

Agency Strategic Plan

Department for the Deaf & Hard-of-Hearing (751)

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Mission and Vision

Mission Statement

The Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (VDDHH) works to reduce the communication barriers between persons who are deaf or hard of hearing and those who are hearing, including family members, service providers, and the general public.

Vision Statement

We see VDDHH as a national model for state level services and a widely known resource in Virginia for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families. This model includes a variety of programs, including Technology Assistance, Virginia Relay, Interpreter Services, Virginia Quality Assurance Screening, Outreach Services and Library Services, which are designed to ensure widespread communications access for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing. To achieve this, VDDHH ensures that every customer who comes into contact with the agency is provided with services, resources, or information to address their needs. VDDHH models communication access by operating in an environment where the customer's communication needs are addressed immediately and consistently. VDDHH is the first source for Virginians seeking information related to hearing loss, whether as a consumer, a family member, a professional in a related field or a business person. Consumers know that VDDHH will have information on and access to the most current and effective assistive technology to meet their needs and that the agency will provide information and assistance for those who need it to access that technology. VA Relay continues to be a national model for telecommunications relay services, monitoring consumer needs and technological advances and initiating or responding to industry developments in a timely manner. VDDHH maintains a wide variety of partnerships with public and private entities to build awareness of and responsiveness to the communication access needs of persons who are deaf or hard of hearing. VDDHH provides opportunities for every state and local agency, business, law enforcement agency, emergency services agency, health care provider, and interested citizen to receive training or have access to information on communications access for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing. With leadership from VDDHH, Virginia is home to an adequate supply of qualified sign language interpreters and transliterators who have access to necessary training to build and enhance their skills. These interpreters participate in Virginia Quality Assurance Screening, demonstrating progressive skill development as they move toward the Virginia Department of Education standard of Level III or national certification.

Executive Progress Report

Service Performance and Productivity

- *Summary of current service performance*

VDDHH has relied on our Management Scorecard, Performance Measures and Customer Feedback to assess our current service performance.

At the end of the past two fiscal years, the Technology Assistance Program has not experienced a waiting list for any individuals qualified to receive equipment at no cost through the program. This is a significant improvement as waiting lists had occurred in 8 of the previous 9 budget years. The absence of year-end waiting lists is a result of additional general fund appropriations received for TAP during the 2005 General Assembly Session.

Due to concentrated Outreach contacts and staff trainings to over 90% of the Commonwealth's Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs or 911 centers), a 57% decrease in the number of emergency calls processed by the Virginia Relay Center has been experienced since these efforts began in 2005. Although the relay center makes every effort to provide efficient and accurate handling of emergency calls, direct calls to a local PSAP can save valuable seconds lost to delays in connection and relay conversation times.

Customer commendations for relay services provided from the Norton call center continue to remain high, while the number of complaints has decreased. For the reporting period ending May 31, 2007, the number of reportable complaints was 3, while the number of commendations received was 129.

The agency incorporated 5 relay enhancements or TAP devices during the past fiscal year, bringing our total to 7 since the end of fiscal year 2005. This comfortably exceeds our target of 6 set for June 30, 2009.

In Virginia Quality Assurance Screening (VQAS), the agency has been conducting a program review while working to improve program efficiency. In 2006, candidate results on the Performance Assessment were being completed in an average of 105 working days. By the end of FY2007, this had improved to an average of 85 working days. Further, Diagnostic Analyses were often sent to candidates as much as 6 months after results in 2006. By the end of FY2007, the delay between results and Diagnostics was reduced to between 4 to 8 weeks.

The agency has also focused on increasing access to the VQAS process. In the Summer of 2007, 20 new Performance Assessment slots were offered. As a result of this effort, the schedule for September through December was not filled until early September. In the past, the schedule was often filled for the year by early summer.

On-line administration of the VQAS Written Assessment is in pilot testing. After several internal trials, the agency offered a full on-line Written Assessment on site in Richmond in August 2007. The on-line Written Assessment should be ready for off-site testing in late 2007.

Customers in Library Services routinely receive customer service surveys which reveal very high (95% or higher) satisfaction with the services provided.

- *Summary of current productivity*

With 14 authorized FTEs, VDDHH currently relies upon 12 full-time staff members (FTEs), 1 wage employee, and 5 contracted agencies employing 16 Outreach Specialists statewide. The agency has 2 vacant FTE positions. An additional MEL is transferred to the Department of Rehabilitative Services on an annual basis as part of our Memorandum of Agreement for provision of back-office/administrative functions. AT&T provides one (1) staff person in support of the Virginia Relay Services program.

VDDHH Outreach is a contract-centered program, providing outreach services through 5 contracts with 16 contracted service providers, a full time Outreach Specialist (staff) in the VDDHH Central Office in Richmond, and the VDDHH Outreach Program Manager. The total Outreach contacts, documented on the monthly reports for the recent contract period (Jul 06-Jun 07) were 70,953. This total does not include the many contacts made at health fairs and festivals, the Community-based Emergency Response Seminars (CBERS), and a host of other activities and presentations.

In FY2007, the Virginia Quality Assurance Screening Program administered 137 Written Assessments and 184 Performance Assessments.

In 2007, the agency coordinated 2,672 requests for interpreter services for 373 state courts, 105 state and local agencies, twelve-step programs and other organizations. Of those 2,672 requests, 1,175 were for the state court system and 1,497 were for local and state agencies. Of these requests, 101 were not filled because no interpreters were available. Of the total number of requests, 96.2% were filled. The agency contracted with 65 interpreters during this period, 23 from out-of-state.

Initiatives, Rankings and Customer Trends

- *Summary of Major Initiatives and Related Progress*

A current major VDDHH initiative is the administration of the Commonwealth's multi-million dollar Telecommunications Relay Service fund. Formerly the responsibility of the State Corporation Commission, the fund was supported by a surcharge on all business and resident phone lines in the state. The passage of HB 568 during the 2006 General Assembly Session created a new Communications Tax which replaced several phone bill state and local charges, including the relay surcharge. The resulting legislative language also made the Department of Taxation the lead agency for the Communications Tax and placed VDDHH as the primary oversight of the relay service. Through agreement with the Department of Taxation, the approximately \$15,000,000 annual expenditures are now the responsibility of VDDHH. The assumption of these new responsibilities has resulted in significant changes to staff responsibilities and the recruitment for a formerly vacant MEL in the Technology Programs Service Area.

Emerging technology and increasing consumer awareness have fueled a number of key initiatives at VDDHH, including:

- **Relay Partner Program** – This is a major initiative to increase awareness of Virginia Relay by businesses in the Commonwealth. Launched in May 2005, the Relay Partner program provides businesses with training and awareness activities to increase their awareness and use of Virginia Relay. VDDHH is providing information on the program through local chambers of commerce and through general press releases. Since its inception, the Relay Partner program has signed on 347 businesses and has established a target of 400 by January 2008. In addition, 38% of these businesses requested follow-up training and information on other services provided by VDDHH.
- **Training on Handling TTY Calls for 9-1-1 Centers** – The intent of this initiative was to reduce the number of emergency calls processed by Virginia relay where precious seconds could be lost to connection and translation times. While the original goal was to decrease this number by 10%, concentrated efforts by the VDDHH Outreach program with support from AT&T have currently reduced the number of emergency calls by 57%.
- **Improved Access to Virginia Quality Assurance Screening** – The agency has completed initial pilot administration of the VQAS Written Assessment on-line, with positive results. Not only does the on-line administration make the test more accessible to candidates statewide, it also reduces the amount of time required to complete the test. In addition, recognizing the needs of educational interpreters, the agency offered an additional 20 Performance Assessment slots for VQAS candidates in the summer of 2007.
- **Upgrading Library Services** – A major re-cataloging project is underway in the VDDHH Library. The intent of this

activity is to improve access to Library materials in house and to enable access to catalogs on-line.

- TAP Review – As a result of a year-long Administrative Review of TAP, the agency is preparing to transition its traditional, coupon-based program to a new process where applicants are able to try a device for a period of 30 days prior to permanent assignment. This new procedure, tentatively labeled as Loan-to-Own or simply L2O, will significantly shorten the waiting time for applicant receipt of equipment, will eliminate the need for multiple visits to an applicant's resident or workplace by Outreach staff, and will reduce the number of devices returned for exchange or refund. Pilots of L2O are scheduled for winter 2008 with statewide implementation of the program by the fall of 2008.
- One-Stop Participation - VDDHH is an active participant in the one-stop workforce delivery system. By networking with other State agencies in compliance with Governor's Workforce Investment Initiative, we can ensure resource information is readily available on interpreter services, technical assistance, outreach services and video relay services for the deaf and hard of hearing, in a collaborative effort to increase awareness of, and access to, partner program services, employment, training and career education services to employers, workers and jobseekers.
- VDDHH is also very active in promoting emergency readiness within the deaf and hard of hearing community. VDDHH Outreach Programs have a special emphasis on emergency preparedness activities targeted at deaf and hard of hearing consumers. The agency has participated in 11 CBERS presentations, spoken at deaf clubs and other organizations, and completed a televised interview on emergency preparedness with Comcast. The Outreach Manager has completed CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) training and is a member of Henrico County's Team Number 21. He is also a standing member of VDEM's "Sheltering Concerns for Special Populations" planning committee.
- The State Interagency Team for Services for Persons who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (SIT)– Recognizing the need for better coordination at the state and local levels by the agencies with primary responsibility for providing special services to persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, VDDHH has partnered with key staff from the Department of Rehabilitative Services, Community Services Boards, and the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired. The Statewide Interagency Team has provided Collaborative Skills Training to staff from offices of these agencies statewide. The SIT also hosted a Town Hall Meeting at the Virginia Association of the Deaf conference in 2007, with additional Town Hall Meetings planned in the coming year.
- Management Improvements – Realignment of management responsibilities to reflect the three distinct Service Areas has recently been implemented. This is expected to enhance program performance.

- *Summary of Virginia's Ranking*

There are few formal mechanisms which compare or rank state-level services for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, though such data is available for Telecommunications Relay Services, which are regulated by the Federal Communications Commission. At least 30 states have some form of office or commission on deafness with responsibilities that extend beyond federally mandated rehabilitative services, but the design, size and authority of these entities varies widely. Products and services offered by VDDHH may be similar (by description) to the products and services available from other state commissions for the deaf and hard of hearing but the fundamental service delivery mechanism is so different as to make comparison impossible. For example, while 41 states offer some form of equipment distribution program, few of these programs can be directly compared to VDDHH TAP which provides limited equipment free or at contract cost to qualified consumers. TAP relies upon General Fund dollars to purchase equipment for consumers who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired, while most other states rely on some form of Universal Services Fund for their equipment distribution programs. Also, in contrast to the VDDHH program, some programs provide equipment vouchers where applicants receive a set dollar amount and choose their equipment from their choice of vendors while others provide long-term loaner equipment without ownership transfer. In addition, eligibility requirements vary widely.

- Virginia Relay, the state's telecommunications relay service located in Norton, currently ranks 12th in the nation for the number of calls handled annually based on data from the National Association of State Relay Administration (NASRA).
- Virginia is home to 134 interpreters certified by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID). By comparison, neighboring states can claim 186 (Maryland), 132 (North Carolina), 70 (Tennessee), 34 (South Carolina), and 14 (West Virginia).

- *Summary of Customer Trends and Coverage*

VDDHH is aware of several trends which impact both the make-up of our customer base and our ability to provide coverage for each customer group. Most significantly, the agency has experienced an exponential growth in requests for Interpreter Services for 12-Step Programs, which VDDHH pays for since they are not covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Specifically, we know that the Commonwealth has a growing population of older Virginians, many of whom experience hearing loss and who may seek or benefit from our services. Many of these individuals are either reluctant to seek services or are unfamiliar with the availability of our services. This trend also increases the percentage of customers we serve who are hard of hearing, which continues the shift the agency has experienced over the past ten years towards a broader customer base than the Deaf Community. In addition, this customer group actively seeks assistance from the agency in identifying financial aid resources for the purchase of hearing aids.

The agency also anticipates requests for services from several smaller but important segments of the population. There is an increasing number of cochlear implant recipients and the agency needs to prepare to understand the service needs of this population and incorporate those into our programs. Another emerging customer group is families with children identified in Virginia's Newborn Hearing Screening Program in the first few weeks of life. These families and their service providers are expected to seek assistance from the agency for a variety of reasons. The agency has also experienced an increase in requests for services from the growing Hispanic community in the state.

As VDDHH Outreach contractors reach more individuals, families and businesses, and, as the media periodically turns its attention to issues affecting persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, the agency anticipates requests for services from more consumers who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Call volume at the state-contracted Virginia Relay Center in Norton, VA, has declined and is expected to continue to decline over the next several years as alternatives, including Internet-based Relay services, increase in popularity. This reduction in call volume at the Relay Center should not be seen as a reduction in the number of Virginians using some form of Relay, as that number is expected to continue to increase as consumers gain access to alternative relay services.

Future Direction, Expectations, and Priorities

- *Summary of Future Direction and Expectations*

Several major factors are expected to influence VDDHH programs and services in the next several years. A survey of agency customers conducted during the strategic planning process supports these assumptions.

