

## Agency Strategic Plan

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

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Biennium: 2010-12 ▼

**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.

**Agency Values**

- Communications Access  
*Ensuring communications access for all of our customers and in all state programs and services.*
- Making a Difference  
*Believing that everything we do can make a difference in the life of one person or many people.*
- Responsive  
*Being responsive to the concerns and issues raised by all of our customers.*
- Customer Service  
*Providing the highest level of customer service.*
- Valued Employees  
*Appreciating the diversity and skills of every member of our staff.*

**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. Notable achievements over the past biennium include the implementation of a more customer-friendly mechanism for the distribution of devices through the Technology Assistance Program (TAP), known as TAP Loan-to-Own (L2O), improvements in the administration of the Virginia Quality Assurance Screening Program for sign language interpreters, active involvement in efforts to improve communications access in emergency situations, and ongoing efforts by Outreach Specialists to meet the needs of local communities while participating in the implementation of L2O and Virginia Relay initiatives.
- *Summary of current productivity*  
With 14 authorized FTEs, VDDHH currently relies upon 9 full-time staff members (FTEs), 2 wage employees, and 4 contracted agencies (vendors) employing 15 Outreach Specialists statewide. The agency has 4 vacant FTE positions, 3

of which are not funded. 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 off-site in support of the Virginia Relay Services program.

VDDHH Outreach is a contract-centered program, providing outreach services through 11 contracts with four (4) vendors employing 15 contracted service providers, a full time Outreach Specialist (staff) in the VDDHH Central Office in Richmond, and the VDDHH Outreach Program Manager. Outreach contacts, documented on the monthly reports for FY09, totaled 121,089. 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 FY2009, the Virginia Quality Assurance Screening Program administered 220 Written Assessments and 272 Performance Assessments.

The Interpreter Services Program (ISP) coordinated 2484 requests for interpreter services for 192 state courts, 109 state and local agencies, twelve-step programs and other organizations during FY09. Of those 2,484 requests, 1,174 were for the state court system and 1,310 were for local and state agencies. Of these requests, 89 were not filled because no interpreters were available. As of July 1, 2009, the agency is contracted with 51 qualified interpreters and utilizes the services of 46 court-qualified interpreters, including 16 who hold special certificates for legal interpreting.

During fiscal year 2009, VDDHH successfully replaced its manual Technology Assistance Program (TAP) process with a new, on-line application procedure known as TAP Loan-to-Own, or simply L2O. Regional, contracted Outreach Specialists maintain a small inventory of devices and provide deaf and hard of hearing applicants with a thirty-day trial period to evaluate adaptive telecommunications equipment prior to application and receipt. Applications are then submitted on-line, and the previous four to six week waiting period for receiving equipment from a central location or vendor in the old process has been eliminated.

All Virginia Relay related Performance Measure goals from the last two years have been met or exceeded. Customer commendations for relay services provided from the Norton-based relay center remain high, while the number of complaints has continued to decrease. While traditional relay call volumes have steadily decreased nationwide, Virginia-based specialty calls such as Spanish relay and re-voiced calls for persons with speech-disabilities have increased. The number of captioned telephone (CapTel®) relay calls grows at an average rate of 11.2% annually.

### **Initiatives, Rankings and Customer Trends**

- *Summary of Major Initiatives and Related Progress*

Over the past 18 months, VDDHH has released a new educational curriculum to help hearing students develop a greater sensitivity to the communication methods used by persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, Deaf/Blind or speech impaired. From the anatomy and physiology of the ear to sign language and Deaf Culture, this program provides everything students and teachers need to fully immerse themselves in the Deaf experience. Written by a skilled classroom teacher in consultation with experts on hearing loss and Virginia Relay, and developed with classroom instructors' needs in mind, Kids Keeping in Touch features complete lesson plans that directly correlate to Virginia Standards of Learning, and provide students a balanced, thorough understanding of hearing loss, deaf culture and Virginia Relay. VDDHH contracted Outreach specialists are also available to conduct informative classroom presentations to reinforce lessons learned from the curriculum package. As of June 2009, half of the Commonwealth's approximately one thousand elementary schools have received copies of the curriculum.

