

Deaf Mentor Program



The Deaf Mentor Program is sponsored by the Minnesota Department of Human Services Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Division. The program focuses on the communication needs of families with children who are deaf and hard of hearing birth to age 6. The Deaf Mentor program assists these families by providing instruction in American Sign Language, early visual communication methods, and Deaf Culture, through a trained Deaf Mentor.

Program Process

- Families fill out an application and submit it to their regional Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Division (DHHS) office.
- Upon receipt of the application, an initial assessment is completed by DHHS regional office staff.
- If the family is an appropriate fit for the program and a Deaf mentor and program funds are also available, the DHHS regional staff will work with the family to plan mentor services.
- Once services are in place, a mentor can begin to work with a family. The mentor will typically spend two hours per week with a family, utilizing lessons from the SKI-HI Deaf Mentor Curriculum.



Deaf Mentor Qualifications

Deaf mentors referred by DHHS have completed training using the SKI-HI Deaf Mentor Training Curriculum, offered by the SKI-HI Institute in Utah. Deaf mentors have been chosen based on their fluency in American Sign Language, their ability to communicate easily with hearing families, their comfort with young children, and their ability to support family decisions.

Funding for the Program

Most often, mentor services are paid for with state grant funding through the DHHS Deaf Mentor Program. Other possible sources of payment include school districts, special education, Medical Assistance waiver programs, or the parents themselves.

Grant funding for the DHHS Deaf Mentor Program is limited. Families applying to the program may have to be placed on a waiting list if other sources of funding cannot be found.



Regional Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (DHHS) offices:

DHHS – Northeast, Duluth

Government Services Center
320 W 2nd St., Suite 710
Duluth, MN 55802
(218) 723-4962 (Voice)
(888) 234-1322 (Voice)
(866) 552-2692 (VP)
(866) 488-3833 (TTY)
(218) 723-4969 (FAX)
dhhs.duluth@state.mn.us

DHHS – Northeast, Virginia

Olcott Plaza
820 N 9th St.
Virginia, MN 55792
(218) 748-2253 (Voice)
(888) 234-1322 (Voice)
(866) 553-7987 (VP)
(866) 488-3997 (TTY)
(218) 748-2288 (FAX)
dhhs.virginia@state.mn.us

DHHS – Upper Northwest, Bemidji

Community Services Center
616 America Av. NW, Suite 320
Bemidji, MN 56601
(218) 333-8283 (Voice)
(888) 663-8329 (Voice)
(866) 488-3940 (TTY)
(218) 333-8279 (FAX)
dhhs.bemidji@state.mn.us
IP# 136.234.6.25

DHHS – Northwest, Moorhead

Family Services Center of Clay County
715 – 11th Street N., Suite 200
Moorhead, MN 56560
(218) 291-5880 (Voice)
(800) 456-7589 (Voice)
(866) 977-7390 (VP)
(866) 488-3829 (TTY)
(218) 291-5886 (FAX)
dhhs.moorhead@state.mn.us
IP# 65.183.243.124

DHHS – East and West Central, St. Cloud

3333 W Division St., #209
St. Cloud, MN 56301
(320) 255-3502 (Voice)
(800) 456-3690 (Voice)
(866) 588-2282 (VP)
(866) 488-3909 (TTY)
(320) 654-5157 (FAX)
dhhs.stcloud@state.mn.us

DHHS – Metro, St. Paul

85 East 7th Place, Suite 105 Office Address
Downtown St. Paul
444 Lafayette Road N. Mailing Address
St. Paul, MN 55155-3814
(651) 431-5940 (Voice)
(651) 964-1514 (VP)
(888) 206-6513 (TTY)
(651) /431-7587 (FAX)
dhhs.metro@state.mn.us

DHHS – Southeast, Rochester

Cedarwood Plaza
4104 NW 18th Av.
Rochester, MN 55901
(507) 285-7295 (Voice/VP)
(800) 311-1148 (Voice)
(866) 266-3779 (TTY)
(507) 280-5531 (FAX)
dhhs.rochester@state.mn.us

DHHS – Southwest, Mankato

12 Civic Center Plaza, Suite 1670
Mankato, MN 56001
(507) 389-1626 (Voice/VP Local)
(866) 298-6566 (VP)
(866) 266-2461 (TTY)
(800) 311-1148 (Voice-Rochester office)
(866) 266-3779 (TTY-Rochester office)
(507) 389-1703 (FAX)
dhhs.mankato@state.mn.us

ADA4 (5-09)

This information is available in alternative formats to individuals with disabilities by calling your local DHHS office. TTY users can call through Minnesota Relay at (800) 627-3529. For Speech-to-Speech, call (877) 627-3848. For additional assistance with legal rights and protections for equal access to human services programs, contact your agency's ADA coordinator.