Developments in technology have and should continue to reduce the communication barriers between consumers who are deaf or hard of hearing and those who are not. These same technological advancements will be one of the driving forces behind VDDHH customer expectations and service priorities. Among the developments that the agency anticipates affecting our services are internet-based communications, such as remote CART, cochlear implants, CapTel phones, wireless text messaging, video remote interpreting and video relay. The benefits of these developments will be counterbalanced by cost to consumers and their expectations that VDDHH will assist them with the purchase or service costs.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has recently expressed their intent to pass on a portion of the costs of internet-based relay services to state relay programs. This change is supported by the Jurisdictional Separation of Costs outlined in the association federal regulations and will have a significant impact on all states. Depending on the formula developed by the FCC, the potential impact on Virginia could exceed \$4,000,000 annually. It is also possible that the FCC could pass on the oversight responsibilities for these services as well. If so, additional staffing could be indicated as the number of internet-based relay calls will soon exceed traditional TTY and VCO relay calls currently managed by the state's contracts with AT&T and Sprint.

The agency anticipates a growing need for communications access, including qualified interpreters and Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) providers in public agencies, courts, schools and remote services (including video relay). The demand for qualified (and certified) interpreters in Virginia is expected to remain high. VDDHH ISP coordinated interpreter services for 105 state agencies in 2007. During the year, a total of 2,672 requests for interpreters were processed, 1,497 for local and state agencies and 1,175 for the state court system.

VDDHH coordinates interpreter services for 373 courts in the state of Virginia. Requests for interpreters in legal settings have remained constant in the last four years, with 955 requests in 2004, 967 in 2005, 1081 in 2006 and 1175 during the 2007 fiscal year.

Changes at the national Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) may also impact on the availability of interpreters in Virginia. In 2008, the RID standards for certification will be raised to make an AA or AS degree a requirement to maintain national certification (a BA is required in 2012). We expect that a number of currently certified interpreters may lose their credentials and that the pool of RID National Interpreter Certification (NIC) candidates will be reduced and the process of certifying new interpreters may be slowed.

The continuing demand and high turn-over rate for educational interpreters will further strain the VQAS system which is currently saturated with unprepared candidates.

Consumers are also calling on VDDHH to take a more active role in the monitoring and evaluation of state programs and services which should be available to persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, particularly in the area of education. The agency will seek creative approaches to address these concerns within our authorized activities and budget.

Many families, individuals and service providers turn to VDDHH for assistance with the purchase of hearing aids. The

agency does not have any resources to provide financial assistance; however we have collected information about available resources which we provide to those seeking these resources. As a partner in many service initiatives for Virginians from newborns to senior citizens, VDDHH is expected to provide meaningful and useful guidance in this area.

In addition to the previously noted Virginia Relay issues related to the need for a new contractor, a number of changes, both administrative (from the Federal Communications Commission and the General Assembly's action on the Telephone Tax Act) and technological, are expected to impact the agency's oversight of Virginia Relay.

Emergency Preparedness for deaf and hard of hearing consumers continues to be a priority. Outreach participated in 10 Community-based Emergency Response Seminars (lead Agency, Dept of Health) throughout the state, and emergency preparedness / readiness information is included in virtually every Outreach presentation. The Outreach Specialists are continuing to work with local emergency management planners to include the needs of our consumers in local emergency plans. Real-time captioning of emergency information on broadcast television continues to be a concern; however, more and more of our consumers are relying on text messaging for these alerts. Increased attention to the use of electronic communications, including the web and broadcast e-mail messages, will be explored in our effort to reach as many people as possible with timely information.

The agency has had success in the past with bringing people from across the state together for a statewide conference on special topics of interest to consumers who are deaf or hard of hearing. We intend to work with the other member agencies of the State Interagency Team (SIT) to provide another such statewide conference in 2009, in conjunction with the Deaf Expo.

As the state's Early Hearing Detection and Identification (EHDI) program at the Department of Health continues to identify children with hearing loss within weeks or months of birth, and as the families of children identified are faced with limited access to unbiased information about the needs of their children who are deaf or hard of hearing, there is a growing call for VDDHH to assist in meeting the needs of these families. An effective program, Virginia Guide by Your Side, has begun to serve these families but funding for that program has been provided through a grant which will be ending soon. This program is supported by the mission and the Code authority of VDDHH and this agency must explore meaningful ways to assist.

- *Summary of Potential Impediments to Achievement*

VDDHH faces a number of challenges which may limit our ability to satisfy expectations and achieve our mission. The greatest challenge we face is based on consumer expectations of our role as an advocacy agency, particularly in the areas of education and ADA enforcement. VDDHH does not have Code authority to provide direct advocacy services nor to enforce the Americans with Disabilities Act or any other laws. Our role in the planning and administration of educational programs, particularly the Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind, is also very limited according to the Code. A 2005 survey of agency customers reveals that, while there are no programs at the agency that they would like to see reduced in focus, they expect us to increase our focus and involvement with advocacy and education. Feedback solicited by Board members in 2007 echoes this concern. Unless and until we have the authority and the funding to do this, we will continue to face expectations which we cannot fulfill.

- Through TAP, our customers seek access to assistive devices which represent cutting edge technology. The addition of new devices increases the program cost and usually results in new customers which may strain the budget.
- As more freelance and private sector opportunities open up (the result of video relay and remote interpreting services), VDDHH is faced with fewer interpreters who choose to contract with the agency. This limits our ability to fill requests from state agencies that have joined on to our contract.
- There are limited training opportunities available for interpreters who wish to develop or improve their skills. As a result, many candidates who participate in the VQAS assessments are unprepared to achieve a screening level.
- Lack of general public awareness about communications access for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing and the role VDDHH is able to take in assisting with such access.

Service Area List

Service Number	Title
751 450 04	Technology Services for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing
751 450 05	Consumer, Interpreter, and Community Support Services
751 450 06	Administrative Services

Agency Background Information

Statutory Authority

The programs and services of VDDHH are authorized in Chapter 13 of Title 51.5 of the Code of Virginia.

This chapter establishes the VDDHH Advisory Board (§51.5-106) and its powers and duties (§51.5-107), including ensuring the development of long-range programs and plans, reviewing and commenting on all budgets and requests for appropriations, and advising the Governor, Secretary of Health and Human Resources, the Director and the General Assembly on matters related to Virginians who are deaf or hard of hearing.

§51.5-108 continues the Department after recodification while §51.5-109 -110 establishes the Director’s position, powers and duties.

§51.5-111 defines persons who are deaf or hard of hearing for purposes of the chapter.

§51.5-112 delineates the powers and duties of the agency to:

- Develop an information program;
- Promote a framework of consultation and cooperation among agencies and institutions serving people who are deaf or hard of hearing;
- Provide training and technical assistance;
- Monitor and evaluate the provision of services for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing;
- Make appropriate recommendations for legislative changes and monitor federal legislation;
- Cooperate with the schools for the deaf and the blind;
- Operate a program of technology assistance; and
- Adopt necessary regulations.

§51.5-113 establishes the VDDHH Interpreter Services program, the Virginia Quality Assurance Screening Program, and the Directory of Qualified Interpreters. This section also defines “qualified interpreter.”

§51.5-114 allows the agency to accept gifts and donations.

In addition to these statutory requirements, VDDHH is authorized, in §37.1-67.5, to coordinate interpreters in commitment hearings, in §8.01-384.1 for civil court and, in § 19.2-164.1, to do the same in criminal court.

§ 51.5-115, telecommunications relay service; standards; funding defines the role of VDDHH as the agency responsible for the provision and administration of telecommunications relay service in the Commonwealth. Title IV of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as codified at 47 USC §255, requires all states to provide a telecommunications relay service.

Customers

Customer Group	Customers served annually	Potential customers annually
Consumers who are deaf or hard of hearing (accounts for only TAP applicants and one deaf consumer in each interpreter request. Does not include individual relay user count.)	3,285	665,000
Families, professionals and interested parties seeking information (served Unknown, potential unlimited)	0	0
Interpreters Seeking Credentials (VQAS)	262	2,613
Library Patrons	188	1,644
State Agencies	41	133
Technology Assistance Program (TAP) applicants(NOTE: Unduplicated count of applicants only. Previous reported data was number of devices distributed.)	523	665,000
Virginia Courts	183	374
Virginia Relay Users (not an unduplicated count)	1,908,328	1,908,328

Anticipated Changes To Agency Customer Base

VDDHH does not anticipate a dramatic increase in any particular customer base. We do anticipate that the number of calls handled by Virginia Relay in Norton will continue to decrease as alternatives to traditional relay services (including Internet Protocol Relay and Video Relay Services) proliferate; however, these same alternatives will probably lead to more individuals using Relay services in some form or another. In all other programs and services, we anticipate that the numbers served will remain steady or increase modestly each year.

EXPLANATORY NOTE ABOUT CUSTOMER BASE: All Virginia residents are potentially served through VDDHH’s Outreach Services, Virginia Relay, Interpreter Services, and Library Services Programs. As the agency moves towards

improved methods of capturing individuals served, we expect that the reported numbers served will increase. At this time, most programs and services in the agency report on activity level and many of the reported activities include multiple customers. While VDDHH does not track actual number of individuals served, we do know that, in FY 2007 agency services recorded a total of 1,987,803 "service contacts" statewide. This reflects 1,908,328 relay calls completed, 2672 interpreter services requests coordinated, 321 VQAS Written and Performance Assessments administered, 5341 TAP services provided (including activities in the TAPLOAN and Demonstration Sites), and 71141 Outreach and Information and Referral contacts (including Library services provided). The agency made several changes in our calculations of numbers served this year. In addition to those noted in the Customer Base figures above, we removed counts for mailings to Outreach Listservs from the count for Outreach Services.

VDDHH does not have reliable data on the number of deaf and hard of hearing Virginians for use in determining our Customer Base. The agency relies upon population projections based on information from the National Center for Health Statistics to provide a general estimate of the number of Virginians who are deaf or hard of hearing. The National Center for Health Statistics - National Health Interview Survey estimates that 8.7% of the total population (over age 3) experiences some degree of hearing loss. This includes persons who are born deaf or hard of hearing as well as persons who lose some or all of their hearing later in life. About 1% of the population might be considered to be deaf (severe to profound hearing loss) and 7.7% could be considered hard of hearing. VDDHH has applied these prevalence rates to 2005 population estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau for Virginia and generally estimates that approximately 665,000 Virginians might experience some degree of hearing loss. These are only estimates based on prevalence rates and have not been independently verified. The agency uses these numbers only to project the greatest possible Customer Base for agency services. There is no data available to project how many of these individuals or their families might be expected to utilize VDDHH programs and services. In addition, the agency does not maintain records which would provide an unduplicated count of individuals served by the agency. For example, one individual might use Virginia Relay every day and access it from a different phone each time and might call to the same number for each call or to different numbers for each call. (The Federal Communications Commission (FCC), which regulates telecommunications relay services, requires providers to report on relay minutes as opposed to number of calls or number of users.) In the same way, it is difficult to identify the number of customers served by each Interpreter Services request. Such a request might provide services in a one-to-one situation where one hearing person and one deaf person discuss a matter (such as a social services interview situation) or in a many-to-many situation (such as a workshop with a deaf presenter and hearing audience members).

The preceding table includes data on only those customer groups for which VDDHH has identified a base and a record of specific numbers of customers served during FY 2007. For example, Virginia has a finite number of courts and state agencies, all of whom are potential customers of the VDDHH Interpreter Services Program. In addition, the agency has operated two programs with established potential customer bases since at least 1990. The number of potential customers for these programs (VQAS, Library Services) represents the total number of individuals who have registered for these services since their inception. Customers in these programs typically access the programs on an occasional basis, limited either by the customers' needs or programs' regulations. Some of the customers included in the potential count are not expected to access the services again, either because they have left the area, achieved national certification (VQAS candidates) or their interest in the issues the agency addresses has otherwise shifted.

Partners

Partner	Description
Consumer Organizations	Provide the agency with access to community leaders and information on community trends and needs.
Contracted Interpreters	Provide sign language interpretation in Virginia courts, state agencies and other service areas.
Contracted Outreach Providers	Provide Information and Referral, training, and technical assistance on the local level.
Contracted Virginia Relay Providers	Provide telecommunication relay service for the Commonwealth.
Contracted VQAS Raters	Provide highly skilled review and rating of VQAS candidate performance assessments.
State Agencies	Work with the agency to address issues across all state agencies which affect persons who are deaf or hard of hearing
Technology Vendors	Provide assistive technology for qualified TAP applicants.

Products and Services

- *Description of the Agency's Products and/or Services:*

Directory of Qualified Interpreters – The agency publishes (hard copy and electronic) a Directory of Qualified Interpreters which provides contact information on interpreters who meet or exceed the Code definition of qualified interpreter.” This directory is available to assist private entities in locating qualified interpreters for events involving consumers who are deaf or hard of hearing.

