise, as noise makes it more difficult for the Hard of Hearing person to understand speech.
- ✓ Do not sit in front of a window, as light from behind you will obscure your face and make speechreading difficult.
- ✓ Provide a copy of the interview questions for the candidate and **CART** provider, if one is present.
- ✓ Speak clearly and slowly — do not shout because it can distort sounds if the candidate is wearing a hearing aid.
- ✓ Use hand gestures and facial expressions while maintaining eye contact with the candidate.
- ✓ To help aid effective communication, use a captioning app on an iPad or similar device.
- ✓ Keep your hands away from your mouth and face while speaking; remember that an accomplished lip reader will be able to clearly understand only 20-30% of what you are saying.

Interviewing the DeafBlind

- ✓ Once the candidate reveals or it is otherwise known to you that they are DeafBlind, discuss freely any reasonable accommodations needed for the interview, including use of a tactile interpreter. If a Support Service Provider (SSP) is present, do not ask to interpret.
- ✓ Inform the receptionist and all other interviewers that you are expecting a DeafBlind candidate, an SSP (if present) and an interpreter, so they are prepared in advance.
- ✓ Position the interpreter next to the interviewer so the candidate can clearly see both individuals. Be sure only one person speaks at a time.
- ✓ Have a written agenda and company literature available either in large print or braille and provide a written copy of the interview questions in large print or braille for the candidate and interpreter.
- ✓ Speak clearly and slowly while using gestures and facial expressions. Maintain eye contact with the candidate. Direct your question to them, not the interpreter.
- ✓ Keep your hands away from your mouth and face while speaking.
- ✓ Use low cost, no cost technology as a resource to help aid in communication during the interview.



GOING FROM JOB OFFER TO JOB AWESOME.

Once you've decided to hire a candidate from the D/HH/DB community, it's important you make sure the employee is in the best position to succeed — because success for them is success for you and your company. Here are some quick considerations for working with your new employee.

Immediately after hire:

Discuss with the employee what reasonable accommodations they may need to succeed in the workplace. These needs will vary by individual employee. Discuss specific needs with the employee for a variety of day-to-day situations, including:

- Phone and teleconferencing systems — visual signaling, increased volume, etc.
- Large meetings and employee gatherings
- Use of a qualified, licensed interpreter, a CART provider, or other alternatives
- Day-to-day and casual conversations — ask the new employee how to best communicate with them

Orientation and training

Small tweaks in the training process can help lead to long-term success. Ultimately, if the employee has full access to materials and training, they will be better prepared in the workplace. Consider the following:

- Provide an outline and/or transcript of the training session
- Use hands-on demonstrations to assist in training
- Make sure all video content has captioning or a transcript is provided
- Allow extra time for communication when training
- Assign a mentor to work directly with D/HH/DB employee(s)
- Provide a qualified, licensed interpreter, a CART provider or other accommodations in coordination with employee

Day-to-Day work

Once you are beyond the training period, it is important to provide opportunities for the employee to be engaged with teammates and coworkers. Additionally, focus on safety plans to make sure the employee is not left behind in an emergency.

- Include D/HH/DB employees in conversations, work-break activities and social events
- Provide training opportunities to all your hearing employees to improve communications skills with their D/HH/DB colleagues
- Use a buddy system to alert D/HH/DB employees to emergency situations
- Install flashing lights to work in conjunction with auditory alarms
- Amend safety procedures as necessary
- Use texting, e-mail or pager to contact D/HH/DB employees in the event of an emergency
- Notify security if D/HH/DB employees are alone in work areas

Long-term success

To ensure long-term success of a D/HH/DB employee, it's best to establish and maintain a corporate training program involving all employees, departments and leadership. For assistance in establishing a training program within your organization, simply call the Commission at 602-542-3323.



NOT JUST A LEGAL REQUIREMENT. A MORAL IMPERATIVE.

