

Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Mission

ODHH represents the Governor and his goal of promoting equal access for all Marylanders by providing expertise that enhances the general welfare of Maryland's deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind residents.

Vision

All Maryland citizens who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind will have equal and full access to resources, services, and opportunities for participation in all aspects of community life.



Annual Report Fiscal Year 2012



MARTIN O'MALLEY
GOVERNOR

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A MESSAGE FROM GOVERNOR MARTIN O'MALLEY

Dear Friends:

Welcome to the 2012 Annual Report prepared by the Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH).

Here in Maryland, we recognize that there is no such thing as a spare Marylander. If we are to compete and win in this new economy, we must ensure that every person has the tools they need to be successful. ODHH is committed to improving the quality of life for people with hearing loss. We're expanding opportunities by training governments at all levels on communications access, employment and public safety tools.

In the last year, ODHH connected with 665 constituents, stakeholders and government contacts to provide information, training and access to interpreters. In conjunction with the Department of Budget and Management, we are working to establish a statewide communication services contract that will increase accessibility. From ensuring that our online videos are captioned to providing resources for hearing aids, ODHH is consistently working to advance the common good.

Thank you for your commitment to promoting equal access for all Marylanders.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Martin O'Malley".

Governor



Our Goals

The Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) has three broad goals:

- to serve as a resource for federal, state, and local government agencies;
- to provide information and support to people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind; and
- to assist in the development of policies and programs that improve the lives of Marylanders who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind.

Our Responsibilities

ODHH was created to:

- Serve as a coordinating agency that reports directly to the Governor’s Office;
- Promote the general welfare of deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind individuals in Maryland;
- Support the development of policies, regulations, and programs that will benefit the communities we serve;
- Improve communication access to existing services and programs;
- Advise State government and the General Assembly on the needs of deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind individuals; and
- Coordinate with other units of State, local, and federal governments about the services provided to deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind Marylanders.

Our Staff

Lisa H. Kornberg, Director
(pictured right)

Julie Anne Schafer, Deputy Director
(pictured center)

Laura Quinn, Special Assistant
July 2011 – October 2011
(not pictured)

Sam P. Lenox, Special Assistant
December 2011 - Present
(pictured left)

Each year, ODHH welcomes interns from area colleges to help strengthen students’ job skills by integrating education with closely related practical work experiences. Though their work often happens “behind the scenes,” these interns make significant contributions to ODHH’s goal of promoting equal access for all Marylanders. The ODHH staff would like to say a special thank you to the interns who worked at ODHH during FY 2012: Zainab Alkebsi, Katherine Anderson, Robert Harris, Sam Lenox, Sarah Peters, and Darrin Smith. We appreciate your help.

Maryland Issues Request for Proposals for a Statewide Visual Communication Services Contract

In FY 2012, ODHH and Department of Budget and Management (DBM) staff developed a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a statewide "Visual Communication Services" contract. The resulting contracts will provide a mechanism to obtain sign language interpreters and computer assisted real-time transcription (CART) services and will streamline the State's access to these auxiliary aids and services. The RFP includes four services: on-site sign language interpreters, remote sign language interpreters, on-site CART, and remote CART. Aside from being available for use by all State of Maryland agencies, the contracts may also be used by Maryland local governments, many not-for-profit organizations, and some governments outside of Maryland. The purpose of the contracts is to help State, local, and nonprofit entities streamline processes and contain costs associated with providing auxiliary aids and services. The contracts will make it easier for State personnel and others to request and provide appropriate auxiliary aids or services. The terms of the RFP may be viewed on the DBM website or at the "News" tab on the ODHH website.

The RFP was issued in the fall of 2012 (FY 2013) by DBM. A pre-proposal conference was held on October 16, 2012. In attendance were State personnel from the Department of Budget and Management, the Department of Rehabilitation Services, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and the Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. 20 people representing over a dozen prospective offerors for the RFP also attended the pre-proposal conference. The attendees were able to ask the DBM staff for clarification on the terms of the RFP. A review of the issues and responses are provided on the DBM and ODHH websites. It is anticipated that contracts will be awarded and the services will be available in early 2013.



Ongoing involvement in the coordination of program and policy development promotes equal and full access to resources, programs, and services, which results in greater access to opportunities for Marylanders with hearing loss. These opportunities enable people with hearing loss to participate in all aspects of community life.

Technical Assistance

ODHH provides technical assistance to all levels of government, private entities, community stakeholders, and constituents. Technical assistance is defined as aid given to support the economic, social and political development of people with hearing loss in Maryland. This includes reviewing, assessing, and evaluating policies, procedures, and practices in relation to effective services for deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind individuals. This also includes ongoing review of and involvement in federal, state, and local legislative initiatives. The provision of communication accessibility assessments is also included. Finally, technical assistance includes individualized responses to inquiries received in person or via email, telephone, or fax.

During FY 2012, ODHH continued to focus significant attention on ensuring that Marylanders with hearing loss have access to information posted on the Internet by State agencies. To this end, ODHH focused staff time and resources on captioning the Governor's videos on the Governor's Office website, as well as the Governor's videos on the State's YouTube channel. ODHH staff also reached out to other State agencies posting online media and provided information and instructions on captioning online videos.

Picture Point Card Update

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA), in partnership with the Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH), the Frederick Police Department, the Maryland Police and Correctional Training Commissions, and Johns Hopkins University Division of Public Safety Leadership, developed a "point to picture" communications aid for first responders. The development and production of this communications aid was made possible through a grant received by the MCPA through the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention.