- Virginia Quality Assurance Screening – VDDHH provides a program of Quality Assurance Screening for sign language interpreters and cued speech transliterators. This program consists of the Written Assessment which must be passed before a candidate may participate in the Performance Assessment. Performance Assessments are reviewed by trained “raters” who score the performance based on strict criteria and further reviewed by a qualified diagnostician who provides detailed diagnostic feedback on areas of strength and weakness, along with suggestions for improvement.
 - Interpreter Services Coordination – VDDHH coordinates requests for interpreter services and Computer Assisted Real Time Captioning (CART) from state agencies and courts. The agency has established a contract for interpreter services, which other state agencies may join. The agency also coordinates interpreters for 12-step programs and other activities (such as funerals) on a very limited basis.
 - Technology Assistance Program – The Technology Assistance Program, or TAP, provides financial assistance or discounts to qualified applicants who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired for the purchase of assistive devices and signalers primarily for telecommunications purposed. The program also offers TAP Device Demonstration Centers for individuals who do not qualify for the program and wish to try out and make informed purchases for themselves.
 - Library Services – VDDHH maintains a library of books and videotapes available for loan within the Commonwealth. The collection also includes a range of periodicals and informational materials specifically
 - Training – Training is a component of every Service Area at VDDHH. Provided primarily through Outreach staff and contractors, topics include use of assistive technology, how to use and acquire a qualified sign language interpreter, availability of services from other state and local agencies, and appropriate procedures in an emergency or law enforcement situation. Other topics include adapting to hearing loss, understanding educational options and services, learning sign language, as well as conducting specialized trainings to hospital staff, courts, and Public Safety Answering Points (9-1-1 dispatchers).
 - Technical Assistance – Technical Assistance provided by VDDHH takes on several forms. The agency provides technical assistance to other state agencies and private entities to assist in meeting the communications access needs of consumers who are deaf or hard of hearing. The agency also provides technical assistance through participation in state and local advisory groups, policy making groups, and planning bodies.
 - Legislative Tracking – The agency monitors legislative activity in the Virginia General Assembly to determine impact on persons who are deaf or hard of hearing. The agency provides expert testimony, when needed, and detailed analysis on issues for the Secretary and the Governor. Issues identified as being of interest to the agency or our customers are actively tracked and regular reports are provided to a broad network of consumers and professionals.
 - Advisory Board Support – The agency provides administrative and planning support to the VDDHH Advisory Board.
 - Information and Referral – The agency provides information and referral to connect citizens, agencies and private entities with resources on topics related to deafness through Outreach Services, our website (www.vddhh.org), Library Services, TAP, and Interpreter Services.
 - Individualized Problem Resolution – Outreach Contractors provide Individualized Problem Resolution services for consumers who are deaf or hard of hearing and who are having difficulty resolving issues as a direct result of their hearing loss, usually due to a lack of communications access. Problems addressed through this service might include housing, utilities, billing issues or other challenges of daily living.
 - Virginia Relay Oversight - VDDHH serves as the oversight agency for the operation of telecommunications relay services in the Commonwealth. In this capacity, VDDHH solicits proposals and manages the resulting contract for telecommunications relay services in the state. Since the original Code language was written, relay-based technology has mushroomed and many new relay services are now available. These services, including but not limited to internet relay, video relay, Spanish relay, and remote text messaging relay are now readily available to deaf and hard of hearing citizens nationwide. These new services are often provided from national relay centers and are largely supported by a federal universal services type fund. While VDDHH retains Code authority for the oversight of basic relay services such as TTY-based and Voice Carry Over (CapTel), consumers consider the agency as a resource for information, referral, equipment and training on all types of relay services, including those provided on a national basis. For purposes of this document, the program VA Relay is defined to include all relay services available to Virginia consumers, not just those provided from the AT&T relay center located in Norton.
 - Video Relay Services (VRS) represent the fastest growing segment of the relay services nationwide. While states do not currently have responsibilities for this internet-based service, VDDHH constantly receives inquiries for assistance in obtaining, using and trouble-shooting the associated video devices. In 2005, VDDHH partnered with national VRS providers to establish demonstration centers throughout the states. In 2006, VDDHH established an on-site, dedicated VRS training room where interested parties can test and select the VRS equipment and VRS provider that best suits their telecommunication needs
- *Factors Impacting Agency Products and/or Services:*
- Advances in technology routinely and significantly impact VDDHH’s products and services. Virginia Relay frequently serves as a testing ground for new forms of telecommunications access, including the captioned telephone relay service and text messaging. As Relay-related devices move from conceptual testing to full market availability, the

agency will be challenged to determine which ones should appropriately be added to the agency's TAP program as essential tools for communications access.

- Over the past three years, the number of TTY-based relay calls handled by the Norton center has decreased by over 40%. During this same period, the total number of relay calls made in Virginia, including internet-based relay calls, has increased by over 33%. The current percentage of total Virginia-based relay calls processed by the Norton center is now less than 44%; in 2004, it was 88%. This trend is consistent across the nation and reflects the consumer's preference for faster, more efficient internet-based relay services.

- Video Relay Services (VRS) and other internet based relay services are currently funded entirely by a federal universal services fund. The FCC has recently expressed its intent to pass a large portion of these costs on to the states. Based on current usage, the future impact on Virginia could be in excess of \$5,000,000 annually.

- Demand for and access to the services of qualified Interpreters and CART providers is affected by the disparity between consumer awareness of these services (which is high) and service provider of the same (which is limited). In addition, the agency's ability to fill requests for qualified interpreters in Virginia's courts and state agencies may be impacted by the emergence of Video Relay Services. As qualified interpreters migrate to steady jobs with benefits with these services, the supply of freelance interpreters available during the typical business day may be expected to dwindle.

Of particular concern, the agency has noted that requests for interpreters in substance abuse related twelve step programs have increased tenfold. FY 2004 twelve step requests totaled 13. FY 2005 was an anomaly in that 113 requests were processed; but, almost all requested by one deaf individual. FY 2006 requests totaled 35. In FY 2007, the number of twelve-step requests totaled 338, with an even more dramatic increase from the first quarter of the year (52 requests) to the fourth quarter (153 requests). This increase in 2007 may be explained by the Deaf Community's greater awareness of VDDHH payment and support for interpreter services for substance abuse programs. Many requests did not come from agencies such as CSB or DRS, but from deaf individuals themselves. Self-referrals to twelve step programs increased, which was reflected in the dramatic increase for interpreter services.

- The agency's Virginia Quality Assurance Screening (VQAS) program is most significantly impacted by the Department of Education's Special Education regulations, which establish VQAS Level III as the minimum professional standard for educational interpreters. Educational interpreters comprise as much as 90% of the candidate pool in VQAS and many of these individuals do not have the skill level necessary to meet the standard. Provisions in the Special Education regulations allow for waivers for up to three years, during which time candidates repeatedly register for the VQAS. Unfortunately, there are limited interpreter training opportunities available for many of these candidates and few incentives for them to pursue the training that is available. This program will continue to experience high demand for assessment slots as candidates who do not have the necessary skills to achieve a level continue to register for the assessment multiple times in order to maintain employment in the public schools. The program is also impacted by the availability of qualified raters to review and score candidate Performance Assessments. While the agency has a cadre of trained raters, not all of them are active and available when needed.

- Library Services has been impacted by challenges with properly cataloged materials and loss of items due to patron failure to return. The library is staffed by a Library Assistant who is also responsible for back-up receptionist duties as much as 50% of the time. Volunteers play a key role in maintaining the library. Efforts are underway to correct cataloging problems and materials recovery to improve overall library services.

- *Anticipated Changes in Products or Services:*

The passage of HB 568 during the 2006 General Assembly Session created a new Communications Tax which replaced several phone bill state and local charges, including the relay surcharge. The resulting legislative language also made the Department of Taxation the lead agency for the Communications Tax and later placed VDDHH as the primary oversight of the relay funding. Through agreement with the Department of Taxation, the approximately \$15,000,000 in annual relay expenditures are now the direct responsibility of VDDHH. The assumption of these new responsibilities have resulted in significant changes to staff responsibilities and the successful recruitment for a formerly vacant MEL in the Technology Programs Service Area

- The current AT&T contract for relay services has recently been extended through January of 2009. During recent negotiations for the extension, AT&T expressed their reluctance to continue services from the Norton center citing the Commonwealth's legislative requirement for an employee level of 105 full time positions. Because of relay user's transition from traditional TTY-based calls to internet-based services, the number of calls processed at the center has decreased by over 40% since the original contract was signed. While a staff of 105 was required to provide quality service when the employment level was established in 2004, AT&T estimates 78 or less employees will be needed in calendar year 2008. Unless the General Assembly considers a reduction in the employment level, it is possible that the Commonwealth will be left without a responsive contract bidder after the current extension expires in early 2009.

- The anticipated availability of the VQAS Written Assessment on-line is expected to improve customer service and to improve the validity and reliability of the test since each test will be a different computer-generated version (currently, the agency has two versions of the test in use).
- New Performance Assessment materials in FY2008 will strengthen the validity and reliability of VQAS by limiting the exposure returning candidates have to the same test materials.
- Development of new Written Assessment questions will provide for a broader pool of questions to be pulled from in the on-line assessment and will reflect the changes in the national Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf Code of Ethics.
- Re-cataloging of Library materials should improve customer access to materials and allow the agency to provide up-to-date catalog information on the agency's website in response to requests from patrons.
- Extensive revisions to the agency website to provide a wider range of useful information in a variety of formats and with more frequent updates is expected to improve the effectiveness of this tool in meeting our mission.

Finance

• *Financial Overview:*

VDDHH's funding is a combination of General and Special Funds. Approximately 10% of our total appropriations are General Funds and support the outreach, equipment distribution, interpreter, and administrative programs of the agency. The remaining 90% of total appropriations are Special Funds for the provision and oversight of the Commonwealth's telecommunications relay services better known as VA Relay. The VDDHH VQAS program also receives a small annual Special Fund appropriation for the receipt and expenditure of candidate registration fees. In fiscal year 2007, the VQAS program also received a small Fund 10 appropriation for the collection receipt and administration of a federal Special Education grant for the evaluation of the skill level of sign language interpreters in the public school system.

• *Financial Breakdown:*

	FY 2009		FY 2010	
	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund
Base Budget	\$1,378,549	\$14,382,229	\$1,378,549	\$14,382,229
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Agency Total	\$1,378,549	\$14,382,229	\$1,378,549	\$14,382,229

This financial summary is computed from information entered in the service area plans.

Human Resources

• *Overview*

VDDHH currently relies upon 11 full time staff members (FTEs), 1 wage employee, and 5 contracted agencies employing 16 Outreach specialists statewide. The agency currently has 2 vacant FTE position. An additional MEL is transferred to the Department of Rehabilitative Services on an annual basis as part of our Memorandum of Agreement for provision of back-office/administrative functions.

• *Human Resource Levels*

Effective Date	7/1/2007	
Total Authorized Position level	14	
Vacant Positions	-2	
Current Employment Level	12.0	
Non-Classified (Filled)	1	<i>breakout of Current Employment Level</i>
Full-Time Classified (Filled)	11	
Part-Time Classified (Filled)	0	
Faculty (Filled)	0	
Wage	1	
Contract Employees	0	
Total Human Resource Level	13.0	<i>= Current Employment Level + Wage and Contract Employees</i>

• *Factors Impacting HR*

The nature of services provided by VDDHH makes it critical that the agency consider two separate sets of workforce skills. First, the agency must consider the administrative/management/technical/customer service skills necessary to do the job. These include computer skills, written and oral communication skills, office technology skills, organizational skills, and interpersonal skills. In every instance though, the agency must also consider a second set of workforce skills: those related to providing services to and working in an environment with persons who are deaf or hard of hearing. This skill set includes sign language skills, knowledge of deaf culture, disability-specific technology skills (e.g. Relay and TTY use). Each position in the agency is evaluated for the degree to which an individual entering that position must have this second, unique set of skills. Some positions require only minimal familiarity upon hire while others require in-depth knowledge and understanding. The agency generally experiences low turnover. Targeted recruitment has proven helpful in identifying qualified candidates who bring the necessary skill set to the agency.

- *Anticipated HR Changes*

VDDHH, with a history of very little turnover, has over the years developed a highly experienced managerial staff with expertise and skills in providing program services to the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia who are deaf and hard of hearing. As a result of this longevity, several key staff have reached the stage of their careers where they will be eligible for retirement within the next two to six years. As a result, this creates a situation where losing staff of this caliber will potentially place a small agency of this particular size in an extremely vulnerable position. Services currently provided may be negatively impacted and potentially fall short of normal expectations. Failure to take the necessary steps to ensure this particular situation is fully addressed in all employment and training decisions, clearly will effect the normal provision of services and programs to the citizens of the Commonwealth. While recognizing this potential situation is critical, what may be more essential is avoiding the failure of taking the necessary measures to assure VDDHH does not become susceptible to this dilemma. This issue should be the principal concern in any future decision making processes. The agency expects to seek funding for one vacant FTE position to achieve the goals of this strategic plan.

Plans are in place to fill the remaining vacant MEL in early FY 2007 as a CapTel Outreach Specialist for promotion of the popular and cost saving VCO relay service. The State Corporation Commission has tentatively agreed to transfer sufficient non-general Funds for the support of the MEL. The corresponding Appropriations will be submitted as a Technical Addendum.

Information Technology

- *Current Operational IT Investments:*

For purposes of our IT Strategic Summary, it is noteworthy that the IT services are provided through the Department of Rehabilitative Services' Administration Service Area, and those services along with other Administration Services (Fiscal Management, Human Resources, Internal Audit) are shared and provided by and to 3 other agencies and their subdivisions including the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI), the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities (VBPD), and VDDHH. This relationship of the 4 agencies is formalized through renewable Agreements signed by each of the Agency Heads in exchange for services, staff, and monetary compensation. The entity collectively is known as the Disability Services Agencies (DSA).

Since 1995, the IT Division offered support of the business environments of the agencies for infrastructure, applications, analysis, production, maintenance, support and data recovery services as needed and determined necessary by the management staff of each of the agencies. Collectively, agency business management and / or their proxies meet with IT management on a periodic basis and determine allocation of computer resources and priorities.