- Improved Access to Virginia Quality Assurance Screening – The agency has completed initial pilot administration of the VQAS Written Assessment on-line at a remote site (Northern Virginia Community College), with positive results. Additional sites for the on-line Written Assessment will be added in the coming year. In addition, the agency continues to improve access for candidates for the Performance Assessment, with the addition of Spring Break Assessment slots and increased flexibility in the availability of Summer Slots. Processing of candidate results and diagnostic reports has also improved significantly over two years, with the wait time for results reduced from as much as 105 working days down to 65.7 working days. Diagnostic reports, which had previously taken as much as one year to reach the candidates, are now being completed within 90 working days as well.

- Emergency Preparedness for deaf and hard of hearing consumers continues to be a focus of Outreach activities. The Outreach Program Manager is actively involved as part of the Health and Human Resources (HHR) Agencies Emergency Preparedness Initiative. This workgroup, convened by the Secretary of HHR, is working to increase the awareness and preparedness activities for citizens of all abilities. Contracted Outreach Specialists continue to follow the lead of the Program Manager to raise the awareness of the need for communication access before, during, and after emergencies, the additional needs of this population for evacuations, and the need for specialized services in shelters.

- 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 heard of hearing, VDDHH continues to partner with key staff from the Department of Rehabilitative Services, Community Services Boards, and the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired to coordinate the Statewide Interagency Team (SIT). The SIT has focused on gathering input from consumers and service organizations statewide through a series of Town Hall meetings. The Town Hall meetings that were conducted during FY 08 and 09 resulted in hundreds of survey forms submitted to the SIT. Work continues at the monthly SIT meetings to compile and sort the survey responses. The final report is expected to be completed during FY10. In addition to the SIT, Regional Teams, comprising service providers from these and other local agencies serving our consumers, meet quarterly to coordinate services and improve communications between consumers and the service agencies. A SIT website is being developed to provide a forum for the State and Regional teams to post minutes of meetings, and to share information and resources.

- *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 such as those offered by VDDHH since there are no uniform program offerings across states other than 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 a discount 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 or surcharge 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.

Of the limited comparisons/rankings that can be determined, we are pleased to note that:

- Virginia Relay, the state's telecommunications relay service located in Norton, currently ranks 13th in the nation for the number of calls handled annually based on data from the National Exchange Carriers Association (NECA).
- Virginia is home to 277 interpreters certified by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID). By comparison, neighboring states can claim 321 (Maryland), 222 (North Carolina), 133 (Tennessee), 52 (South Carolina), and 18 (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.

We continue to be aware of the 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.

Another segment of the population that will likely seek our services is the growing number of veterans. As hearing loss is the most prevalent disability of returning armed forces personnel, VDDHH is very likely to be see an increase in service requests from these returning soldiers.

Changes in technology continue to impact consumer expectations of the agency. The use of wireless devices for basic communication among persons who are deaf continues to increase each year as does access to and use of internet-based video relay and interpreting services. Several states have added one or more wireless devices to their equipment distribution programs and VDDHH will need to evaluate the impact of such an addition to our Technology Assistance Program.

In addition, the agency continues to be concerned about the demand for Interpreter Services for 12-Step Programs, which VDDHH pays for since they are not covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Currently, the agency can only pay for one 12-step meeting per week per client, although we understand that, especially early in recovery, daily meetings are critical. The concern here is compounded by the limited availability of qualified interpreters who will accept 12-step assignments.

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 during 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 is also aware of the need to provide effective services to the growing Hispanic community in the state.