The communications aid was developed by Maryland School for the Deaf graduate Bobby Harris, who first started working on the project as an intern at the Frederick Police Department in 2008. During the summer of 2011, Bobby worked as a consultant on the grant project, making changes so the booklet is more versatile and can be used across the state. Beginning in September 2011, the communications aid and training materials were distributed to agencies with law enforcement officers and first responders across the state.

Maryland General Assembly Legislative Session

During the 2012 Legislative Session in Maryland, ODHH continued to monitor and provide testimony, as appropriate, on bills relevant to Marylanders with hearing loss. The Office also hosted its Third Annual Legislative Awareness Day.

Third Annual Legislative Awareness Day

On February 20, 2012, ODHH hosted its Third Annual Deaf and Hard of Hearing Legislative Awareness Day. Nearly 100 people were in attendance for the day's events, which started with an advocacy training to familiarize participants with the legislative process. The training was followed by an informative video about the Maryland Legislative Process provided by the Department of Legislative Services and open-captioned by public television. The highlight of the event was the Welcome Ceremony and Awards Presentation, with keynote remarks by Lt. Governor Anthony Brown.

During the Awards Presentation, ODHH recognized Delegate Patrick Hogan, Delegate Kirill Reznik, and Senator Nancy King for their involvement and commitment to the deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind communities. Shane Feldman received the Second Annual Kelby Brick Community Leadership Award for his active participation on the ODHH Advisory Council and his tremendous efforts in working with the Maryland Department of Transportation to improve access at the Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport and in public transportation. Participants had an opportunity to meet with their legislators to discuss issues important to them. During the House General Session, the deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind communities were recognized.



Non-departmental Legislation

On May 22, 2012, Governor Martin O'Malley signed into law several bills that affect people with hearing loss. ODHH provided technical assistance and information on the following bills:

House Bill 390 / Senate Bill 571 - Libraries - Maryland Deaf Culture Digital Library

Creates a task force to study and make recommendations regarding the establishment and coordination of a Deaf Culture Digital Library to educate individuals about deaf culture in the United States and other countries; requiring the Task Force to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly.

House Bill 1148 - Courts - Victims of Crime - Interpreters

Alters specified requirements relating to the use of interpreters in court proceedings to include the appointment of an interpreter for a victim or victim's representative who is deaf or cannot readily understand or communicate the spoken English language; authorizing a victim or a victim's representative to apply for appointment of a specified interpreter.

House Bill 1087 / SB 746 - Communications Companies - Universal Service Trust Fund - Surcharge

Expands the services that are subject to the Universal Service Trust Fund (USTF) surcharge from switched local exchange access (landline service) in the State to all "communications services" in the State. The bill also alters the surcharge from a per telephone charge not to exceed 45 cents per month to a per account charge not to exceed 18 cents per month. The bill requires the Public Service Commission (PSC) to set the surcharge in fiscal 2014 and annually thereafter at an amount that is no higher than necessary, given the current fund balance, to generate sufficient revenues to fund the costs of USTF's programs and administrative costs for the following fiscal year. The bill also establishes specific uses for the money in USTF.

Program and Policy Development Highlights

In FY 2012, ODHH was involved in the coordination of program and policy development to accomplish the following:

- During Hurricane Irene, ODHH worked with the Maryland Emergency Management Agency to ensure that an American Sign Language interpreter was present for the Governor's press conferences streamed online. ODHH staff also captioned updates and transcribed audio information so that it was accessible to Marylanders with hearing loss.
- The Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing reached out to ODHH for information and support in drafting a bill similar to Maryland's law requiring that closed captioning be activated on televisions in public places.
- During FY 2012, ODHH staff and interns compiled a project proposal to create hospitals kits designed to enhance communication between medical staff and their deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind patients. Materials were purchased and the kits will be assembled during FY 2013.
- ODHH worked closely with the Department of Aging to ensure that staff are aware of and sensitive to the needs of an aging population impacted by hearing loss. Using the research of Dr. Frank Lin at Johns Hopkins Hospital, ODHH has provided information, technical assistance, and training to a number of the departments within the Agency to ensure that communication accessibility is a priority in program development.
- ODHH consulted with the Maryland State Department of Education to continue the development of a State plan for the education of deaf and hard of hearing children. During this fiscal year, community forums were held around the State to solicit input from parents, professionals, and advocates on the educational needs of children who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind.
- ODHH continues to collaborate with MSDE's Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) to ensure that programs and services offered through DORS are accessible to deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind consumers.
- ODHH collaborated with the Maryland Police and Correctional Training Commissions (PCTC) to include Sensitivity and Awareness Trainings to candidates in the Police Academy while developing a "Train the Trainer" Model to be used across the state. ODHH also worked with PCTC staff to develop and film a training video about assistive technology.
- ODHH met with Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services Community Supervision staff to establish a plan to train Community Supervision staff across the state.
- ODHH worked with the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) to ensure that MDP's statewide redistricting meetings had accommodations for people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind.
- ODHH coordinated captioning with the Governor's Press Office to ensure that all videos posted on the Governor and Lt. Governor's websites were captioned and accessible to Marylanders with hearing loss. In FY 2012, 97 videos were captioned. This is an increase from FY 2011, when 74 videos were captioned.
- The Governor of Rhode Island requested that the Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing work with the State of Maryland to develop a strategic planning and outcomes mechanisms similar to Maryland' "Managing for Results" (MFRs). ODHH staff worked closely with the Executive Director of the Commission and provided input and assistance to facilitate an MFR system for Rhode Island.
- The Tennessee Partnership for Families, Children and Adults contacted ODHH and requested technical assistance in developing comprehensive mental health services for the deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind population of Tennessee. Representatives from Tennessee came to Maryland to meet with ODHH staff to draft a proposal for their State.

