

Best Practice Tip Sheet for Casework

With Individuals Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

1. Additional time should be allowed for investigations, home visits, meetings, and other points of contact.
2. Due to the need for consistent communication, schedule home visits and meetings with as much lead time as possible. Submit interpreter requests as soon as you know a need exists. Request that the same interpreter / interpreting team be present whenever possible.
3. Document the presence of an interpreter / interpreting team in the notes for each interaction, date/time, arrival/departure.
4. The life of the case for a deaf family should be equivalent to that of a hearing family.
5. When making referrals for services, DPP staff should inform the source of accommodation needs.
6. Interpreters may be knowledgeable in specialized service providers for the deaf and hard of hearing community. You may ask them for referral information pre- or post-sessions.
7. Flexibility and creativity should be employed when choosing and using treatment providers, Ensuring that individuals have equal access to services means that they have equal access to understanding the content. For example, a deaf and hard of hearing services therapist may be able to supplement or substitute for anger management or parenting classes, by removing access barriers to the services needed.
8. All deaf or hard of hearing consumers or community partners should be offered brief communication through email or text message whenever possible. Visual communication methods can be used for appointment scheduling and brief interactions but do not substitute for an in-person interpreter for longer interactions.
9. Each Community Mental Health Center has a point person to ensure access for individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind. This document can be found in SOP 1.14.1.
10. A communication assessment, necessary for individuals with limited language or language dysfluency, may be requested through the DBHDID Program Administrator for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, 502-782-6181.
11. Do not be afraid to consult with your supervisor, central office, or deaf or hard of hearing service providers on the best practices for addressing individual needs.