## 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.

- The Federal Communications Commission has recently stated their intent to postpone the transfer of administrative and financial responsibility of the growing internet-based relay services, including but not limited to video relay and internet captioned telephone relay, to state programs. This is potentially good news for state programs as the estimated cost to Virginia alone approaches \$10,000,000 annually, not including consideration for additional staffing that would be needed to assume the new federal mandate. This transfer is now believed to be up to four years or more years away.

- During the Spring of 2009, Virginia Relay launched a marketing campaign targeting Seniors with a hearing loss. A combination of print media and television spots feature relay services and adaptive telecommunications equipment that are available to this population. The very popular CapTel captioning telephone is highlighted in the campaign's materials, and Ultratec, Incorporated, the manufacturer of the CapTel device, is assisting VDDHH with the receipt and screening of calls and potential applicants. All costs associated with the campaign are being provided by the Commonwealth's two relay contractors, AT&T and Sprint. Sprint is also offering the CapTel phone to qualified consumers at a special price of \$99 for the duration of the campaign.

- 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.

- As opportunities for qualified sign language interpreters increase in the private sector as a result of Video Relay Services and Video Remote Interpreting, VDDHH will be faced with new challenges in filling requests from courts and state agencies. 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 1175 requests during the Fiscal Year 07, 1245 in FY08 and 1174 in FY09. As costs for interpreter services in courts continue to rise, VDDHH is working with the Supreme Court of Virginia to explore the effective use of Video Remote Interpreting in appropriate courtroom situations when no local interpreter is available.

- 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 promoting the provision of qualified interpreters in non-VDDHH coordinated situations, including private medical appointments. While VDDHH is limited by our Code authority and privacy laws in reaching out to medical professionals in response to patient specific requests, the agency is considering opportunities to address these concerns within our limited authority.

- Emergency Preparedness for deaf and hard of hearing consumers continues to be a priority. The Outreach Manager serves on the HHR Agencies Emergency Preparedness Workgroup and serves as the Chair of the Communications Sub-committee. A listserv is being developed that will enable VDDHH to post time-sensitive information related to emergencies to all subscribers. 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. VDDHH TAP is exploring adding wireless devices that will enable users to receive emergency alerts to the program.

### • *Summary of Potential Impediments to Achievement*

VDDHH faces a number of challenges which may limit our ability to satisfy expectations and achieve our mission.

One growing concern is the number of VDDHH staff who are at or near retirement eligibility. The agency is fortunate to have an experienced staff with excellent credentials but attention must be given to developing staff resources to replace those who will retire in the next three to ten years.

The challenges created by the recent economic downturn are significant as well. Not only is VDDHH faced with potentially significant budget reductions but demand for services can be expected to increase as consumers who are deaf or hard of hearing deal with the same factors that affect the general population and result in an increase in demand for services in general.

Another significant 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 revealed 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 2009 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.

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 courts or 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.

Finally, there continues to be a 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. VDDHH is frequently called upon to educate private providers (primarily doctors and lawyers) about the need to provide communications access at no additional cost to the consumer.

**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.)	3,065	678,600
Families, professionals and interested parties seeking information (served based on total Information and Referral requests/potential based on total projected population of VA)	25,007	7,200,000
Interpreters Seeking Credentials (VQAS)	262	2,869
State Agencies (Based on Interpreter Services Requests)	41	133
Technology Assistance Program (TAP) applicants(NOTE: Unduplicated count of applicants only. Due to database conversion, this reflects 10 months of services.	581	678,600
Virginia Courts	192	374
Virginia Relay Users (not an unduplicated count)	1,763,741	1,763,741

*Anticipated Changes To Agency Customer Base*  
 [Nothing entered]

**Partners**

<b>Partner</b>	<b>Description</b>
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.

• 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](http://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 contracts 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 five years, the number of TTY-based relay calls handled by the Norton center has decreased by over 58%. During this same period, the total number of relay calls made in Virginia, including internet-based relay calls, has increased by over 7%. The current percentage of total Virginia-based relay calls processed by the Norton center is now less than 35%; 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.
  - 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.
  - 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.