Data Collection¹

ODHH collects data so that consolidated information about statewide services to the deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind can be reported. Currently, information is collected from several primary State agencies that provide critical services to our constituent population including:

- **Maryland Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program:** Data on the number of infants identified with a hearing loss as part of the Maryland Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program is counted based on the calendar year. These numbers do not include infants who have had an audiological evaluation, but do not yet have a definitive diagnosis. A number of these infants will eventually be diagnosed with some degree of hearing loss. The numbers may also fluctuate when infants with risk factors return for their monitoring evaluations due to incidents of late-onset hearing loss or transient conductive loss at the time of testing.
- **Telecommunication Access of Maryland (TAM):** TAM provides free telephone assessments to Marylanders with disabilities to determine which telephone is best for each individual's communication needs. Assessments usually take place at one of six Evaluation Centers located across the state. This number reflects all assessments conducted (speech, physical, and hearing disabilities) by TAM.

¹ As a Coordinating Office of the Governor, ODHH does not provide direct services.

- **Springfield Hospital Center (SFHC):** This data reflects admissions to the designated Deaf Unit at SFHC. The total reflects the number of annual admissions and not an unduplicated count of individuals served.
- **Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS):** DORS provides employment evaluations, training, and support to Marylanders who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind. This count, which is based on the federal fiscal year, reflects the number of deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind consumers who received an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

The collection of this information assists the Office in identifying trends and gaps in order to facilitate appropriate and efficient delivery of State services in Maryland. In FY 2012, the Office continued to use this data to determine attendance at and involvement in various task forces and councils, to guide outreach, and to focus staff resources.

ODHH serves on or attends meetings for the following Committees and Councils:

- Maryland Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
 - Behavioral Health Subcommittee
 - Education Subcommittee
 - Communication Access Subcommittee
- Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Advisory Council
- The Alliance
- Helping Educate to Advance the Rights of the Deaf
- Governor's Advisory Board for Telecommunications Relay
- Maryland State Steering Committee for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students
- Interagency Committee on Aging
- MDOT's State Coordinating Committee for Human Services Transportation
 - Needs Assessment Subcommittee
- Urban Area Security Initiative Baltimore Region Vulnerable Populations Workgroup
- Deaf V.I.S.A. Project
- Maryland Relay Deafblind Equipment Distribution Program
- MSDE/DORS Deafblind Working Group
- National Summit on Deaf Education
- Baltimore County Association of Senior Citizen Organizations, Inc.
- Behavioral Health Integration Meetings with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
- Baltimore County Aging and Disability Resource Center Advisory Council
- University of Maryland Emergency Preparedness Focus Groups
- Maryland Association of the Deaf Board Meetings
 - New Member Retreat

Consolidated Report of Statewide Services

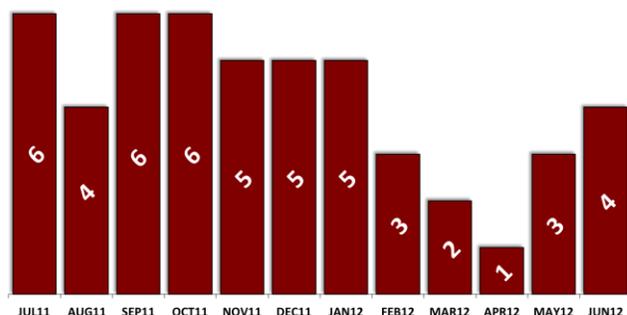
Telecommunications Access of Maryland, DoIT, <i>Telephone Assessments Provided</i>	501
Division of Rehabilitation Services, MSDE, <i>Number of deaf and hard of hearing individuals receiving Individualized Plans for Employment (Federal Fiscal Year)</i>	1769
Maryland Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program, DHMH, <i>Number of infants with a confirmed identification of a hearing loss (calendar year)</i>	124
Springfield Hospital Center Deaf Unit, DHMH, <i>Annual admissions to deaf unit</i>	9

Committees and Task Forces

As a Coordinating Office of the Governor, ODHH staff attends many task force, committee, and council meetings to provide advice and guidance when necessary.



Council and Task Force Meeting Attendance Fiscal Year 2012



PCTC Follow-Up/Video

ODHH and the Maryland Police and Correctional Training Commissions (PCTC) have an ongoing partnership to deliver quality training about the needs of individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind to law enforcement and corrections personnel. In the summer of 2011, ODHH and PCTC staff conducted site visits to a Pre-Trial, Central Booking, and Intake Center, Maryland Reception, Diagnostic, and Classification Center, and Maryland Correctional Institution – Jessup. As part of these site visits, ODHH and PCTC staff were able to interview Corrections leadership, staff, and inmates with hearing loss to learn about the real-life communication challenges they face. The information learned from these site visits were incorporated into the training developed by PCTC in consultation with ODHH.

Work on this important training initiative continued in FY 2012, when a “Train the Trainer” module was delivered to Corrections staff. After the module was delivered, ODHH provided information and support to the staff delivering the training, including attending some of the training sessions to serve as an additional resource.