Decisions included but were not limited to:

- translation of federal, state and local requirements and grants into IT solutions
- development and support of more than 30 data tracking / management (legacy) systems – including shared DSA HR and Fiscal management systems, VRIS (DRS VR), VCPS (DRS DDS), StarBase (DBVI VR), COMET (WWRC).
- IT production services
- integration of LAN, WAN data networks and telecom, servers and support
- continued updating and integration of voice, data, video network services including transition of voice service from ISDN to VoIP and unified messaging
- management of network services
- development and support of web presence and informational content
- development of standards
- information and building security
- information backup and recovery services and business continuity planning
- IT quality assurance and training
- messaging services
- IT purchasing of infrastructure and application systems
- retirement of HP3000 platform and associated production applications

- consolidate systems with a common look, feel and process
- purchase of an integrated case management system to be used by DRS, DBVI, WWRC, and VDDHH.
- purchase of an integrated Fiscal Management System to be used by the DSA
- support of a more mobile workforce with introduction of laptops, cell phones, pda's, blackberries, wireless and air card technology.
- development of remote conferencing technology including tools such as "Go To Meeting", computer based training, and video teleconferencing.

● *Factors Impacting the Current IT:*

In 2003 the Commonwealth of Virginia (COVA) made a decision to integrate IT infrastructure, telecom, server, and related support staff across all executive branch agencies. The infrastructure components and services for the DSA as well as all other COVA agencies were transferred to VITA and subsequently to the VITA / NG Partnership. The other IT services remained within the DSA.

In addition to continue the support of IT decisions outlined above in current state, these events have created new challenges for the DSA IT, including but not limited to:

- determination of IT infrastructure, software, application components as in-scope or out of scope (OOS) as relates to agency or partnership responsibility and control.
- development of transition planning for the transfer of IT components, services, responsibility, control and staff to in-scope or OOS.
- working with the Partnership to transform current state to target state as determined by the Partnership including network architecture and protocol, asset refresh, server consolidation, transfer of hosting services to centralized facility, messaging services, regionalization of support staff, help desk services, security configuration standards and services, supply chain management, asset management, etc.
- determination, monitoring and funding of appropriate charges for services provided by the Partnership
- integrating new COVA standards governing change management, asset portfolio management, accessibility such as Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) process, Information Technology Investment Management (ITIM), Web Template Standard, IT Accessibility standard as it relates to the Federal Section 508 compliance to accessibility.

In addition to IT relationships already established through the back office consolidation for the DSA, continued and new business relationships with agency federal, state, local government, as well as charitable and private organization partnerships as outlined in other sections of the plan have added impacts on IT resources, including but not limited to:

- consolidation of more than one agency in a single office location necessitating common IT infrastructure requirements
- sharing of data, information, video teleconference capability, applications, resources among all agency business partners at federal, state, local government as well as charitable and private organizations.
- HIPAA compliance
- mobilization of staff resources for more accessible contact to consumers
- executive orders relating to telecommuting and reduction of work space placing increased emphasis for technology supporting "hoteling".
- Increased security concerns complicated through mobilization and selective sharing with partners.
- Integrate agency fiscal, human resources, supply change information and processes in the Virginia Enterprise Architecture Process (VEAP).

● *Proposed IT Solutions:*

While VITA technology expense will increase, we hope to control and plan the increases by careful planning of VITA activity.

The agency will continue to transform its infrastructure and development activities to Commonwealth standards. This includes –

- desktop and server refresh;
- the MPLS network protocol;
- integration of data, voice and video services;
- transition of voice services to VoIP and integration with unified messaging services
- adoption of Peregrin support tool, and migration to VCCC services;
- regionalization organization of support services;
- migration to the Chester facility when it makes sense to do so;
- new consolidated messaging services
- participation in data recovery services
- implementation, full compliance with security standard
- implementation, full compliance with ITIL, Change management services
- implementation, full compliance with Investment Portfolio Management (ITIM) processes and appropriate utilization of

- the ProSight tool
- full compliance with Web Template Standard
- full compliance with IT Accessibility Standard.

VITA will discontinue support for the out-of-scope portions of the technology infrastructure, that portion most important for direct service programs. Implementation of technology infrastructure for this equipment and software will be implemented.

The growing demand video-teleconferencing for both direct services and administrative functions will be addressed by a partnership between the Disability Services Agencies, our Workforce investment partners and other interested state agencies.

A comprehensive, Integrated Case Management (ICM) computer system will provide a single management tool which will be more efficient, effective and increase opportunities for significant collaboration between DRS, DBVI and their residential rehabilitation centers. The new VDDHH TAP L2O program is also under consideration for inclusion in ICM.

A comprehensive, Financial Management System, supporting between four and six agencies, will present opportunities to promote common business practices, modernize our technology infrastructure and provide economies of scale for software maintenance.

A re-engineered Facilities system will provide case management and automated billing to DRS' Employment Service Organizations. The result will be more accurate case management information and better financial management.

A re-engineered Brain Injury Information System will provide better case management services to local partnerships.

Continued purchases of software licenses, maintenance contracts, and in-house maintenance support as appropriate for adjustments for Federal, State and Local mandates to production systems. Such purchases may included but are not limited to -

- WorkWorld: This application contains the most up to date technical and substantive information on benefits for VR consumers.
- Citrix/OASYS, Career Scope - Job Matching, support software for VR consumers.
- Office suite products, Mavis Beacon for OOS PC's to be used in training facilities and consumer workstations in ERC's.
- CAD and other programs used by Rehab Engineers
- replacement of Athena Library Services tool
- development of the Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS) Equipment Recycling Tracking System.
- Procurement of a Grant/Donation Software like RaiserEdge
- Procurement of SQL database management tools

ARMICS, SWAM quotas, E-Virginia, planning and implementation of the VEAP, VA Performs Scorecards and Performance Measures and VITA Project Dashboards will address improved management practices for agency programs and promote compliance with policies, standards and guidelines.

Improved grants management, better managed and trained staff, better utilized program evaluation will increase special fund revenue, reduce staff training costs and add accountability and 'evidence based' strategies for direct service program improvement.

With the assistance of DRS, VDDHH is considering implementation of a telecommuting program and the co-located of Outreach offices with other state agencies, local government agencies and one stop employment service centers in an effort to reduce costs and improve access to services by clients.

● *Current IT Services:*

Estimated Ongoing Operations and Maintenance Costs for Existing IT Investments

	Cost - Year 1		Cost - Year 2	
	General Fund	Non-general Fund	General Fund	Non-general Fund
Projected Service Fees	\$181	\$29,687	\$184	\$30,133
Changes (+/-) to VITA				

Infrastructure	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Estimated VITA Infrastructure	\$181	\$29,687	\$184	\$30,133
Specialized Infrastructure	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Agency IT Staff	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Non-agency IT Staff	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Application Costs	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Agency IT Current Services	\$181	\$29,687	\$184	\$30,133

Comments:

[Nothing entered]

- *Proposed IT Investments*

Estimated Costs for Projects and New IT Investments

	Cost - Year 1		Cost - Year 2	
	General Fund	Non-general Fund	General Fund	Non-general Fund
Major IT Projects	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Non-major IT Projects	\$20,000	\$0	\$20,000	\$0
Agency-level IT Projects	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Major Stand Alone IT Procurements	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Non-major Stand Alone IT Procurements	\$2,500	\$0	\$2,500	\$0
Total Proposed IT Investments	\$22,500	\$0	\$22,500	\$0

- *Projected Total IT Budget*

	Cost - Year 1		Cost - Year 2	
	General Fund	Non-general Fund	General Fund	Non-general Fund
Current IT Services	\$181	\$29,687	\$184	\$30,133
Proposed IT Investments	\$22,500	\$0	\$22,500	\$0
Total	\$22,681	\$29,687	\$22,684	\$30,133

[Appendix A](#) - Agency's information technology investment detail maintained in VITA's ProSight system.

Capital

- *Current State of Capital Investments:*

[Nothing entered]

- *Factors Impacting Capital Investments:*

[Nothing entered]

- *Capital Investments Alignment:*

[Nothing entered]

Agency Goals

Goal 1

Enhance the quality of communications access for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing in Virginia by increasing the

availability and effectiveness of and consumer access to assistive technology and technology services.

Goal Summary and Alignment

Technology presents the greatest opportunity for communications access for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing yet it has also, historically, resulted in some of the greatest barriers to communications access. Virginians who are deaf or hard of hearing are increasingly demanding access to a variety of technologies which can further eliminate barriers to access. Unfortunately, in many cases, the technologies with the greatest opportunity to break down barriers are cost-prohibitive for the average consumer who is deaf or hard of hearing. With widespread access to and awareness of effective technology, Virginians who are deaf or hard of hearing will be able to improve their economic standing, achieve higher levels of educational attainment, and maintain a higher sense of safety, security, and independence.

Goal Alignment to Statewide Goals

- Elevate the levels of educational preparedness and attainment of our citizens.
- Be a national leader in the preservation and enhancement of our economy.
- Engage and inform citizens to ensure we serve their interests.
- Inspire and support Virginians toward healthy lives and strong and resilient families.
- Protect the public's safety and security, ensuring a fair and effective system of justice and providing a prepared response to emergencies and disasters of all kinds.

Goal 2

We will strengthen the culture of preparedness across state agencies, their employees and customers.

Goal Summary and Alignment

This goal ensures compliance with federal and state regulations, polices and procedures for Commonwealth preparedness, as well as guidelines promulgated by the Assistant to the Governor for Commonwealth Preparedness, in collaboration with the Governor's Cabinet, the Commonwealth Preparedness Working Group, the Department of Planning and Budget and the Council on Virginia's Future. The goal supports achievement of the Commonwealth's statewide goal of protecting the public's safety and security, ensuring a fair and effective system of justice and providing a prepared response to emergencies and disasters of all kinds.

Goal Alignment to Statewide Goals

- Protect the public's safety and security, ensuring a fair and effective system of justice and providing a prepared response to emergencies and disasters of all kinds.

Goal 3

Increase the availability, quality and utilization of communication facilitators (interpreters and CART providers)

Goal Summary and Alignment

With adequate training opportunities and enhanced Quality Assurance Screening access, sign language interpreters in Virginia should be able to meet the demand for services in a changing marketplace (including video relay, remote interpreting and traditional interpreting situations). In addition, with increased community and agency awareness of the levels of participation which can be achieved with appropriate utilization of interpreters and CART providers, consumers who are deaf or hard of hearing should be able to access employment, community activities, health care, education, and a wide array of other public and private activities.

Goal Alignment to Statewide Goals

- Elevate the levels of educational preparedness and attainment of our citizens.
- Be a national leader in the preservation and enhancement of our economy.
- Engage and inform citizens to ensure we serve their interests.
- Be recognized as the best-managed state in the nation.
- Inspire and support Virginians toward healthy lives and strong and resilient families.
- Protect, conserve and wisely develop our natural, historical and cultural resources.
- Protect the public's safety and security, ensuring a fair and effective system of justice and providing a prepared response to emergencies and disasters of all kinds.

- Ensure that Virginia has a transportation system that is safe, enables easy movement of people and goods, enhances the economy and improves our quality of life.

Goal 4

Strive for recognition of communications access for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing as a core component of all services provided by agencies of the Commonwealth.

Goal Summary and Alignment

VDDHH is authorized, in the Code of Virginia, to provide a framework of consultation and cooperation among agencies and institutions serving people who are deaf or hard of hearing and to monitor and evaluate the provision of services to this population. While the agency has done this through participation in interagency workgroups and policy reviews upon request, there is an increasing call from consumers for assistance in achieving acceptable levels of access in a broad range of government services.

Goal Alignment to Statewide Goals

- Elevate the levels of educational preparedness and attainment of our citizens.
- Be a national leader in the preservation and enhancement of our economy.
- Engage and inform citizens to ensure we serve their interests.
- Be recognized as the best-managed state in the nation.
- Inspire and support Virginians toward healthy lives and strong and resilient families.
- Protect, conserve and wisely develop our natural, historical and cultural resources.
- Protect the public's safety and security, ensuring a fair and effective system of justice and providing a prepared response to emergencies and disasters of all kinds.
- Ensure that Virginia has a transportation system that is safe, enables easy movement of people and goods, enhances the economy and improves our quality of life.

Goal 5

Serve as a recognized and reliable source of current information from state/national resources provided to all customers through a variety of means.

Goal Summary and Alignment

With a wide and diverse customer base seeking current and critical information, VDDHH must be prepared to serve as an up-to-date and reliable resource providing information in a variety of formats and through a range of channels, including training programs, library services, the Internet and others.

Goal Alignment to Statewide Goals

- Engage and inform citizens to ensure we serve their interests.
 - Inspire and support Virginians toward healthy lives and strong and resilient families.
 - Protect the public's safety and security, ensuring a fair and effective system of justice and providing a prepared response to emergencies and disasters of all kinds.
-

Service Area Strategic Plan

Department for the Deaf & Hard-of-Hearing (751)

3/11/2014 10:05 am

Biennium: 2008-10 ▼

Service Area 1 of 3

Technology Services for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (751 450 04)

Description

This service area provides access to telecommunication services and assistive technology for Virginia citizens who are deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind or speech impaired. The service area comprises two agency programs, VA Relay and the Technology Assistance Program (TAP). Direct services include:

- Oversight of federally-mandated Telecommunication Relay Services;
- Administration of the Commonwealth’s \$15,000,000 Telecommunications Relay Services Fund;
- Financial assistance for purchase of telecommunication-related assistive devices for qualified applicants; and
- Technical assistance for and demonstration of devices for persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired.

Background Information

Mission Alignment and Authority

- Describe how this service supports the agency mission

This service area directly aligns with VDDHH’s mission of reducing communication barriers through the use of technology services and assistive devices.

- Describe the Statutory Authority of this Service

Virginia Code §51.5-115 establishes VDDHH as the oversight agency for the operation of telecommunications relay services in the Commonwealth.