● **Anticipated Changes in Products or Services:**

The agency is negotiating with AT&T for an extension of the current contract for relay services through January of 2011, the last possible extension date for the current contract. As previously noted, AT&T has recently expressed concerns over continuing services from the Norton center after the current contract, citing the decreasing number of traditional relay minutes and the high costs of maintaining the unionized workforce. If the company decides not to continue services from the Norton center, the Commonwealth may find itself unable to comply with the federal mandate for the service. Since 1996, AT&T has been the only responsive bidder on the service. Other relay providers object to the location and minimum employment level requirements controlled by General Assembly Budget Language.

- The anticipated expansion 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 FY10 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.
- Extensive revisions to the agency website will 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. The addition of a ListServ will greatly enhance our communication capabilities to our consumers, enabling us to post timely information immediately available to our registered ListServ consumers.

Library Services has been impacted by several factors, including a decrease in patron activity as a result on increasing access to a variety of materials via the internet. Recent and anticipated budget reductions are also affecting Library Services. The library is staffed by a Library Assistant who is now assuming receptionist duties as much as 80% of the time. Volunteers play a key role in maintaining the library. The agency is reviewing options for reducing but not eliminating Library Services.

**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 2009, the VQAS program also received a funds 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 2011		FY 2012	
	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund
Base Budget	\$1,371,900	\$14,389,078	\$1,371,900	\$14,389,078
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Agency Total</b>	<b>\$1,371,900</b>	<b>\$14,389,078</b>	<b>\$1,371,900</b>	<b>\$14,389,078</b>

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

**Human Resources**

● **Overview**

VDDHH currently relies upon 1 At-Will Employee (the Director), 8 full time staff members (FTEs), 2 wage employees, and 4 contracted agencies (vendors) employing 15 Outreach specialists statewide. The agency currently has 4 vacant FTE positions, 3 of which are not currently funded. An additional MEL is transferred to the Department of Rehabilitative Services and funded through the DRS appropriation on an annual basis as part of our Memorandum of Agreement for provision of back-office/administrative functions. This MEL is included on the following chart as a Filled FTE however, it



should be clearly noted that this FTE resides at and is funded by DRS as part of that agency's IT services.

● *Human Resource Levels*

Effective Date	9/1/2009	
Total Authorized Position level	14	
Vacant Positions	-4	
<b>Current Employment Level</b>	<b>10.0</b>	
Non-Classified (Filled)	1	<i>breakout of Current Employment Level</i>
Full-Time Classified (Filled)	9	
Part-Time Classified (Filled)	0	
Faculty (Filled)	0	
Wage	2	
Contract Employees	0	
<b>Total Human Resource Level</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<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 current budget situation has forced the agency to eliminate a contracted temporary services staff person in an administrative support role. In addition, concerns about the budget led the agency to close a recent recruitment for the Interpreter Services Coordinator (which is the one currently funded vacant FTE), leaving the position vacant. Existing staff are covering the functions of these positions as we review our options for best utilization of that position.

**Information Technology**

● *Current Operational IT Investments:*

Since 1995, as part of a consolidation of back office services, VDDHH receives Information Technology Services from the Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS) through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

As part of the Memorandum of Understanding with DRS, VDDHH receives:

- data and voice communication networks for its facilities statewide in cooperation with VITA
- systems engineering services through VITA (Virginia Information Technology Agencies) including voice and data communications networks, hardware and computer support services
- computer applications development and support, and web services
- technology procurement, security, asset tracking, policy and mini-computer support services

The Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS) Agency Strategic Plan gives a detailed overview of the current state of IT for the Disability Service Agencies, which includes VDDHH.

IT services to the agency are provided by DRS using a MOU that identifies staff and expense for these services. The Agency is billed monthly by VITA for IT services. Since these expenses are reported by DRS, they are not included in the IT Budget summary table for VDDHH. Out-of-Scope cost for IT services not provided by DRS is estimated at \$10,000 for FY 2011. Application costs include TELCO.