As part of this training initiative, ODHH staff worked with PCTC staff to develop an instructional video about assistive technology that will be available to Corrections staff to review as needed. The video highlights how to use assistive listening devices, video remote interpreting and video relay service, and text-to-text communication systems like the UbiDuo. The video also provides step-by-step instructions for using these devices and services, including demonstrations of the products in use.

ODHH Partners with MDOT to Recognize Disability Employment Awareness Month

In observance of National Disability Employment Awareness Month, ODHH partnered with the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to deliver Sensitivity and Awareness training about serving constituents who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind to MDOT employees. Robin Underwood, Title VI and ADA Program Manager for MDOT, coordinated seven training sessions for several different modules within the Department. As a result, nearly 300 employees from the MDOT Headquarters, the Maryland Aviation Administration, Maryland Port Administration, Maryland Transit Administration, and Motor Vehicle Administration were trained on how to interact with customers and employees who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind.

Through the ongoing provision of information, training, and technical assistance, ODHH is able to increase the awareness and sensitivity of government agencies about the accessibility needs of the Marylanders we serve. We are grateful to MDOT for their commitment to improving access for people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind.

ODHH and Towson University Partner for a Unique Service Learning Opportunity



In an exciting new Service Learning Project launched in fall 2011, Towson University, the Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH), and the Deaf Shalom Zone (DSZ) collaborated on a two-tier service learning experience for students enrolled in the Deaf Studies Program. Through this innovative project, students spent the first several weeks of the semester working with DSZ to attain real-life experience and personal contact with various deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind consumers. This interaction was the first tier of the learning experience and facilitated an in-depth understanding of the varied needs and diversity of communication methods within the community.

During the second half of the semester, Towson students were trained by staff from ODHH to offer a professionally developed Sensitivity and Awareness Training module at various sites around the state. The locations range from universities to local government agencies, not-for-profit and faith-based organizations, and health care providers. The trainings had a common objective: increase awareness and understanding of communication access issues to facilitate equal access to services, programs, and information throughout the state. Examples of sites include: Kennedy Krieger Institute, Goucher College, Sheppard Pratt, Port Discovery, and Disability Support Services.

Students from the Social Services in the Deaf Community class were the first to undertake this project. The feedback was positive and there was a mutual sense of accomplishment on the part of the Towson students and the various sites. The Deaf Studies Program hopes to use this service learning project model as a bulk of the curriculum for the Social Services class each fall semester. The project provides professionals in Maryland with vital information about the communication access needs of people with hearing loss. As a result, Towson students are able to erase social stigmas and replace them with an understanding that promotes equal access for all.

Governmental Education and Training Programs

These trainings allow ODHH to reach all levels of government, facilitating an increased awareness about the communication access needs of the Marylanders we serve. The Office conducts trainings on a number of topics, including:

- ADA Compliance
- Assistive and Adaptive Technologies
- Sensitivity and Awareness

In FY 2012, ODHH provided 41 trainings to federal, state, and local government agencies. This is a marked increase from FY 2011, when the office delivered 15 trainings to government agencies. The increase can be attributed to our efforts to market the Office as a source of expert training related to people with hearing loss, as well as to the partnerships we have developed with agencies that continue to invite us to train and recommend our training to others.

Lunch and Learn ASL Classes for State Employees

In recognition of Deaf Awareness Week, ODHH staff delivered “Lunch and Learn” ASL classes to staff from the Maryland Department of Disabilities and the Developmental Disabilities Council. The classes were held on Tuesdays and Thursdays during lunch and the staff learned about the American Sign Language and Deaf culture. The classes were a success and ODHH has received requests to facilitate similar lunchtime workshops for other State agencies.



Training Highlights:

Federal

- Federal Executive Board Disability Employment Conference

State

- DHMH/MHA Special Needs Population Conference
- University of Maryland Police Academy
- Department of Transportation
 - Maryland Aviation Administration
 - Maryland Port Administration
 - Maryland Transit Administration
 - Motor Vehicle Administration
- DLLR’s Local Veterans Employment Representative and Disabled Veterans Outreach Program

- Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services
 - Community Supervision
 - Police and Correctional Training Commissions

Local

- Baltimore County Police Department
- Frederick Police Academy
- Montgomery County Human Resources Specialists
- Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services
- Maryland-National Capital Park Police
- Anne Arundel County Office of Emergency Management
- Anne Arundel County Commission on Disabilities
- Baltimore City Commission on Disabilities
- Aging and Disability Resource Center of Baltimore County

Nongovernmental Education and Training Programs

ODHH provides a number of trainings and presentations to stakeholders, constituents, and nongovernmental entities. In training these groups, we support our mission by educating the communities we serve about their rights and teaching them how to access services and programs. We are also able to educate nongovernmental entities about the communication access needs of our constituent population. Through these presentations and workshops, we are able to expand participants’ knowledge of and familiarity with people with hearing loss, accessibility issues, ADA requirements, emergency preparedness, adaptive equipment, and more.

In FY 2012, ODHH provided 23 trainings to non-governmental organizations, a significant increase from the 15 trainings delivered in FY 2011.

Nongovernmental Training and Education Highlights:

- Foxwell Memorial Apartments
- Value Options
- Innovations in Aging Expo
- Russian Social Service Delegation
- Goucher College
- Independence Now

About ODHH Presentations

The Office also provides “About ODHH” presentations to familiarize constituents, community stakeholders, professionals, and all levels of government with ODHH as a resource. In FY 2012, we provided seven “About ODHH” presentations at various events and meetings around the state.