There are legal matters related to hiring and employing members of the D/HH/DB community. There are three central programs to be sure you abide by:

- The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Rehabilitation Act
- Arizona Licensure laws

They spell out in great detail the rules, regulations, and necessary accommodations employers are required to follow. Please remember, any costs associated with complying with these programs' requirements may be offset by previously mentioned tax credits. The Commission will gladly assist you with information to help you comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

While guided by legal requirements, it is our hope that you and your organization come to see recruiting and hiring from the D/HH/DB community as your social responsibility to provide equally to all the opportunities and economic security that come with gainful employment.

THEY'RE NOT JUST PARTICIPATING, THEY'RE PIONEERING.

Arizona businesses are embracing the recruiting and hiring from the D/HH/DB community. We would be remiss if we didn't recognize those employers in Arizona and across the nation that are already serving as pioneers in the hiring of members from the D/HH/DB community.

- Warehouses (ex. Amazon and Home Depot)
- Retail (ex. Walmart and Target)
- Banner Health
- Shipping/mail (USPS, FedEx, and UPS)
- Community colleges & universities
- School districts
- Group homes (ex. RISE)
- Manufacturing (ex. Boeing)
- Engineering (ex. Boeing and Intel)

Are you ready to be a pioneer? Learn more about the **Let's Get to Work** initiative and ways you can get involved at ChangeYourPerception.org.



BECAUSE QUALITY EMPLOYMENT IS ESSENTIAL TO QUALITY OF LIFE.

It's our hope that Arizona businesses will fully embrace the **Let's Get to Work** initiative. The D/HH/DB community faces severe economic challenges due to unemployment and underemployment, despite the valuable and unique skills they bring to the workplace. This needs to change.

Please join us and become a valuable partner in helping to improve the lives and futures of members of Arizona's Deaf/Hard of Hearing/DeafBlind community.

By supporting us, you support a better Arizona for everyone.

To get started, call the Commission (602-542-3323) to discuss how we can help you participate in the **Let's Get to Work** initiative.

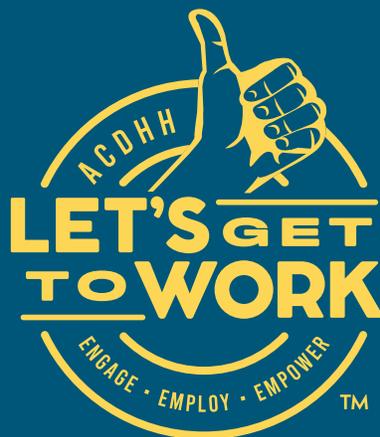
About us

The Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing is a national leader in the provision of communication access, support services, and community empowerment throughout Arizona.

Our purpose is to ensure, in partnership with the public and private sector, accessibility for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and DeafBlind to improve their quality of life.

What we do

- Provide communication access and support
- Distribute free equipment through **AzTEDP** to all Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Speech-Impaired, and DeafBlind Arizonans
- Serve as a resource for self-advocacy and community empowerment
- Provide outreach, education, information and referrals
- Access AZ licensed American Sign Language interpreters and CART providers directory
- **Arizona Relay Service (711)** — free to all Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Speech-Impaired, and DeafBlind residents
- Support Service Provider access to the DeafBlind community



The **Let's Get to Work** initiative is the first-ever, statewide employment initiative undertaken by the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing.

Working with Arizona's business community and its leaders, we hope to reduce the unemployment and underemployment that disproportionately affects our community members and help the promise of economic security and independence become a sustainable reality¹.

We're here to assist Arizona businesses in the recruiting, interviewing, employing, and promoting of D/HH/DB people.

It is our intent to make the State of Arizona the recognized leader in creating economic independence for members of the D/HH/DB community by helping businesses embrace their unique talents, abilities, and work ethic.

Please contact the Commission for help with:

- Corporate diversity and sensitivity training specific to the D/HH/DB
- Recruiting
- Job posting
- Interviewing best practices
- Employee orientation best practices
- Workplace accommodations
- Technological assistance
- Arizona Relay Service
- Interpreter services and CART providers

www.acdhh.org

info@acdhh.az.gov

602-542-3323

¹ Source: www.business.com/articles/hire-disabled-people