The agency continues to be challenged to meet its annual VITA costs without additional funds.

VDDHH has proposed IT investments costs of \$37,122 for both fiscal years 2011 and 2012. These costs represent payments to DRS for the development and implementation of a comprehensive Fiscal Management System. Additional cost associated in training staff to use these new systems is not included in the table.

- *Factors Impacting the Current IT:*

VDDHH's MOU with the Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS) includes IT Support. Refer to DRS Agency Strategic Plan for detailed description of factors impacting agency IT.

- *Proposed IT Solutions:*

VDDHH's MOU with the Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS) includes IT Support. Refer to DRS Agency Strategic Plan for detailed description of factors impacting anticipated changes to agency IT.

- *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
<b>Estimated VITA Infrastructure</b>	<b>\$181</b>	<b>\$29,687</b>	<b>\$184</b>	<b>\$30,133</b>
Specialized Infrastructure	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Agency IT Staff	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Non-agency IT Staff	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Application Costs	\$10,000	\$0	\$10,000	\$0
<b>Agency IT Current Services</b>	<b>\$10,181</b>	<b>\$29,687</b>	<b>\$10,184</b>	<b>\$30,133</b>

*Comments:*

"Other App Costs" include TELCO. All other expenditures are reported in DRS IT Strategic Plan.

- *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	\$37,122	\$0	\$37,122	\$0
Agency-level IT Projects	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Major Stand Alone IT Procurements	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Non-major Stand Alone IT Procurements	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Proposed IT Investments</b>	<b>\$37,122</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$37,122</b>	<b>\$0</b>

● *Projected Total IT Budget*

	Cost - Year 1		Cost - Year 2	
	General Fund	Non-general Fund	General Fund	Non-general Fund
Current IT Services	\$10,181	\$29,687	\$10,184	\$30,133
Proposed IT Investments	\$37,122	\$0	\$37,122	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$47,303</b>	<b>\$29,687</b>	<b>\$47,306</b>	<b>\$30,133</b>

[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 10:04 am

Biennium: 2010-12 ▼

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 disabled. 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 \$14,000,000 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. Due to database conversion, this reflects 10 months of services.	Technology Assistance Program (TAP) applicants	581	6,786,000
Virginia Relay Users (not an unduplicated count)	Virginia Relay Calls (NOTE: This is calls handled ONLY - not customers)	1,763,741	1,763,741

Anticipated Changes To Agency Customer Base

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

- With the successful implementation of TAP L2O, application approval and equipment delivery has become much more effective and efficient over the past few months. Because customer intake and equipment distribution was limited during the final four months of calendar year 2008 for conversion to the L2O database, the number of TAP customers for fiscal year 2009 and beyond is expected to be greater than the 581 (unduplicated) served during fiscal year 2009.

- Under current TAP Regulations, customers may reapply for new equipment/technology every four years. In recent years, up to 57% of all applications were renewals; however, many traditional text relay users are now converting to internet-based relay services. As a result, renewal applications accounted for only 47% of applications processed in the most recent fiscal

year.

### 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

Current TAP Regulations severely limit the Department's ability to react to fluctuations in demand and resources. Promulgated over twenty years ago, the Regulations provide for replacement equipment every four years; newer devices have a much longer life span. Financial eligibility thresholds were generously established in the Regulations at 250% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Similar assistance programs in other state agencies are now set much lower. VDDHH intends to pursue changes to the Regulations during the 2010 fiscal year.

- Pending budget cuts may prevent VDDHH from processing all applications for financial assistance for the purchase of assistive devices during the current fiscal year. Waiting lists, not experienced in TAP since 2005, may need to be implemented again.
- Many of the devices provided through TAP are designed to operate on traditional, analog phone services. More and more locations are upgrading their phone service to bundled, internet or server-based high-speed lines. This is particularly true in assistive-living or skilled nursing facilities. Consumers are often confused by this issue and complicate the appropriate selection of equipment from the TAP program.
- 

#### Virginia Relay Oversight

The 2009 General Assembly revised the Budget Language associated with the relay service to lower the minimum employment level to ninety, with restrictions on hiring until the employment level reaches seventy-five. The revision provides the desired opportunities for significant cost savings for the Commonwealth; however, because the employment level is only reduced through attrition, such cost savings may take several years to be fully realized.