ODHH and Education Subcommittee Reach Out to Students Across the State

ODHH focuses a lot of its resources on program and policy development; however, grassroots outreach and education are also integral to fulfilling our mission. As part of our responsibility to be a resource to all of Maryland’s residents who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind, ODHH and the Maryland Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing’s Education Subcommittee worked together to plan social gatherings to connect deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind students and their families with their peers. The first “Family Social Event” took place on Saturday, December 17, 2011 at Applewood Farms in Harford County. The event, which was open to both Maryland School for the Deaf students and mainstreamed students, was a huge success thanks to all of the families and professionals who attended. The Maryland School for the Deaf Foundation sponsored the tent for the event, giving the families a central location to meet and chat. There were also informational tables from ODHH and others as well as drawings for door prizes, courtesy of the Maryland State Steering Committee for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children and the Maryland School for the Deaf.



The Education Subcommittee is looking forward to planning and hosting more “Family Social Events” for families and students with a hearing loss.

Marketing the Office as a State resource on issues affecting deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind individuals is an ongoing process. Outreach through various activities, events, and meetings is necessary to promote awareness of ODHH among stakeholder communities, constituents, and state and local government agencies in Maryland.

Our Outreach activities include:

- Exhibiting at expos, fairs, and conferences;
- Publishing the *ODHH Monthly Bulletin*;
- Updating the ODHH website;
- Participating in community events; and
- Maintaining an active social media presence.

In FY 2012, ODHH continued its involvement at community and stakeholder events. In addition, ODHH added Helping Educate to Advance the Rights of the Deaf to the list of community organizations in which we participate.

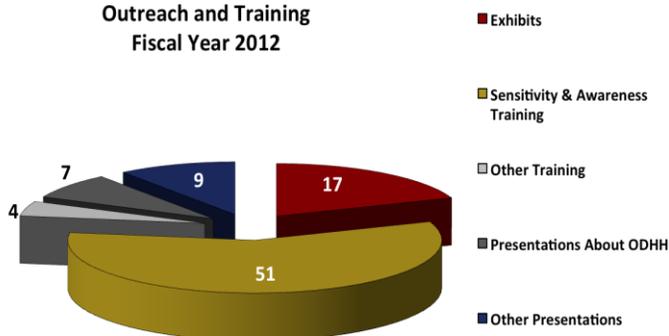
Outreach Highlights for FY 2012:

Exhibits at expos, fairs and conferences are one way ODHH connects with the public to promote ODHH as a resource on communication access. ODHH exhibited at 17 such events during FY 2012, more than double the number in FY 2011.

- Maryland Association of the Deaf Symposium
- DeafNet Deaf Awareness Day Expo
- Maryland Association of Counties Conference
- National Aquarium Deaf Awareness Days
- Hearing Loss Association of America DC Walk4Hearing



Outreach and Training
Fiscal Year 2012



- Baltimore County Association of Senior Citizens Organizations, Inc. Bi-Monthly Meetings
- Maryland Department of Disabilities ADA Anniversary Celebration
- Maryland Association of the Deaf/Eastern Shore Association of the Deaf Family Fun Day
- Charlotte Hall Veterans Home Open House
- Maryland Association of the Deaf Conference
- Baltimore County Senior Citizens/Baby Boomer Expo
- Hearing and Speech Agency’s Deaf Awareness Week Events

Monthly Bulletin

A prominent feature of our Outreach Program is the *ODHH Monthly Bulletin*, a newsletter that provides stakeholders and other entities with pertinent information that affects the constituents we serve. The newsletter also enables ODHH to give monthly updates and progress reports about the activities and programs undertaken by the Office. During FY 2011, the Office began distributing the *Monthly Bulletin* through the online program Constant Contact so that we can deliver a more professional-looking, easy to read publication. The program also allows us track open rates and other trends. We continued using this program in FY 2012 and have adjusted the publication based on the feedback we have received.



Social Media

During FY 2012, ODHH continued utilizing both Facebook and Twitter to increase awareness of ODHH as a State resource on issues affecting deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind individuals. Most notably, we used social media during Hurricane Irene to get feedback from the community through our Facebook and Twitter pages and were able to respond and post important information to the community in a timely and efficient manner. ODHH also utilizes these pages to provide updates related to the Office, advertise ODHH and community events, and post news on a variety of topics.

ODHH was also able to use Twitter to address community issues during a Town Hall Meeting in Easton. Constituents who were not able to attend tweeted questions to @mdodhh and answers were tweeted in response. Because of our increased visibility, ODHH is better able to address needs and identify gaps within a diverse and geographically dispersed community.

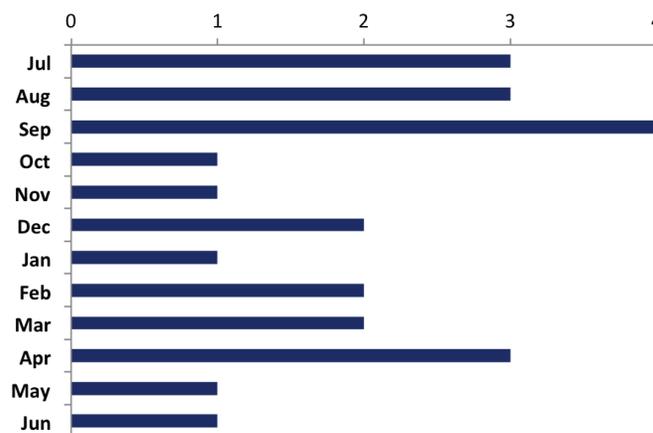
Website

The website continues to serve as a resource for community stakeholders and constituents, as well as to state and local government agencies in Maryland. The resources on the website address emergency preparedness, access to voting, assistive technology and hearing aids, children and youth services, services for people who are deafblind, education, behavioral health, sign language classes, senior citizens and aging, and more.