- CFR §64.604 mandates provision of telecommunication relay services in all states and sets minimum standards for all relay operations.
- Virginia Code §51.5-112:8 authorizes VDDHH to operate a program of technology assistance and services to persons who are hearing or speech impaired, including the distribution of devices and support of message relay services through grants, contracts or other means, including a sliding fee scale.
- 22VAC20-20 Regulations Covering Technology Assistance Programs establishes guidelines for the distribution of assistive devices.

Customers

Agency Customer Group	Customer	Customers served annually	Potential annual customers
Technology Assistance Program (TAP) applicants(NOTE: Unduplicated count of applicants only. Previous reported data was number of devices distributed.)	TAP Applicants (applications received/projected deaf/hard of hearing population in Virginia)	1,292	665,000
Virginia Relay Users (not an unduplicated count)	Virginia Relay Calls (NOTE: This is calls handled ONLY - not customers)	1,908,328	1,908,328

Anticipated Changes To Agency Customer Base

While the number of relay calls handled by Virginia Relay in Norton is expected to continue to decrease as alternatives to traditional relay services proliferate (including Captioned Telephone Service, Internet Protocol Relay and Video Relay Services), the actual number of relay users should continue to increase as this proliferation allows individuals to use services that more fully satisfy their needs. For example, native signers of American Sign Language (ASL) may be expected to more actively use Video Relay rather than the written English-based traditional relay.

The TAP customer base may be expected to continue at the same level although the popularity of local health-related public events such as the southwest’s Remote Area Medical (RAM) may cause periodic spikes in the number of applications received. Customers in TAP may reapply for new equipment/technology every four years, and in 2007, renewal applications accounted for 57% of all applications processed.

Partners

Partner	Description
Contracted Virginia Relay	

Providers	Provide telecommunications relay service under contract with the state
Outreach Contractors	Offer training of use of relay services and provide intake and delivery, installation and training for TAP devices
Technology Vendors	Provide assistive technology for qualified TAP applicants

Products and Services

- *Factors Impacting the Products and/or Services:*

Technology Assistance Program

- Renewal applications account for approximately 57% of the annual TAP budget, often delaying equipment distribution to first-time applicants.
- An antiquated TAP database severely limits reporting and automated delivery of management tools and reports.
- No current policy exists for donated, returned, or unused equipment.
- Possibility of insufficient funds to establish and update TAP Demonstration centers with new equipment. These centers that assist applicants with choosing the most appropriate device for their hearing loss.

Virginia Relay Oversight

- The current Appropriations Act language requires the relay center to be located in Norton and have a minimum employment level of 105. Historically, no other relay provider except AT&T has bid on a Norton-based contract. Other relay providers appear reluctant to operate a center with a unionized workforce. In addition, due to the transition of traditional TTY-based relay traffic to newer internet based or enhanced relay services provided on a national level, a minimum employment level of 105 may no longer be needed to handle Virginia-only calls.
- AT&T has recently expressed their reluctance to continue services from the Norton center citing the Commonwealth's legislative requirement for an employee level of 105 full time positions. Because of relay user's transition from traditional TTY-based calls to internet-based services, the number of calls processed at the center has decreased by over 40% since the original contract was signed in 2004. While a staff of 105 was required to provide quality service when the employment level was established, AT&T estimates 78 or less employees will be needed by calendar year 2008. Unless the General Assembly considers a reduction in the employment level, it is possible that the Commonwealth will be left without a responsive contract bidder after the current extension expires in early 2009.
- The current Norton-based workforce is highly qualified, experiences minimal employee turnover, and consistently provides excellent customer service to relay users. The center also provides a positive economic impact on the area.
- Video Relay Services (VRS) are unavailable in rural areas where Broadband or DSL infrastructure does not exist; however, competition for VRS consumers is high, offering no-cost VRS devices and free installation to qualified consumers.
- There are no established minimum standards for VRS making it difficult for states to monitor answer response rates, interpreter skills, transmission quality, or user complaints.
- VRS connections for employees in business/office environments often present firewall/security issues and sap bandwidth from network data connections.

- *Anticipated Changes to the Products and/or Services*

Technology Assistance Program

- As a result of a year-long Administrative Review of TAP, the agency is preparing to transition its traditional, coupon-based program to a new process where applicants are able to try a device for a period of 30 days prior to permanent assignment. This new procedure, tentatively labeled as Loan-to-Own or simply L2O, will significantly shorten the waiting time for applicant receipt of equipment, will eliminate the need for multiple visits to an applicant's resident or workplace by Outreach staff, and will reduce the number of devices returned for exchange or refund. Pilots of L2O are scheduled for winter 2008 with statewide implementation of the program by the fall 2008.
- The new TAP L2O program does not lend itself to distributing devices to non-qualifying applicants. If a corresponding change to TAP Regulations is not implemented, a separate process will be needed to provide discounted equipment to these individuals.
- The full implementation of L2O will eliminate the need for the fifteen-year old TAPLoan (no cost) contracts with local government and non-profit agencies. The opportunity for individuals to test adaptive telephone devices, including access to VRS services, will continue to be available from Demo Centers that will be established in all offices of the VDDHH Outreach programs as well as in many One-Stop locations.
- As many deaf and hard of hearing consumers are migrating to text-based wireless and internet-based alternatives to traditional telecommunication services, TAP must consider alternatives to traditional TTY and VCO devices, both of which are based on twenty-year old technology. In many cases, the substitution of pagers, video, and text messaging devices could result in a net cost savings in the program. VDDHH will keep careful watch on the offerings and policies of equipment distribution programs in states similar to Virginia in demographics, funding, and diversity of applicants.

Virginia Relay Oversight

- Since 2004, the total number of relay calls made in Virginia has increased from 1.5 million to just under 2 million, a 33% jump. During this same period, the number of the state's traditional TTY-based relay calls handled by the Norton center has decreased by over 40%. This trend is consistent across the nation and reflects the relay consumer's preference for faster, more efficient internet-based relay services.
 - The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has recently expressed their intent to pass on a portion of the costs of internet-based relay services to state relay programs. This change is supported by the Jurisdictional Separation of Costs outlined in the association federal regulations and will have a significant impact on all states. Depending on the formula developed by the FCC, the potential impact on Virginia could exceed \$4,000,000 annually. It is also possible that the FCC could pass on the oversight responsibilities for these services as well. If so, additional staffing could be indicated as the number of internet-based relay calls will soon exceed traditional TTY and VCO relay calls currently managed by the state's contracts with AT&T and Sprint.
 - As previously stated, Video Relay Services (VRS) and other internet based relay services are currently funded entirely by a federal universal services fund; however, the FCC has repeatedly expressed its intent to pass both the responsibilities for VRS oversight and a large portion of these costs on to the states. In anticipation to this change, VDDHH will be expanding opportunities for consumers whose native language is ASL to try out and apply for any of the VRS products provided by the 11 current providers of the service. Of particular interest is the new, portable VRS device, dubbed the OJO. The OJO incorporates internet and analog connections for households or offices where VRS, TTY and voice calls are routinely made.
- *Listing of Products and/or Services*
 - Technology Assistance Program – The VDDHH equipment distribution program (TAP) provides assistive devices, primarily for telecommunications purposes, to qualified applicants who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech-impaired either at no or a discounted cost. Eligibility is based on verification of disability, income, and residency. There are no age restrictions. Devices available include text telephones (TTYs), large print TTYs, telephone amplifiers, Voice Carry Over and Captioned Phones, Hearing Carry Over phones, and visual, tactile, and audible signalers. In addition, special order equipment is available on a case-by-case basis.
 - Virginia Relay Oversight - Virginia Code § 51.5-115 establishes VDDHH as the oversight agency for the operation of telecommunications relay services in the Commonwealth. Originally drafted in 1990 and revised in 1994, much of this codified language focuses on the operations of a TTY-accessible telecommunications center located in the state. Corresponding Appropriations Act language designates a Norton location. Currently, services at the center are limited to basic relay services including those for persons with a speech disability. Since the original Code language was written, relay-based technology has mushroomed and many new relay services are now available. These services, including but not limited to internet relay, video relay, Spanish relay, and remote text messaging relay, are now readily available to deaf and hard of hearing citizens nationwide. These new services are currently provided from national relay centers and are largely supported by a federal universal services type fund. While VDDHH retains Code authority for the oversight of basic relay services such as TTY-based and Voice Carry Over relay services, consumers consider the agency as a resource for information, referral, equipment and training on all types of relay services, including those provided on a national basis. For purposes of this document, the program VA Relay is defined to include all relay services available to Virginia consumers, not just those provided from the AT&T relay center located Norton.
 - Virginia Relay Advisory Council (VRAC) - During the 2001 General Assembly, Virginia Relay consumers sought passage of legislation to establish an advisory group. Although the legislation did not advance, VDDHH, recognizing the importance of such a group, worked with the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, the State Corporation Commission (SCC), legislators, and a roundtable of consumers to administratively establish such a group within our agency. During the Fall of 2001, this advisory group held its first meeting and became known as the Virginia Relay Advisory Council (VRAC). Since that first meeting, the Council has established by-laws, elected competent officers, and worked closely with VDDHH to establish an on-going, AT&T-supported educational and outreach campaign for Virginia Relay. The Council also assists VDDHH with the oversight of the current relay contracts and serves as a consumer-based focus group for development and testing of new relay features and services. Expenses for VRAC meetings are supported by Special Funds. The success of the VRAC has been due in large part to the diversity of its membership and their representation of a cross-section of relay users. Council members include representatives from the Virginia Association of the Deaf (VAD), a Virginia Chapter of the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), the Association of Late Deafened Adults (ALDA), the Virginia Association of Deaf Blind (VADB), a Center for Independent Living (CIL), and the Speech and Hearing Association of Virginia (SHAV). Council members also include a captioned telephone relay user, a user of Speech to Speech relay, a Video Relay user, and two hearing individuals that regularly use Virginia Relay. In addition to these members, representatives from VDDHH and the current relay contractors also participate in the Council meetings as non-voting members.

Finance

- *Financial Overview*
[Nothing entered]

- *Financial Breakdown*

	FY 2009		FY 2010		FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2009	FY 2010
	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund				
Base Budget	\$381,540	\$14,364,229	\$381,540	\$14,364,229				
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0				
Service Area Total	\$381,540	\$14,364,229	\$381,540	\$14,364,229				
Base Budget	\$381,540	\$14,364,229	\$381,540	\$14,364,229				
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0				
Service Area Total	\$381,540	\$14,364,229	\$381,540	\$14,364,229				
Base Budget	\$381,540	\$14,364,229	\$381,540	\$14,364,229				
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0				
Service Area Total	\$381,540	\$14,364,229	\$381,540	\$14,364,229				

Human Resources

- *Human Resources Overview*
[Nothing entered]

- *Human Resource Levels*

Effective Date		
Total Authorized Position level	0	
Vacant Positions	0	
Current Employment Level	0.0	
Non-Classified (Filled)		} breakout of Current Employment Level
Full-Time Classified (Filled)		
Part-Time Classified (Filled)		
Faculty (Filled)		
Wage		
Contract Employees		
Total Human Resource Level	0.0	= Current Employment Level + Wage and Contract Employees

- *Factors Impacting HR*
[Nothing entered]

- *Anticipated HR Changes*
[Nothing entered]

Service Area Objectives

- Provide the citizens of the Commonwealth with access to appropriate and effective telecommunications relay services and specialized assistive technology.

Objective Description

VDDHH is required to annually report all relay user feedback to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) as part of our requirements to maintain state certification for providing relay services. Since 1991, the VA Relay service has enjoyed a high level of customer satisfaction evidenced in part by a relatively low number of complaints reported from relay customers. Over the past 3 years as the numbers of traditional, TTY-based customers and calls have rapidly declined, the historical numbers of commendations and complaints become less significant when comparing them to the total volume of customer feedback received in today's relay environment. In an effort to monitor the level of customer satisfaction, we will now track the percentage of total calls processed by the Norton center which result in customer commendations and complaints. As a result of a year-long Administrative Review of TAP, the agency is preparing to transition its traditional, coupon-based program to a new process where applicants are able to try a device for a period of 30 days prior to permanent assignment. This new procedure, tentatively labeled as Loan-to-Own or simply L2O, will significantly shorten the waiting time for applicant receipt of equipment, will eliminate the need for multiple visits to an applicant's resident or workplace by Outreach staff, and will reduce the number of devices returned for exchange or refund. Pilots of L2O are scheduled for winter 2008 with statewide implementation of the program by the fall 2008. We will begin to measure the level of effectiveness and customer satisfaction of L2O.

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: Enhance the quality of communications access for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing in Virginia by increasing the availability and effectiveness of and consumer access to assistive technology and technology services.

Objective Strategies

- VDDHH will reference customer satisfaction in all upcoming contract extensions through January 31, 2011. • VDDHH will conduct independent testing or "mystery caller" program during the current and upcoming relay contract extension periods. • VDDHH will continue to analyze and respond to all feedback provided by relay customers through standard feedback avenues including Town Hall Meetings and Outreach staff and contractors. • Develop TAP customer satisfaction survey instrument by January 31, 2008 • Begin trials of L2O in early 2008 with full implementation scheduled for July 1, 2008 based on feedback from Outreach and piloted consumers. • Modify Outreach contracts to include prompt delivery and reporting requirements effective July 1, 2008. • Revise Outreach and TAP monthly reports to reflect adherence to delivery standards associated with L2O. Implementation of TAP L2O offering up to a 30-day CapTel trial usage period. • Request EIN list of CapTel Devices not being used in a 3-month period. • Contact all currently assigned CapTel device recipients to obtain information on equipment use or need for training. • Coordinate follow-up or equipment return with appropriate Outreach staff or contractors. • Develop improved training module for CapTel use.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Objective Measures

- The ratio of documented relay user complaints compared to the number of documented relay user commendations

Measure Class: Measure Type: Measure Frequency: Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: Percentage showing total service comments which are complaints

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: Reduce the percentage of complaints by 2%.