- The agency is negotiating with AT&T for an extension of the current contract for relay services through January of 2011, the last possible extension date for the current contract. As previously noted, AT&T has recently expressed concerns over continuing services from the Norton center after the current contract, citing the decreasing number of traditional relay minutes and the high costs of maintaining the unionized workforce. If the company decides not to continue services from the Norton center, the Commonwealth may find itself unable to comply with the federal mandate for the service. Since 1996, AT&T has been the only responsive bidder on the service. Other relay providers object to the location and minimum employment level requirements controlled by General Assembly Budget Language.
  - 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. The Federal Communication Commission has also been mandated by Congress to create a National Broadband Plan and deliver it by February 2010. The goal of this plan is to ensure that all citizens have access to broadband capability.
  - There are currently no federally-established minimum standards for VRS making it difficult for states to monitor answer response rates, interpreter skills, transmission quality, or most often, user complaints.
  - VRS connections for employees in business/office environments often present firewall/security issues and require substantial bandwidth usage from networks.
- *Anticipated Changes to the Products and/or Services*  
Technology Assistance Program

Due to the current migration by the deaf population from traditional telecommunication devices for the deaf (TTYs) to wireless devices with internet relay, instant messaging, and texting capabilities, many state equipment distribution programs similar to TAP are adding wireless communication devices to their offerings as a replacement for a TTY. Such programs provide financial assistance only for the purchase of the wireless device; the associated responsibility for monthly service charges for a (reduced cost) data-only plan is under contract between the individual and the wireless company. Such wireless devices also provide access to alerts from Emergency Management or other critical

and timely information. While such wireless devices clearly offer features and services beyond the scope of TAP, they are much less expensive to purchase and distribute than a TTY, and can offer a net cost savings to the state program. VDDHH is currently monitoring a trial Text Accessibility Program in Maryland's equipment program to determine potential savings.

- Virginia Relay Oversight

- Since 2004, the total number of all types of relay calls initiated in Virginia has steadily increased. During this same period, the number of traditional TTY-based relay calls processed at the Norton center has decreased by over 58%. This trend is consistent across the nation and reflects the relay consumer's preference for faster, more efficient internet-based or wireless relay services.
  - On a national basis, the number of CapTel relay calls will soon surpass the number of traditional TTY-based relay calls. This is due to two primary factors; the migration of TTY users to wireless and video relay alternatives and the growing number of Seniors who have difficulty using a standard or amplified telephone. With an 11.2% increase projected for CapTel relay and a 15.4% decrease in traditional relay projected in the current contract year, it is only a matter of time before this change will occur in Virginia.
  - Virginia Relay customers continue to benefit from the collaborative relationship between AT&T and VDDHH as we work to bring the latest in traditional relay features and services to the Commonwealth. Currently, any new feature or service AT&T develops for other states is first tested at the Norton center for a trial period. If successful, the new product is added to the Virginia platform at no additional cost to the Commonwealth. Previous examples of such new services are Relay Conferencing Services, Multi-user Relay Choice Profile, and Speech to Speech with Privacy.
- *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. After pre-screening, qualified applicants are loaned equipment for a period of 30 days to evaluate its ability to restore communications access; if successful, the equipment is assigned to the applicant. 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 proliferated 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 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 primary 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 2011		FY 2012		FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2011	FY 2012
	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund				
Base Budget	\$434,071	\$14,371,078	\$434,071	\$14,371,078				
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0				
Service Area Total	\$434,071	\$14,371,078	\$434,071	\$14,371,078				
Base Budget	\$434,071	\$14,371,078	\$434,071	\$14,371,078				
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0				
Service Area Total	\$434,071	\$14,371,078	\$434,071	\$14,371,078				
Base Budget	\$434,071	\$14,371,078	\$434,071	\$14,371,078				
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0				
Service Area Total	\$434,071	\$14,371,078	\$434,071	\$14,371,078				