The website provides an opportunity for individuals to submit requests for information and assistance. Users can also keep up with ODHH's progress by accessing Advisory Council meeting minutes, press releases, past issues of the *ODHH Monthly Bulletin*, and Legislative Updates



Website Updates Fiscal Year 2012



Town Hall Meetings

ODHH holds at least two town hall meetings each year to solicit public comment and feedback. These meetings help ODHH by providing a forum to gather community input on:

- The quality of State services and programs affecting deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind individuals;
- ODHH-related functions and operations; and
- Other issues affecting deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind individuals.

FY 2012 Town Hall Meetings

In FY 2012, ODHH continued to reach out to groups and organizations hosting meeting or events and solicited feedback from their participants and members. This approach was a success and attendance at ODHH Town Hall meetings grew from 60 in FY 2011 to over 170 in FY 2012.

The Office hosted three town hall meetings during FY 2012:

- Howard County – November 11, 2011
- Washington County – May 11, 2012
- Wicomico County – June 16, 2012

Some of the issues raised by attendees were:

- Interpreter Quality and Standards for Educational Interpreters
- Concerns that parents are not being informed of all the options for educating their child with a hearing loss
- Need for a method to provide feedback when interpreters are not qualified
- Relationships and interactions between the community and law enforcement
- Resources for attorneys who know American Sign Language or have knowledge of Deaf culture

In FY 2012, ODHH staff began working on the issues raised by participants at town hall meetings by reaching out to our state and local government partners. For example, ODHH and the Department of Budget and Management continue to work on a statewide Visual Communication Services contract, which will ensure that only certified interpreters are used under the contract and provides a process through which agencies may address interpreter quality issues. We also continue our work with the Maryland State Steering Committee for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students to address the educational needs of children with hearing loss. In addition to distributing a “point to picture” communications aid for first responders during FY 2012, ODHH also continued to train a variety of law enforcement and corrections entities across the state. Finally, ODHH continues to update out resource lists to include current information of attorneys who are fluent in American Sign Language and familiar with Deaf culture.

ODHH will continue to address these issues in FY 2013. The Office values the input of the community and makes its best effort to address the concerns raised by stakeholders at the Town Hall Meetings we host.



FY 2011 Town Hall Meetings Follow - Up

ODHH took steps to follow up on feedback gathered at FY 2011 (July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012) town hall meetings, including:

- Access to interpreters in hospitals and doctor's offices
 - ODHH worked with the Maryland Healthcare Education Institute to deliver training to help hospitals and healthcare providers develop an understanding of the demographics and diversity of the deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind population. ODHH also purchased materials to produce hospital kits to improve communication between medical personnel and deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind patients.
- Quality of Interpreters
 - ODHH staff worked with the Department of Budget and Management to develop a Request for Proposals for a statewide contract for visual communication services. All interpreters used under the RFP must be certified interpreters.
- Employment Resources and Employment Discrimination
 - ODHH reached out to partners in other state agencies to address these issues. To that end, ODHH continued to work with the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) to discuss employment issues related to deafblind individuals. ODHH also worked with the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation to train staff members working as Local Veterans Employment Representatives and in the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program to discuss the needs of veterans with hearing loss seeking employment.
- Access to Emergency Preparedness and Emergency Weather Information
 - ODHH made progress on improving access to emergency preparedness information before, during, and after Hurricane Irene by updating social media accounts, sending out e-blasts, and coordinating captioning and interpreter services for messages from the Governor.
- Financial Assistance for Hearing Aids
 - ODHH continued to update our resource list of organizations providing financial assistance for hearing aids.
- Resources for deaf people immigrating to the US for better social and educational opportunities
 - ODHH continued to be involved in the work of the Deaf V.I.S.A Project.



Other Outreach

In addition to the mandated Town Hall meetings, ODHH Staff and/or members of the Advisory Council attended a number of meetings throughout the state to solicit input and feedback on the needs of the deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind communities. This information is used to develop strategies that will further the Office's mission and vision. Examples of meetings attended include:

- Community Leadership Meetings
- Brown Bag Lunches with Professionals working with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Marylanders
- Community Advocacy and Association Meetings (HLAA, MDAD, MDSC)

Keeping the Community Informed During Hurricane Irene

In August of 2011, Maryland was hit by Hurricane Irene, leaving hundreds of thousands of individuals without power and damaging homes and other structures across the State. During Hurricane Irene, the Office worked closely with the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and the Governor’s Office to ensure that interpreters were provided for the Governor’s press conferences. On the Governor’s website, the press conferences were streamed live and the interpreter remained in full view for the entirety of the briefings.

ODHH staff also posted information on Facebook and Twitter and sent out e-blasts to our distribution lists to ensure that Marylanders with hearing loss had access to information before, during, and after the storm. Additionally, ODHH captioned all of the Governor’s YouTube updates and transcribed the audio for some of the Governor’s press conferences. Through social media, we were able to get feedback from community members and respond to questions and requests for assistance.