Data Source and Calculation: This measure is calculated on the number of unsolicited commendations provided by relay customers compared to the total number of unsolicited customer comments on the relay service.

- Customer Satisfaction with VDDHH TAP equipment distribution program.

Measure Class: Measure Type: Measure Frequency: Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Description: This is a new measure. The agency will develop a TAP customer satisfaction survey and begin collecting data on or before July 1, 2008.

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: To be determined based on baseline.

Data Source and Calculation: Percentage of survey respondents that indicate that the TAP equipment assigned meets their on-going telecommunications needs. Calculation will be based on the customer survey instrument.

- o Percentage increase in special requests to maintain independence and personal safety

Measure Class: Measure Type: Measure Frequency: Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: 176 special request devices were delivered to customers in FY2006

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: A 10% increase over the baseline by June 30, 2009

Data Source and Calculation: The percentage increase in the number of devices provided annually to applicants to satisfy special requests based on documented need to ensure independence or personal safety. Data to be provided from new TAP L2O database.

- o The percentage of CAPTEL recipients who utilize the CAPTEL Relay Service

Measure Class: Measure Type: Measure Frequency: Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: 58% of CAPTEL recipients are using the service each quarter

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: 75% of CAPTEL recipients using the service each quarter by June 30, 2009

Data Source and Calculation: Percentage of measure service use by CapTel recipients during a 3 month period. Calculation based on reports provided by contract CapTel provider.

Service Area Strategic Plan

Department for the Deaf & Hard-of-Hearing (751)

3/11/2014 10:05 am

Biennium: 2008-10 ▼

Service Area 2 of 3

Consumer, Interpreter, and Community Support Services (751 450 05)

Description

This service area provides communication access and community support services for Virginia citizens who are deaf, hard of hearing, their families and the professionals who serve them. The service area is composed of four agency programs: Interpreter Referral; Virginia Quality Assurance Screening (VQAS); Outreach; and, Information and Referral (I&R). Direct services include:

- Scheduling of qualified sign language interpreters for courts and state agencies,
- Provision of interpreters for situations not covered by the federal Americans with Disabilities Act,
- On-line maintenance and distribution of the Virginia Directory of Qualified Interpreters,
- An assessment and diagnostics program for the evaluation of the skill level of sign language interpreters,
- Regional technical assistance and local training on assistive devices, adapting to and prevention of hearing loss, use of interpreters, orientation to deafness, and communications access in emergency situations, and
- Information and referral materials including specialized library services on all aspects of communication access for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Background Information

Mission Alignment and Authority

- *Describe how this service supports the agency mission*

This service area directly aligns with VDDHH's mission of reducing communication barriers through community awareness and the identification and referral of sign language interpreters.

- *Describe the Statutory Authority of this Service*

Virginia Code §51.5-113 authorizes VDDHH to provide an Interpreter Referral program as well as the Directory of Qualified Interpreters.

- Virginia Code §51.5-113 also establishes the Virginia Quality Assurance Screening program for evaluation of sign language interpreters.
- 22VAC20-30 Regulations Governing Quality Assurance Screening establishes guidelines for the interpreter skills assessment program.
- Virginia Code §51.5-112.3 authorizes VDDHH to provide technical assistance and training within the Commonwealth through Outreach efforts to support efforts to initiate or improve community programs and services for persons who are deaf or hard-of-hearing
- Virginia Code §51.5-112.1 authorizes VDDHH to develop an information and referral program for persons who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, their families, professionals and other citizens working or involved in the deafness field.

Customers

Agency Customer Group	Customer	Customers served annually	Potential annual customers
Consumers who are deaf or hard of hearing (accounts for only TAP applicants and one deaf consumer in each interpreter request. Does not include individual relay user count.)	Consumers who are deaf or hard of hearing (assumes 1 consumer in each completed interpreter request)	2,762	665,000
Interpreters Seeking Credentials (VQAS)	Interpreters Seeking Credentials (Participated in FY 2005/Registered in Program History)	262	2,613
Library Patrons	Library Patrons (Patrons who accessed in FY 2007/Total registered patrons)	188	1,644
State Agencies	State Agencies	41	133
Virginia Courts	Virginia Courts	183	374

Anticipated Changes To Agency Customer Base

As the agency moves towards improved methods of capturing individuals served, we expect that the reported numbers

served will increase. At this time, most programs and services in the agency report on activity level and many of the reported activities include multiple customers.

Partners

Partner	Description
Contracted Interpreters	VDDHH contracts with qualified interpreters to provide interpreting services for state agencies who are also on the contract.
Contracted Outreach Providers	VDDHH contracts with local agencies to provide training, technical assistance, information and referral and other services on a local or regional basis.
Contracted Raters and Diagnosticians	VDDHH contracts with qualified individuals to provide rating services (reviewing and scoring VQAS candidate performance assessments) and detailed diagnostic analysis.

Products and Services

- *Factors Impacting the Products and/or Services:*

Requests for interpreters in substance abuse-related twelve step programs have increased tenfold. FY 2004 twelve step requests totaled 13. FY 2006 requests totaled 35. In FY 2007, the number of twelve-step requests totaled 338. (FY 2005 was an anomaly in that 113 requests were processed, almost all requested by one deaf individual). This dramatic increase in 2007 may be explained by the Deaf Community's greater awareness of VDDHH payment and support for interpreter services for substance abuse programs. Many requests did not come from agencies such as CSB or DRS, but from deaf individuals themselves. Self-referrals to twelve step programs increased, which was reflected in the increase for interpreter services.

- Changes at the national Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf may also impact on the availability of interpreters in Virginia. In 2008, the RID standards for certification will be raised to make an AA or AS degree a requirement to maintain national certification (a BA is required in 2012). We expect that a number of currently certified interpreters may lose their credentials and that the pool of RID NIC candidates will be reduced and the process of certifying new interpreters may be slowed.

- Demand for and access to the services of qualified Interpreters and CART providers is affected by the disparity between consumers' awareness of these services (which is high) and service providers' awareness of the same (which is limited). Virginia Interpreter Service Programs currently have the human and technological resources to handle the current level of demand. However, ISP faces the potential of a decline in the number of sign language interpreters certified by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID). The number of certified interpreters in Virginia decreased approximately 15% from 2006 to 2007, from 151 to 134. By comparison, neighboring states such as Maryland show a decrease from 218 to 186 certified interpreters, Tennessee decreased from 78 to 70, South Carolina from 35 to 34 and West Virginia from 20 to 14. North Carolina is the only nearby state to have maintained or increased the number of certified interpreters since 2006, increasing from 119 to 132. There are no statistics to determine a decrease in the number of certified interpreters nationally; however National RID membership has decreased by more than 20% from 2006 to 2007, from more than 12,000 to 9,264. As noted above, reasons for this decline may include the transition from the traditional "free-lance" interpreter model to the full-time opportunities (with benefits) offered by VRS providers. A second reason may be a result of baby boomer interpreters phasing out in the field in larger numbers than new certified interpreters are entering the field.

- The Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA) is offered in a number of states as an educational assessment tool. It has been adopted by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction as a tool designed to evaluate the voice-to-sign and sign-to-voice interpreting skills of interpreters who work in the elementary and secondary school classroom setting. The first administration of the EIPA was held in Virginia in August 2007 at James Madison University. The impact of the EIPA on the current VQAS System remains to be seen.

- The Virginia Department of Education is currently considering the EIPA Level 4 certification as equivalent to a VQAS III, meeting their standards of qualification. However, it is difficult to determine if there is an equivalent between EIPA and VQAS levels. The EIPA is specifically a test for classroom interpreters while the VQAS is a "generalist" test, with test materials designed for both educational and community interpreters. In other words, to compare the EIPA and VQAS is to compare apples and oranges. EIPA is used to evaluate interpreters who work with students and teenagers who use predominately American Sign Language (ASL), Manually-Coded English (MCE) and Contact Sign, or Pidgin Sign English (PSE).

- The agency's Virginia Quality Assurance Screening (VQAS) program is most significantly impacted by the Department of Education's Special Education regulations, which establish VQAS Level III as the minimum professional

standard for educational interpreters. Educational interpreters comprise as much as 90% of the candidate pool in VQAS and many of these individuals do not have the skill level necessary to meet the standard. Provisions in the Special Education regulations allow for waivers for up to three years, during which time candidates repeatedly register for the VQAS. Unfortunately, there are limited interpreter training opportunities available for many of these candidates and few incentives for them to pursue the training that is available. This program will continue to experience high demand for assessment slots as candidates who do not have the necessary skills to achieve a level continue to register for the assessment multiple times in order to maintain employment in the public schools. The program is also impacted by the availability of qualified raters to review and score candidate Performance Assessments. While the agency has a cadre of trained raters, not all of them are active and available when needed.

- VDDHH Outreach Services are impacted by large areas of the Commonwealth being served by part-time Outreach Specialists. This is especially true in the West and Southwest areas of the state, where a large part of the population is rural. Identifying and delivering equipment to a consumer may involve several home visits that can result in many hours and miles of travel – a burden for a part-time person serving a large geographical area. In Central Virginia, a part-time (3-4 days a week) Outreach Specialist is required to serve four planning districts encompassing 22 counties and the city of Richmond.
- Library Services has been impacted by challenges with properly cataloged materials and loss of items due to patron failure to return. The library is staffed by a Library Assistant who is also responsible for back-up receptionist duties as much as 50% of the time. Volunteers play a key role in maintaining the library. Efforts are underway to correct cataloging problems and materials recovery to improve overall library services.
- VDDHH does not have enforcement authority and the success of efforts to educate private providers (including legal and medical professionals and media outlets) about critical communications access issues is limited by outside factors.
- *Anticipated Changes to the Products and/or Services*

The availability of the VQAS Written Assessment on-line will improve customer service. To improve the validity and reliability of the test since each test will be a different computer-generated version (currently, the agency has two versions of the test in use).

 - Re-cataloging of Library materials should improve customer access to materials and allow the agency to provide up-to-date catalog information on the agency's website in response to requests from patrons. New materials, including training videos in DVD format, will increase the circulation and the number of patrons who use the library.
 - In FY2008, Outreach Contractors will be asked to shift their focus from Relay Partner development to the new program, "Keeping Kids in Touch," targeted at students in Virginia Public Schools.
 - The agency is exploring options for a statewide Outreach Contract to focus on service needs and development for the Hispanic Community.
 - As a partner in the many of the efforts to provide services to infants and toddlers who are deaf or hard of hearing, VDDHH is sought out by service providers and families for assistance. While we do not have direct early intervention services, we have been asked by several sources to consider becoming the agency home for the new Virginia Guide by Your Side program. This program partners a parent of a newly identified child who is deaf or hard of hearing with a trained parent who has experienced many of the same challenges.
 - As a partner in the Olmstead Initiative, VDDHH has been charged with addressing communication access issues for persons making the transition from institutional to community placements.
 - The agency anticipates continued focus on emergency preparedness issues for consumers in response to consumer feedback provided.
- *Listing of Products and/or Services*
 - Virginia Quality Assurance Screening – VDDHH provides a program of Quality Assurance Screening for sign language interpreters and cued speech transliterators. This program consists of the Written Assessment which must be passed before a candidate may participate in the Performance Assessment. Performance Assessments are reviewed by trained "raters" who score the performance based on strict criteria and further reviewed by a qualified diagnostician who provides detailed diagnostic feedback on areas of strength and weakness, along with suggestions for improvement.
 - Interpreter Services Coordination – VDDHH coordinates requests for interpreter services and Computer Assisted Real Time Captioning (CART) from state agencies and courts. The agency has established a contract for interpreter services, which other state agencies may join. The agency also coordinates interpreters for 12-step programs and other activities (such as funerals) on a very limited basis. In statewide and local emergency

situations, the Department provides Emergency Management officials with information about interpreters available to assist in shelters and other critical areas.

