



NC Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Accessibility Gives DeafBlind People Choices

June is DeafBlind Awareness Month

**Theme: Accessibility and Inclusion Open
Doors for DeafBlind Community**

June 2022

Did you know that DeafBlind...?

- **Is used to describe people with various degrees and types of BOTH losses, hearing and vision.**
- **People can become DeafBlind at any age. Causes can include illness, injury and/or genetics.**
- **People can and do lead productive lives especially when they have access and can make informed choices.**
- **Use a variety of communication methods, depending on the age of onset, the degree and type of hearing and vision loss and the communication environment they are in.**
- **Number about 84,000 in North Carolina according to 2019 statistics from the Helen Keller National Center.**

A DIVERSE DeafBlind Community



Delegates from the 2020 North Carolina Deaf-Blind Associates (NCDBA) conference. NCDBA prides itself for being all-inclusive with a board and membership including DeafBlind and hearing/sighted individuals with different communication modalities, racial and ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientation and identities, ages, education and employment.

To learn more, visit their website at: www.ncdba.org

SOURCE: Photo courtesy of DSDHH

Be an Ally

- Always identify yourself before speaking
- Tap their upper arm to get their attention
- Recognize that each DeafBlind person is unique and ask for their preferred way of communicating.
- Provide a qualified sign language interpreter upon request.
- Adjust lighting or seating arrangements upon request.
- Inform of changes in environment such as furniture placement, closures, obstacles, and possible hazards.
- Ensure written materials are available in accessible formats.
- Include text descriptions and audio/visual transcripts for photos and videos.
- Stay informed about events, training opportunities and resources by contacting your local DSDHH Regional Center to subscribe to their newsletter and monthly event calendars.
[NC DSDHH regional center](#)

How do Support Service Providers (SSPs) improve ACCESS for DeafBlind People?

In the DeafBlind community, an SSP is an individual who empowers and supports DeafBlind people in their independence by providing the visual and environmental information they need to make informed decisions.

Support Service Provider

- **Can either be voluntary or paid but must adhere to ethical business practices.**
- **Possesses training and skills required for the assignment.**
- **Supports and conforms to a variety of settings: work, home, recreation and social.**
- **Respects consumers' right to privacy and confidentiality.**
- **Respects consumers' preferences.**

SSP Services in NC

- **DHHS Driver/Support Service Provider Vendor List (DSSPVL)**
 - **DHHS DeafBlind Employees and Consumers**
 - **Driver/SSPs are contracted and paid for services**
- **Medicaid Communication Access and SSP Service**
 - www.ncdhhs.gov/dsdhh/medicaid

SOURCE: Created by NC DHHS

Medicaid Communication Access Services



NC DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES

Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Division of Health Benefits (NC Medicaid)

DeafBlind Services in NC

- **DSDHH [NC DSDHH regional center](#)**
 - **2 DeafBlind Services Specialists**
 - **Peer support and Self-Advocacy Training**
 - **National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program (NDBEDP/iCC) www.iCanConnect.org**
- **Division of Services for the Blind (DSB)**
 - **Vocational Rehabilitation and Independent Living Services <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/dsb>**
- **NC Deaf-Blind Project**
<https://ec.ncpublicschools.gov/disability-resources/deaf-blind>
 - **Support for children, families and schools**
 - **ECU Teacher Support Program**
 - **Exceptional Children Assistance Center (ECAC)**

Contact us

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