Constituent Services

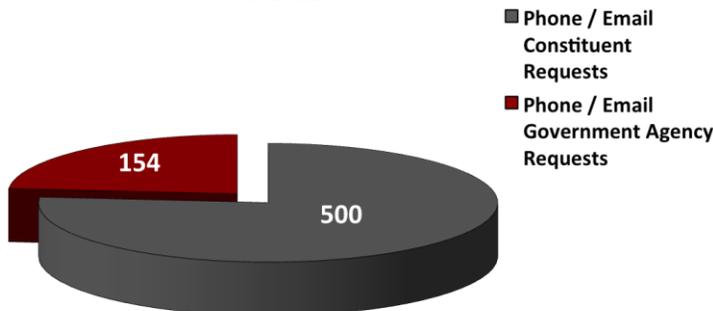
There are many ways in which ODHH provides information and referral services to all levels of government, private entities, community stakeholders, and constituents. One way is through our constituent services program, through which ODHH staff responds to individual requests for information and assistance. The information sought through these contacts range from locating American Sign Language (ASL) classes to finding financial assistance for hearing aids. Often, we answer questions about how to access government support or how to file a complaint if an individual feels that he or she has been discriminated against because of his or her hearing loss. We also answer questions from government agencies, private entities, and advocacy organizations.

In FY 2012, requests for information from government agencies remained about the same while requests from constituents and stakeholders increased slightly. We anticipate an eventual decrease in constituent and stakeholder contacts because more information than ever is available on the ODHH website, which means fewer people have to make direct contact with the Office to get the information they need. Additionally, the Office is actively using social media to reach out to constituents and the number of followers on the Office’s Facebook and Twitter pages has steadily increased.

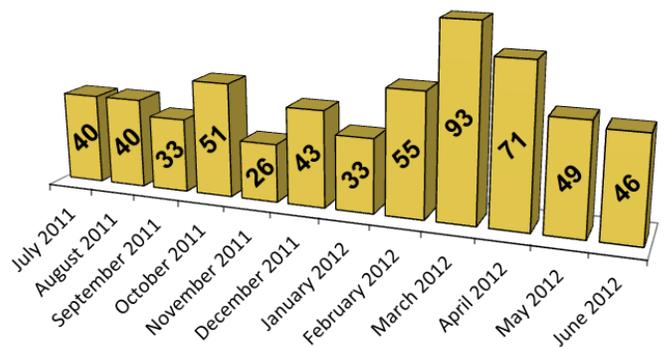
ODHH recognizes that the number of individual requests for information and support services it receives is an integral part of the Office’s operation; we are committed to the delivery of timely information and referral. ODHH staff strives to meet or exceed timeliness standards for responding to requests from constituents and stakeholders. It is the goal of the office to respond within two business days to 90% of all requests received. In FY 2012, ODHH received 665 requests for information from constituents, stakeholders, and government entities. Office staff responded to 89% of email/phone requests within two business days and 100% of written inquiries within ten business days.

Another way ODHH ensures community stakeholders and constituents, as well as State and local government entities, get the information they need is through the dissemination of community service announcements. ODHH circulates pertinent community announcements to several electronic distribution lists as a community service. In FY 2012, ODHH sent out 580 Community Service Announcements reflected in the following table.

**Constituent Services Requests for Information
Fiscal Year 2012**



**Constituent Services Announcements
Fiscal Year 2012**



The number of announcements disseminated by the Office decreased by 40, which may be attributed the staffing changes and challenges ODHH faced in FY 2012.

The Maryland Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MACDHH) was established in October 2001. The Council, appointed by the Governor, is headed by a Chair and Vice Chair and consists of 18 members – nine members representing State agencies and nine members representing the general public.

MACDHH's responsibilities include:

- advising ODHH in carrying out its duties;
- reviewing statewide activities for deaf and hard of hearing, and deafblind individuals;
- fostering the coordination of and support for programs for the deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind; and
- studying ways to maximize the use of facilities and services available to deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind individuals.

The State agencies represented are:

- Department of Education
- Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation
- Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
- Department of Human Resources
- Department of Transportation
- Commission on Civil Rights
- Department of Housing and Community Development
- Maryland School for the Deaf
- Department of Aging

Of the nine public members:

- one must be a parent of a deaf child,
- one must be a private citizen with special knowledge or expertise relating to services to deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind individuals,
- one must be from a private agency providing services to deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind individuals,
- one must have knowledge or expertise about deafblind individuals.

The Council meets four times during the year to learn about and discuss issues facing individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind.

In FY 2012, Laurie Corcoran continued to serve as Chair of the Advisory Council and Gary Monroe continued as Vice Chair until the June 2012 meeting. At the June 2012 meeting, Shane Feldman was elected as Chair and Stacey Farone was elected as Vice Chair.

The Advisory Council participates in various activities and projects of ODHH and provides information based on the levels of expertise within the Council. Those activities and projects include:

- Reviewing the results of ODHH Town Hall meetings;
- Ongoing review of ODHH programs and services, including technical assistance, constituent services, training, and outreach;
- Submitting testimony during legislative session on pertinent legislation.