**Human Resources**

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

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

The VDDHH Technology Programs Service Area is supported by two programs that provide access to telecommunication services and assistive technology for Virginia citizens. The first program, Virginia Relay, is a federally-mandated telecommunications relay service for persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, Deafblind, or speech disabled. It allows these individuals to use specialized telecommunication devices or features to communicate with standard telephone users. VDDHH is the federally-certified state entity to operate and provide oversight of these services. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) requires all states to report on the performance of their relay providers on a semi-annual basis. These reports include specific reference to relay customer complaints as well as compliance with FCC-regulated minimum service standards. The most critical of these standards in the average time it takes for a relay provider to answer an incoming call. The current FCC requirement is 85% of all incoming calls be answered in 10 seconds. The second VDDHH technology program area is the Technology Assistance Program (TAP) that provides financial assistance for the purchase of adaptive telecommunications equipment to persons with a hearing loss or speech disability. In the spring of 2009, VDDHH implemented a new TAP procedure and corresponding on-line database known as TAP Loan-to-Own, or simply L2O. With L2O, an applicant that meets residential and income criteria is loaned an adaptive communications device for a period of 30 days. At the end of those 30 days, if the device improves access to the telephone, the equipment is permanently assigned to the applicant. If not, it can be exchanged for a different device for another 30 day period. In the past few months, L2O has proven to be an effective and efficient program. The number of trips to a customer's workplace or home has been greatly reduced; almost all equipment returns and exchanges have been eliminated; and applicants are receiving their devices in a matter of days as opposed to up to six weeks from the old procedure. VDDHH has recently implemented a survey instrument to determine the level of customer satisfaction with the new program. Survey results will indicate the need for revising or improving current procedures as well as determining which devices in the program we should continue or replace in 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 continue daily oversight of current relay contractor compliance for FCC standards and state requirements through early 2011 • Report to FCC semi-annually on vendor performance and relay customer satisfaction. • During the Fall of 2009 and the Winter 2010, VDDHH will solicit input and recommendations for the deaf, hard of hearing, Deafblind and speech-disabled communities for inclusion in new contracts. • VDDHH and VITA will issue an RFP in the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2010 to establish new relay contracts in early calendar year 2011. • Quality assurance testing will be conducted during the first year of the new contracts. • Begin distribution of TAP L2O customer satisfaction survey instrument in the first quarter of fiscal year 2010 • Based on results of survey, modify Outreach contracts to enhance response and reporting requirements effective July 1, 2011. • Based on L2O customer feedback, consider revising list of standard equipment offerings for fiscal year 2011.

**Link to State Strategy**

- nothing linked

**Objective Measures**

- Percentage of incoming calls answered by Virginia Relay Contractors in ten (10) seconds or less.

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

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: Standard established in Federal Regulations

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description: Ensure higher than mandated percentage of calls answered in 10 seconds or less

Data Source and Calculation: This measure is calculated based on the percentage of incoming calls, including abandoned calls, answered by traditional relay and captioned telephone contractors within the federally-mandated ten-second connection period. Contracts require relay providers to report this information on a monthly basis.

- Percentage of Technology Assistance Program (TAP) applicants responding to a quarterly survey who report satisfaction with the service they received as good or excellent.

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

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: This is a new measure. The agency has sent a survey to customers who participated in TAP L2O in the last quarter of FY09 and data from that survey will be used to establish the baseline.