- Library Services – VDDHH maintains a library of books, DVDs and videotapes available for loan within the Commonwealth. The collection also includes a range of periodicals and informational materials specifically related to issues affecting persons who are deaf or hard of hearing. Utilized by consumers, educators, interpreters, families and other interested individuals, the Library provides a central source of very specific, topical and current information available from no other source in the Commonwealth.
- Training – Training is a component of every Service Area at VDDHH. Provided primarily through Outreach staff and contractors, topics include use of assistive technology, how to use and acquire a qualified sign language interpreter, availability of services from other state and local agencies, and appropriate procedures in an emergency or law enforcement situation. Other topics include adapting to hearing loss, understanding educational options and services, learning sign language, as well as conducting specialized trainings to hospital staff, courts, and Public Safety Answering Points (9-1-1 dispatchers). Additionally, Outreach provides technology demonstrations and resource information at a wide variety of community activities, including Health Fairs, Transition (from school to employment) Fairs; community-sponsored information activities (Deaf Expo).
- Technical Assistance – Technical Assistance provided by VDDHH takes on several forms. The agency provides technical assistance to other state agencies and private entities to assist in meeting the communications access needs of consumers who are deaf or hard of hearing. The agency also provides technical assistance through participation in state and local advisory groups, policy making groups, and planning bodies.
- Information and Referral – The agency provides information and referral to connect citizens, agencies and private entities with resources on topics related to deafness through the Central Office, Outreach Services, our website (www.vddhh.org), Library Services, TAP, and Interpreter Services.
- Individualized Problem Resolution – Outreach Contractors provide Individualized Problem Resolution services for consumers who are deaf or hard of hearing and who are having difficulty resolving issues as a direct result of their hearing loss, usually due to a lack of communications access. Problems addressed through this service might include housing, utilities, billing issues or other challenges of daily living.
- Directory of Qualified Interpreters – The agency publishes (hard copy and electronic) a Directory of Qualified Interpreters which provides contact information on interpreters who meet or exceed the Code definition of “qualified interpreter.” This directory is available to assist private entities in locating qualified interpreters for events involving consumers who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Finance

- *Financial Overview*
[Nothing entered]
- *Financial Breakdown*

	FY 2009		FY 2010		FY 2009	FY 2010
	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund		
Base Budget	\$686,758	\$18,000	\$686,758	\$18,000		
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		
Service Area Total	\$686,758	\$18,000	\$686,758	\$18,000		
Base Budget	\$686,758	\$18,000	\$686,758	\$18,000		
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		
Service Area Total	\$686,758	\$18,000	\$686,758	\$18,000		

Human Resources

- *Human Resources Overview*
[Nothing entered]
- *Human Resource Levels*

Effective Date		
Total Authorized Position level	0	
Vacant Positions	0	
Current Employment Level	0.0	
Non-Classified (Filled)		} breakout of Current Employment Level
Full-Time Classified (Filled)		
Part-Time Classified (Filled)		
Faculty (Filled)		
Wage		
Contract Employees		
Total Human Resource Level	0.0	= Current Employment Level + Wage and Contract Employees

- *Factors Impacting HR*
[Nothing entered]
- *Anticipated HR Changes*
[Nothing entered]

Service Area Objectives

- Increase consumer awareness of the availability of assistive technology and new communication devices for person who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired.

Objective Description

Emerging technology and the introduction of new communications devices are increasing opportunities for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing in all aspects of their lives by providing communications accessibility. New services such as captioned telephones, portable induction loops, video relay, video remote interpreting, voice recognition software, and hand-held text communication devices allow this population to readily participate in community activities, and to pursue educational and job opportunities. Awareness and availability of this new technology is critical to the independence and employability of persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired.

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: Enhance the quality of communications access for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing in Virginia by increasing the availability and effectiveness of and consumer access to assistive technology and technology services.
- Agency Goal: Serve as a recognized and reliable source of current information from state/national resources provided to all customers through a variety of means.

Objective Strategies

- Include source fields in TAP L2O on-line application • Establish related TAP L2O policies • Generate monthly Outreach application activities • Monitor success rate of specific types of Outreach activities

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Objective Measures

- TAP Applications generated from Outreach Activities.

Measure Class: Measure Type: Measure Frequency: Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: This is a new measure. The agency will track TAP application source information beginning on or before July 1, 2008.

Measure Target Value: Date: Measure Target Description: To be determined based on Measure Baseline.

Data Source and Calculation: Number of completed TAP applications directly initiated by Outreach Program Activities. New TAP L20 database will generate reports based on source indicator fields.

- Improve consumer preparedness for a variety of disaster and emergency situations.

Objective Description

Emergency preparedness planning is of major importance to consumers who are deaf and hard of hearing. During the Spring and Summer of 2007, VDDHH partnered with VDEM and other state agencies and organizations to present the Community-based Emergency Response Seminars in 11 different sites throughout the state, the purpose being to create an awareness of the needs of citizens of the Commonwealth who are considered to have special needs and get them involved in the emergency planning process. Although it may be impossible to ensure that every county and city in the Commonwealth has deaf and hard of hearing consumers on their local emergency planning committee, it is of vital importance to have these consumers' needs represented in major population areas.

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: We will strengthen the culture of preparedness across state agencies, their employees and customers.
- Agency Goal: Serve as a recognized and reliable source of current information from state/national resources provided to all customers through a variety of means.

Objective Strategies

- Continue to provide information relating to emergency preparedness at every opportunity (guest presentations, information at technology demos, conferences, conventions, etc). Partner with VDEM to ensure local planning committees are aware of and receptive to inclusion of people with disabilities in their local planning committees. Develop a special section on the VDDHH Website addressing emergency preparedness and providing links to the VDEM website. (This will enable consumers to more easily find their local emergency management office.) Include emergency preparedness information with every TAP equipment delivery. Partner with Devaney and Associates to provide annual updates about the needs of our consumers to television stations throughout the Commonwealth.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Objective Measures

- Number of Local Emergency Planning Committees who have representation from the deaf and hard of hearing communities.

Measure Class: Measure Type: Measure Frequency: Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: This is a new measure. Baseline to be determined.

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: To be determined based on established baseline.

Data Source and Calculation: Number of committees who have representation from the deaf and hard of hearing communities. Data to be provided through the Outreach Program Manager and the Regional Emergency Planners from VDEM.

- We will increase the pool of qualified interpreters available to fill assignments coordinated by VDDHH.

Objective Description

The number of certified and qualified interpreters who contract with the agency has dropped significantly in recent years, primarily due to changes in the field. As more full-time, salaried positions open for interpreters in public schools, in Video Remote Interpreting and in Video Relay Services, the number of interpreters available for freelance assignments has reduced. In addition, the number of interpreters who will accept court interpreting assignments is limited because of the nature and complexity of such assignments. This objective seeks to identify opportunities to

increase the number of interpreters who will contract with the agency and the number who will accept court assignments.

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: Increase the availability, quality and utilization of communication facilitators (interpreters and CART providers)

Objective Strategies

- The agency will develop a data collection methodology from registration and candidate survey information and begin collecting data on October 1, 2007. • Partner with organizations/agencies (such as the Virginia Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf and Sign Language Associates) to provide additional training to interpreters. • Include information on the VDDHH website on all the training opportunities available to interpreters in Virginia. • Utilize VQAS Diagnostics to assist with localized workshops targeted to VQAS candidates based on identified performance areas of weakness.
- Develop and solicit interpreter contracts with Interpreter referral agencies to increase the pool of available interpreters. • Recruit additional “court available” interpreters through direct contact with ISP Interpreter Coordinator. • Recruit additional “court available” interpreters through announcements on VDDHH Website. • Develop a mentorship program for developing interpreters with requirement for participants to contract with the agency for a set period of time and to complete a set number of hours of contracted services. Include targeted mentorships for interpreters who want to work in courts. • Partner with the Virginia Registry of Interpreters of the Deaf and private interpreter coordination services in Virginia to develop a recruitment plan targeting Interpreter Training Programs nationwide. • Partner with the Supreme Court of Virginia to provide more specialized legal trainings to certified interpreters in Virginia to prepare for work in the legal field. • Promote the use of video remote interpreting services (VRI) to courts and Deaf individuals in order to meet the future need for interpreter services in areas not readily served by qualified interpreters.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Objective Measures

- VQAS Candidate Improvement as a result of training.

Measure Class: Measure Type: Measure Frequency: Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: This is a new measure. The agency will develop a data collection methodology and begin collecting data in FY 2008.

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: A percentage of candidates who participated in training whose assessment results improved.

Data Source and Calculation: This measure will be calculated by analyzing the performance improvement of VQAS candidates across assessments. For candidates who indicate they received training in preparation, we will compare scores between tests to document improvement.

- We will fill interpreter requests from Virginia Courts, state agencies and 12-step programs.

Measure Class: Measure Type: Measure Frequency: Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: In FY05, 94% of all interpreter requests received by VDDHH were filled.

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: By the end of FY 2009, 98% of all requests received will be filled in a timely manner.

Data Source and Calculation: ISP monthly reports reflect an increase in the percentage of assignments filled. Requests received with less than 48 hour notice will not be counted as unfilled.

○ Number of Court Available Interpreters

Measure Class: Measure Type: Measure Frequency: Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: In FY 2005, the agency had 53 court available interpreters

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: An increase of at least 5% per year.

Data Source and Calculation: This measure will be calculated based on the number of Interpreters in the Interpreter Services Database identified as available and qualified to accept court assignments.

- Increase consumer access to interpreters and CART providers in non-VDDHH coordinated assignments, including medical and legal settings.

Objective Description

The number of interpreter/CART assignments coordinated by VDDHH is only a small portion of the total number of interpreter assignments in the state each year. Consumers who are deaf or hard of hearing require interpreter services on the job, at the doctors, in banking situations, and many other complex tasks of daily living which are not associated with the state. This objective seeks to increase awareness of interpreter services, both to increase the number of interpreters available and to reduce the challenges consumers face when requesting these services.

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: Increase the availability, quality and utilization of communication facilitators (interpreters and CART providers)

Objective Strategies

- Work with the Court Reporters Association to identify priorities and resources in the area of CART services. • Develop and publish and post on the VDDHH Home page a "Guide to CART Services in Virginia" to provide consumers, agencies and businesses with information on securing CART Services. • Develop, publish and post on the VDDHH Home page an ASL version of instructions on "A Guide for Deaf Consumers in Requesting Interpreter Services" in video format. • Develop a section in the Directory of Qualified Interpreters to list private interpreter referral agencies separate from individual freelance interpreters. • Develop a section in the Directory of Qualified Interpreters to list private interpreter referral agencies providing remote video interpreting services (VRI) separate from individual freelance interpreters. • Work with organizations such as the Virginia Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf to make the "Directory Release form" available on their websites to solicit additional interpreters to be listed in the Directory.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Objective Measures

- Number of Listings In Directory of Qualified Intepreters

Measure Class: Measure Type: Measure Frequency: Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: 262 Interpreters listed in FY 2005.

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: A 5% increase per year.

Data Source and Calculation: This measure will be calculated based on the number of interpreters who are

listed in the Directory compared with the baseline.

- Number of People who use/access the Directory of Qualified Interpreters

Measure Class: Measure Type: Measure Frequency: Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: 4929 hits per quarter on VDDHH Directory of Qualified Intepreters listing pages on the web.

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: 6000 hits per quarter.

Data Source and Calculation: This measure will be calculated by reports of the number of requests for the Directory online and otherwise.

- Develop and disseminate information on viable resources for funding for hearing aids.

Objective Description

Many individuals approach VDDHH seeking assistance for the purchase of hearing aids. While VDDHH does not have funds available to provide direct assistance, the agency is able to provide information about other possible funding sources. The agency has maintained a packet of information on hearing aids but this packet needs to be formalized and enhanced to include specific resources presented in a user-friendly format. Further, the agency needs to be in direct contact with potential funding sources to encourage maintenance of resources and assist in promotion of same.

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: Enhance the quality of communications access for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing in Virginia by increasing the availability and effectiveness of and consumer access to assistive technology and technology services.
- Agency Goal: Serve as a recognized and reliable source of current information from state/national resources provided to all customers through a variety of means.

Objective Strategies

- Develop a "funding guide for hearing aids in Virginia" information folder, modeled after the VDDHH TAP Applicant Information folder, to include basic information about sources of funding and checklists for consumers to follow in seeking funding. Information brochures and other resources on hearing aid funding will be inserted in the folders when distributed. Folder would also include a customer follow-up survey to assess the success of the efforts. • Explore opportunities to incubate funding sources for hearing aids in Virginia through expansion of existing programs or creative approaches to new programs.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Objective Measures

- Customer Satisfaction with Hearing Aid Packet

Measure Class: Measure Type: Measure Frequency: Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: No baseline data available.

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: 50% of all customers completing the customer satisfaction survey report that the packet assisted them in securing funding for the purchase of hearing aids.

Data Source and Calculation: Calculated based on consumer feedback provided on a customer satisfaction

survey included in every packet.

- Increase awareness of, access to and utilization of VDDHH Library services.

Objective Description

VDDHH Library Services offers a valuable resource which could be more widely utilized. Patron feedback on the library indicates that the most valuable improvement which could be made in the Library is the availability of Library material catalogs online. Unfortunately, the current catalog does not lend itself to online publication. In addition, the records in the current catalog are more informal agency notes than formal catalog information of value to the average user. Finally, the agency recognizes that the Library is underutilized by many potential patrons, including consumers who are deaf or hard of hearing, family members and professionals other than interpreters. The intent of this objective is to improve the Library Catalog and widely disseminate information about materials available and their value to a wide range of patrons.

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: Serve as a recognized and reliable source of current information from state/national resources provided to all customers through a variety of means.

Objective Strategies

- Complete re-cataloging project to prepare for publication of VDDHH Library Catalog on-line. • Conduct annual inventory and materials assessment to ensure accuracy of catalog and availability information. • Actively promote Library Services to under-represented patron groups, including consumers who are deaf or hard of hearing, parents, and professionals using mailings, announcements in organization newsletters, information tables at local events and other activities. • Continue to update the Library collection to include more DVDs, materials targeted for under-represented patron groups and Spanish-language materials.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Objective Measures

- Percentage increase in Library Usage Statistics

Measure Class: Measure Type: Measure Frequency: Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: In FY 2005, 263 or 19%, of 1344 registered patrons accessed Library services.

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: A 10% increase in the percentage of registered patrons accessing the Library.

Data Source and Calculation: This measure will be calculated based on the percentage increase in the number of registered patrons utilizing library services as reported by the Athena Library database.

- Ensure and improve the validity, reliability and efficiency of the VQAS Process.

Objective Description

VDDHH provides a program of Quality Assurance Screening for sign language interpreters and cued speech transliterators. This program consists of the Written Assessment which must be passed at a 90% rate before a candidate may participate in the Performance Assessment. Performance Assessments are reviewed by trained "raters" who score the performance based on strict criteria and further reviewed by a qualified diagnostician who provides detailed diagnostic feedback on areas of strength and weakness, along with suggestions for improvement. This objective seeks to continue review and improvement of the VQAS System and ensure the ongoing validity and reliability of the VQAS.