Education Subcommittee

Chairperson – Cheri Dowling

The Education Subcommittee hosted a regional social activity for families with children who are deaf or hard of hearing. The event was held at Applewood Farms in Harford County on December 17, 2011. Families who attended the event enjoyed hayrides, petting zoo, kiddy maze, lawn bowling, reindeer antler toss, and much more. This event offered families the opportunity to gather and meet other families who have deaf and hard of hearing children from their area. The Maryland School for the Deaf Foundation provided funding for this event. The Education Subcommittee is currently working on providing additional social activities for families around the state.

Communication Access Subcommittee:

Chairperson – Shane Feldman

During FY 2012, the Communication Access Subcommittee made progress in the areas of employment, transportation, legal and self advocacy. Through the work of the Subcommittee, ODHH began training Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation staff on the communication needs of people with hearing loss. In addition, the subcommittee initiated a training partnership with the Maryland Department of Transportation through which nearly 300 employees from the MDOT Headquarters, the Maryland Aviation Administration, Maryland Port Administration, Maryland Transit Administration, and Motor Vehicle Administration were trained on how to interact with customers and employees who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind. Finally, the Subcommittee continued to work with the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights to address complaints from deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind individuals.

Behavioral Health Subcommittee:

Chairperson - Carl Bailey

The Behavioral Health Subcommittee, in collaboration with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH), is now meeting bi-monthly to ensure that comprehensive Behavioral Health services are made available along the entire continuum of care to Marylanders who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind.

The Behavioral Health Subcommittee has continued working on its goal of becoming more inclusive to consumers in the system. On Our Own members have participated more actively in the committee and, in collaboration with the Office of Special Populations at DHMH, facilitated member participation in the national On Our Own Conference.

Finally, the MACDHH would like to thank Carl Bailey for his supportive leadership of the Committee throughout FY 2012. The Committee is now in the process of identifying a new Chair and developing its agenda for the next two years. As a result of the committee’s ongoing advocacy, the mental health needs of Maryland’s deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind community are included in the planning and implementation of all DHMH initiatives.

State Agencies

Membership Roster for FY 2012

Maryland School for the Deaf Stacey Farone, <i>Full Year</i>	Citizen / Deaf or Hard of Hearing Shane Feldman, <i>Full Year</i>
Maryland State Department of Education Kathleen Heck, <i>Full Year</i>	Lisa Jordan, <i>Full Year</i>
Maryland Department of Human Resources Carl Bailey, <i>Full Year</i>	Nwokoma Sampson, <i>Full Year</i>
Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Marian Bland, <i>Full Year</i>	Nancy Jenkins, <i>Full Year</i>
Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (Formerly the Maryland Commission on Human Relations) Gary Monroe, <i>Full Year</i>	Citizen with Special Knowledge, Laurie Corcoran, <i>Full Year</i>
Maryland Department of Transportation Robin Underwood, <i>Full Year</i>	Private Agency Amy Bopp, <i>Full Year</i>
Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development John (Jack) Rouse, <i>Full Year</i>	Parent Cheri Dowling, <i>Full Year</i>
Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation Sara Muempfer, <i>Full Year</i>	Citizen with Special Knowledge of deafblind Individuals Ann Black, <i>Full Year</i>
Maryland Department of Aging Dakota Burgess, <i>Full Year</i>	

Public Members



217 EAST REDWOOD STREET
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BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21202
VOICE (410) 767-6290
VP (443) 453-5954
EMAIL gov.odhh@maryland.gov
www.odhh.maryland.gov

A MESSAGE FROM THE AGENCY DIRECTOR AND ADVISORY COUNCIL CHAIR

December 2012

Dear Citizens of Maryland:

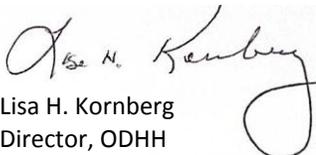
The Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) is pleased to present our Fiscal Year 2012 (FY 2012) Annual Report, which details the accomplishments of both ODHH and the Maryland Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MACDHH). This annual report covers the activities of ODHH and MACDHH from July 1, 2011 until June 30, 2012.

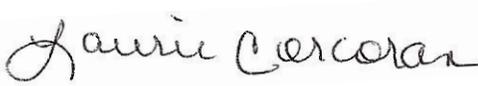
ODHH remains a steadfast contributor to the O'Malley-Brown Administration's vision of *One Maryland* by working to improve the quality of life for Marylanders with hearing loss. ODHH shares the Administration's commitment to making and creating progress. To this end, ODHH continued to reach out to federal, state, and local agencies to provide training about the communication access needs of people with hearing loss while responding to an unprecedented number of requests for information and referral services. Furthermore, we harnessed the power of volunteers and interns to expand program and policy development in the State. For example, ODHH staff and interns worked to develop a proposal for the creation of hospital kits to facilitate communication between medical personnel and patients with hearing loss. ODHH staff and interns also worked together to plan and execute our most successful Legislative Awareness Day to date.

FY 2012 was a year of progress and change for ODHH. We welcomed Sam Lenox as our new Staff Assistant while bidding farewell to Laura Quinn. We thank Laura for all of her hard work in helping ODHH realize our mission. We must also thank our state and community partners who loaned their expertise and resources to the Office while our Deputy Director was on six months of medical leave. It is your unwavering support that kept our Office of three going during challenging times and the accomplishments of 2012 are as much yours as they are ours.

Finally, we are thankful for the leadership and vision of the O'Malley-Brown Administration and for their continued support of the ODHH, The Advisory Council on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and the communities we serve.

Respectfully,


Lisa H. Kornberg
Director, ODHH


Laurie Corcoran
Chair, MACDHH

Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

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