



to

Hiring a Deaf, Deafened or Hard of Hearing Employee

Definitions

The distinction between the terms deaf, deafened and hard of hearing is based principally on the individual's means of communication rather than on the actual degree of hearing loss.

Deaf people

The term **Deaf** refers to people who identify themselves as members of a socio-linguistic and cultural group whose language is Sign Language. The term **oral deaf** refers to individuals who are deaf and whose preferred mode of communication is speech and speech reading.

Persons with a hearing loss

The term **hard of hearing** refers to people who have a hearing loss ranging from mild to severe, although it is sometimes profound, and use their voice and residual hearing to communicate. The terms **late deafened or deafened** refer to people who have lost all hearing at

some point after learning to speak, usually as adults. Growing up either hearing or hard of hearing, late deafened people continue to use voice to communicate and rely strongly on visual forms of communication such as speechreading, text, and occasionally sign language.

Characteristics of deaf, deafened and hard of hearing employees

- Skilled, hard working and responsible
- Rated higher by employers than co-workers in:
 - Safety skills
 - Dependability
 - Ability to concentrate
 - Productivity

How will we communicate?

Communication with Deaf employees requires the use of sign language (either your own or a professional interpreter), written notes, gestures, visual aids, demonstration.

Communicating with employees with a hearing loss is similar to conversing with a hearing person, with the addition of simple visual strategies that allow effective interaction. Demonstration, visual aids and assistive listening devices can also be used in the workplace.

Do deaf, deafened and hard of hearing people have the skills and training I need?

Deaf, deafened and hard of hearing people have the same potential and abilities as hearing people.

They have a variety of skills and backgrounds ranging from technical training to professional degrees.

They are employed in jobs ranging from general labour to professional positions.

Most training, upgrading and educational courses can be made accessible for employees who are deaf, deafened and hard of hearing.

Removing barriers

Some jobs may not require accommodations while other jobs may need adaptations. Accommodation varies depending on the individual and the situation. Accommodation can be as simple as changing the lighting in a room or installing a technical device.

A number of technical devices are available, many of which are inexpensive.

Funding

Funding may be available to subsidize salaries and/or costs of technical devices.

CHS's Employment Services program

Provides:

- Technical Devices
- Sign Language Interpreting
- Information & Resources
- Consultation
- Workplace Assessments
- Job Placement Services

CHS can assist organizations in becoming accessible for deaf, deafened and hard of hearing workers. In addition, CHS has a variety of programs and resources of interest to both employers and employees. Contact us!

THE CANADIAN HEARING SOCIETY
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Through our 12 Ontario regional offices and 13 smaller area offices, CHS offers a range of direct services. Services in each region may vary, so be sure to contact your local CHS office for specific details.

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- ◆ London ◆ Ottawa
- ◆ Peel ◆ Peterborough
- ◆ Sault Ste. Marie
- ◆ Sudbury ◆ Thunder Bay
- ◆ Toronto ◆ Waterloo
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Area Offices

- ◆ Barrie ◆ Belleville
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- ◆ Chatham ◆ Durham Region ◆ Elliot Lake
- ◆ Fort Frances ◆ Kenora
- ◆ Niagara ◆ Sarnia
- ◆ North Bay ◆ York Region (Newmarket)

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to

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