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: Increase the availability, quality and utilization of communication facilitators (interpreters and CART providers)

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Objective Measures

- VQAS Candidate satisfaction with the testing process

Measure Class: Measure Type: Measure Frequency: Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: Percent of candidates who completed VQAS Survey indicating satisfaction with process

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: All candidates who participated in assessments will be included in the survey.

Data Source and Calculation: This measure will analyze the satisfaction of the evaluation process by VQAS candidates who have participated in testing. Data source will be candidate surveys which are under development.

- Average days from registration to first available Performance Assessment date.

Measure Class: Measure Type: Measure Frequency: Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: 140 days average between registration and test date in FY2007

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: 90 days in FY2009

Data Source and Calculation: This measure will be calculated based on the number of days from date of candidate registration to the date of evaluation. Data based on agency records showing the date the registration was received and information on the first available test date.

- Days from Performance Assessment to Results

Measure Class: Measure Type: Measure Frequency: Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: 105 days average between test date and results date in FY2006

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: 60 days average in FY2009

Data Source and Calculation: This measure will be calculation between the candidate assessment date and the results completed date. Data source is the rater summary sheet and the Agency records on candidate test date and date of results letter.

- Ensure a high level of consumer satisfaction with Outreach Services.

Objective Description

Outreach Specialists are the front line service providers, representing VDDHH in a variety of activities and services. It is very important that consumers are satisfied with, and benefit from, the information and services provided by Outreach Specialists. With awareness of, and access to, current information and appropriate assistive technology,

Virginians who are deaf or hard of hearing will be able to overcome communication barriers, achieve higher levels of educational and employment fulfillment, improve their economic standing, and maintain a higher sense of safety, independence, and self-worth.

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: We will strengthen the culture of preparedness across state agencies, their employees and customers.
- Agency Goal: Strive for recognition of communications access for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing as a core component of all services provided by agencies of the Commonwealth.
- Agency Goal: Serve as a recognized and reliable source of current information from state/national resources provided to all customers through a variety of means.

Objective Strategies

- Develop a Standardized Outreach Services Evaluation form and provide this form to consumers attending or participating in a variety of Outreach activities, including formal presentations, training activities, and TAP. Forms will be included in TAP equipment delivered to consumers. An on-line form will also be posted and available on the Outreach and Community Services page of the VDDHH website.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Objective Measures

- Customer Satisfaction with Outreach Services.

Measure Class: Measure Type: Measure Frequency: Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: to be determined. Data collection will begin in January of 08 (3rd quarter of the FY-08).

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: 75% of evaluations received will rate Outreach Services Contract Providers as "Very Good" or "Excellent".

Data Source and Calculation: This measure will be calculated by averaging the evaluation forms for each contract area. Results will be reported for each contract, and combined for a statewide average, on a quarterly basis.

Service Area Strategic Plan

Department for the Deaf & Hard-of-Hearing (751)

3/11/2014 10:05 am

Biennium: 2008-10 ▼

Service Area 3 of 3

Administrative Services (751 450 06)

Description

This service area provides oversight, policy guidance, and administrative and operational support to all of the agency's programs and services as well as support for the Advisory Board.

Background Information

Mission Alignment and Authority

- *Describe how this service supports the agency mission*
Administrative Services supports the agency's mission by providing overall policy guidance to ensure that the agency's other service areas function efficiently and in an environment focused on superior customer service and accountability.
- *Describe the Statutory Authority of this Service*
The programs and services of VDDHH are authorized in Chapter 13 of Title 51.5 of the Code of Virginia.

This chapter establishes the VDDHH Advisory Board (§51.5-106) and its powers and duties (§51.5-107), including ensuring the development of long-range programs and plans, reviewing and commenting on all budgets and requests for appropriations, and advising the Governor, Secretary of Health and Human Resources, the Director and the General Assembly on matters related to Virginians who are deaf or hard of hearing.

§51.5-108 continues the Department after recodification while §51.5-109 -110 establishes the Director's position, powers and duties, including hiring such staff as may be necessary to perform the authorized duties.

§51.5-112 delineates the powers and duties of the agency including: promoting a framework of consultation and cooperation among agencies and institutions serving people who are deaf or hard of hearing; monitoring and evaluating the provision of services for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing; making appropriate recommendations for legislative changes and monitoring federal legislation; and adopting necessary regulations.

Customers

Agency Customer Group	Customer	Customers served annually	Potential annual customers
	Advisory Board Members	9	9
	Legislators	140	140
	State Agencies	30	133

Anticipated Changes To Agency Customer Base
[Nothing entered]

Partners

Partner	Description
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[None entered]

Products and Services

- *Factors Impacting the Products and/or Services:*
In previous years, VDDHH was served by a Communication Access Committee, a subcommittee of the Board charged with addressing issues in Interpreter Services Programs. Recognizing the need to increase active consumer involvement in the development of agency programs and services and to create a pathway for consumers to provide consultation for program planning, the agency plans to review the concept for revival as related to Interpreter programs and expansion to other program areas.
- *Anticipated Changes to the Products and/or Services*
As outlined in this Strategic Plan, this service area may assume the additional responsibility of monitoring and

evaluation of state agency programs and services for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.

- *Listing of Products and/or Services*

- Advisory Board Support - The agency provides staff support to the gubernatorially appointed advisory board. Support includes research, training, policy guidance, logistics and administrative support.
- Legislative Updates - The agency tracks legislative activity and provides timely updates on legislation affecting persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Legislative Liaison Services - VDDHH provides legislative analysis and expert testimony on bills related to persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Regulatory Coordination - The agency maintains regulations for public participation, TAP and Interpreter Programs.
- Interagency Program and Policy Guidance - In order to ensure that programs and services of the Commonwealth address communications access issues and other concerns of persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, VDDHH staff often serve on work groups, task forces, and planning groups for state agencies.
- Agency Program Support - Administrative Services provides general guidance and administrative support to all agency programs. This include policy development, publications, and website coordination.

Finance

- *Financial Overview*
[Nothing entered]

- *Financial Breakdown*

	FY 2009		FY 2010	
	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund
Base Budget	\$310,251	\$0	\$310,251	\$0
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Service Area Total	\$310,251	\$0	\$310,251	\$0

Human Resources

- *Human Resources Overview*
[Nothing entered]

- *Human Resource Levels*

Effective Date		
Total Authorized Position level	0	
Vacant Positions	0	
Current Employment Level	0.0	
Non-Classified (Filled)		} breakout of Current Employment Level
Full-Time Classified (Filled)		
Part-Time Classified (Filled)		
Faculty (Filled)		
Wage		
Contract Employees		
Total Human Resource Level	0.0	= Current Employment Level + Wage and Contract Employees

- *Factors Impacting HR*
[Nothing entered]

- *Anticipated HR Changes*
[Nothing entered]

Service Area Objectives

- Promote accessibility for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing who wish to participate in or interact with state programs and services.

Objective Description

VDDHH has consistently provided assistance to other state agencies to improve access for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing. This assistance has taken several forms, including participating on planning committees, reviewing policies, loaning equipment, and coordinating interpreter requests. The agency has never had the resources to institute a formal program of evaluation and monitoring of state programs and services as we are authorized to do in the Code. Consumers frequently call upon VDDHH to assist in problem resolution when they attempt to access a state agency for services but cannot, most typically due to lack of communications access. Under this objective, VDDHH will address the on-going concerns about communications access in all state agencies.

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: Strive for recognition of communications access for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing as a core component of all services provided by agencies of the Commonwealth.

Objective Strategies

- Establish internship or leadership development opportunities for young people who are deaf or hard of hearing to become involved in public issues. • Pursue an Executive Order directing state agencies to meet certain standards related to communications access in public meetings and services. • Develop a Best Practices Guide for Communications Access in State Programs, to include a checklist and procedures for determining the appropriate accommodations and how to secure same. • Establish a multi-agency workgroup to assist in the development of the Guide and Executive Order. • Establish monitoring and evaluation procedures to review progress.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Objective Measures

- Public Meetings Offering Sign Language Interpreters

Measure Class: Measure Type: Measure Frequency: Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: To be determined in FY2007

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: To be established after baseline is determined.

Data Source and Calculation: The measure will be calculated based on a quarterly review of meetings posted on the Commonwealth Calendar which report that an interpreter will be available. Virginia Interactive, which hosts the Commonwealth Calendar, may be able to provide this report.

- Improve agency accountability to enhance responsiveness to consumer needs.

Objective Description

The agency has been challenged to provide detailed, accurate and meaningful information on the number of customers served in and across various programs and the service needs of Virginians who are deaf or hard of hearing. Very structured and detailed data is available in some program areas but is not consistently available in others. The agency recognizes that without accurate data on the services we provide, we cannot be as effective in predicting future service needs. This effort is further impacted by the lack of meaningful census data or formal needs assessment data on the number and needs of Virginians who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: Enhance the quality of communications access for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing in Virginia by increasing the availability and effectiveness of and consumer access to assistive technology and technology services.
- Agency Goal: We will strengthen the culture of preparedness across state agencies, their employees and

customers.

- Agency Goal: Increase the availability, quality and utilization of communication facilitators (interpreters and CART providers)
- Agency Goal: Strive for recognition of communications access for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing as a core component of all services provided by agencies of the Commonwealth.
- Agency Goal: Serve as a recognized and reliable source of current information from state/national resources provided to all customers through a variety of means.

Objective Strategies

- Develop effective, automated methods of collecting enhanced program and service data in all service areas. • Working with Collaborative Partner agencies (DRS, DMHMRSAS, and DBVI), explore opportunities to conduct a formal statewide needs assessment. • Establish board subcommittees or other work groups similar to VRAC involving agency consumers for all agency programs

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Objective Measures

- Number of Effective Data Collection Tools in use in VDDHH programs

Measure Class: Measure Type: Measure Frequency: Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: Currently, 3 programs and services have effective data collection tools which result in consistent and meaningful quarterly reports of activity.

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: Five (5) new or revised data collection tools introduced each year through FY08.

Data Source and Calculation: This measure will be calculated by reviewing agency documentation on the development, enhancement, and implementation of formal data collection tools for every program and service in the agency and the availability of quarterly reports based on each tool.

- Increase access to VDDHH programs and services for the Hispanic community in Virginia.

Objective Description

VDDHH has experienced an increase in requests from Spanish-speaking residents of the Commonwealth. The agency needs to be prepared to provide services to this segment of the population. This objective seeks to address language barriers that limit the effectiveness of our services.

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: Serve as a recognized and reliable source of current information from state/national resources provided to all customers through a variety of means.

Objective Strategies

- Identify cross-cultural resources and consultants to assist in planning. • Establish agency policy on use of language line interpretation services to assist in communicating with Spanish speaking customers. • Identify resources for Spanish sign language interpretation services. • Include requirements for activities and events targeted at the Hispanic community in Outreach contracts. • Translate all agency forms and key documents into Spanish. • Purchase and publicize availability of Spanish language materials for the VDDHH Library. • Review all VA Relay and AT&T Relay materials related to Spanish Relay calls; update as indicated. • Increase promotion of Spanish Relay through activities of VRAC members and Outreach contractors. • Advertisement in periodicals or information directories targeting the Hispanic population. • Determine Best Practices of NASRA member states reporting a substantial Spanish Relay call volume. • Support TAP program efforts to distribute equipment to qualified members of the Hispanic community. • Explore options for a new statewide Outreach Services contract specifically for Outreach to Hispanic communities in Virginia.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Objective Measures

- Spanish Relay Calls completed by Contracted Relay Providers

Measure Class: Measure Type: Measure Frequency: Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: 1254 Spanish Relay Calls completed in FY2007

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: A 5% increase per year

Data Source and Calculation: Number of completed Spanish Relay Calls as reported in monthly traffic reports required from contracted relay providers.

- To ensure that resources are used efficiently and programs are managed effectively, and in a manner consistent with applicable state and federal requirements.

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: Serve as a recognized and reliable source of current information from state/national resources provided to all customers through a variety of means.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Objective Measures

- Percent of scorecard categories marked as “meets expectations” for the agency.

Measure Class: Measure Type: Measure Frequency: Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: 67%

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: 100% by FY2010

Data Source and Calculation: The Management Scorecard grades agencies on six criteria. Take the number of cases where your agency scored “Meets Expectations” and divide by six.

- We will be prepared to act in the interest of the citizens of the Commonwealth and its infrastructure during emergency situations by actively planning and training both as an agency and as individuals.

Objective Description

We will be prepared to act in the interest of the citizens of the Commonwealth and its infrastructure during emergency situations by actively planning and training both as an agency and as individuals.

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: We will strengthen the culture of preparedness across state agencies, their employees and customers.

Objective Strategies

- The agency Emergency Coordination Officer will stay in continuous communication with the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management. The agency will determine preparedness enhancements needed at the agency level from federal and state guidance and from comparison of current capability and then distribute funding to meet target increases.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Objective Measures

- Will assess agency's Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) to determine assessment score that reflects % of 24 COOP requirements agency has completed. Aim is to achieve minimum of 75% compliance for 1st assessment in 2007 and improve 5% each following year

Measure Class: Measure Type: Measure Frequency: Preferred Trend:

Frequency Comment: The COOP Assessment Review is a 24-component assessment tool that helps measure the viability of a COOP Plan. Assessment conducted in coordination with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management.

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: 2007 COOP Assessment Results (% out of 100)

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: Minimum of 75% or, if at 75%, increase the average by 5% each year

Data Source and Calculation: The COOP Assessment Review is a 24-component assessment tool that helps measure the viability of a COOP Plan. Assessment conducted in coordination with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management.