Measure Target Value:  Date:

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

Data Source and Calculation: The agency will calculate the percentage of respondents to the TAP L2O Customer Satisfaction Survey who indicate an average rating of service from the program as 3, 4 or 5 on a scale of 5 where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent. Surveys will be distributed by VDDHH to all program participants 30 days after receiving equipment through the TAP program.

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## Service Area Strategic Plan

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

3/11/2014 10:04 am

Biennium: 2010-12 ▼

## 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 ONLY - actual number served is undocumented)	2,484	678,600
Interpreters Seeking Credentials (VQAS)	Interpreters Seeking Credentials (Participated in FY 2005/Registered in Program History)	262	2,869
State Agencies (Based on Interpreter Services Requests)	State Agencies	41	133
Virginia Courts	Virginia Courts	192	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 and Court Qualified Interpreters	VDDHH contracts with qualified interpreters to provide interpreting services for state agencies who are also on the contract. In addition, the agency works with court-qualified interpreters who are not required to 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:*

Among the most critical assignments coordinated in the Interpreter Services Program are requests from Virginia Courts. The availability of highly qualified court interpreters varies significantly across the state and, in some areas, interpreters with the most appropriate certification for critical court cases must travel two hours or more each way in order to provide services.

VDDHH is unable to meet the full demand for interpreters for twelve-step programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous. Currently, the agency is able to pay for one interpreter per consumer per week. Generally speaking, particularly during the early stages of recovery, an addict should attend daily meetings. In addition to the funding limitations in this area, the number of interpreters who are able and willing to interpret for 12-step meetings is limited.

- 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. Significant improvement has been made in the administration of the VQAS over the past two years however, the testing materials used are more than ten years old and

- The Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA) has been adopted by the Virginia Department of Education as one of the standards for employment 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 Department of Education has asked VDDHH to become an EIPA administrator by registering with the national organization.

- 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. IN addition, we are limited in our ability to contact private medical providers to assist in meeting the communication needs of deaf patients because of health privacy laws.

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

The agency plans to begin tracking contacts from consumers requesting assistance in securing interpreter services for appointments with private health care providers. Currently, the agency will encourage the consumer to ask their health care provider to contact us for assistance and information. No follow up tracking has been done to evaluate the effectiveness of these efforts. In the coming biennium, VDDHH will develop a tracking mechanism based on follow-up with consumers to determine if services were provided.

Ongoing efforts to enhance the administration of the Virginia Quality Assurance Screening program will include the development of new assessment materials and expansion of the sites available to administer the online Written Assessment.

The agency expects to provide more interpreting services via remote access, either through the use of broadband or, for courts, ISDN video connections.

The agency anticipates scaling back Library Services in the coming biennium as budget reductions force us to consider efficiencies.

- 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 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 2011		FY 2012		FY 2011	FY 2012
General	Nongeneral	General	Nongeneral		

	Fund	Fund	Fund	Fund
Base Budget	\$600,679	\$18,000	\$600,679	\$18,000
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Service Area Total</b>	<b>\$600,679</b>	<b>\$18,000</b>	<b>\$600,679</b>	<b>\$18,000</b>
Base Budget	\$600,679	\$18,000	\$600,679	\$18,000
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Service Area Total</b>	<b>\$600,679</b>	<b>\$18,000</b>	<b>\$600,679</b>	<b>\$18,000</b>

**Human Resources**

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

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

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

**Service Area Objectives**

- 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**



- Partner with organizations/agencies (such as the Virginia Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf) 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. .
- Annually, contact all certified interpreters in Virginia who have email addresses listed on the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) website, to inform them about the VDDHH interpreter services contract and opportunities for court interpreting. • 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

- 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.

- Percentage of returning Virginia Quality Assurance Screening Candidates whose survey responses indicate they used feedback from their Diagnostic Feedback Report to prepare for the assessment and whose Performance Assessment scores show an improvement.

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 and tracking methodology and begin collecting data for the baseline in FY 2010.

Measure Target Value:  Date:

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

Data Source and Calculation: This measure will be calculated by adding a data item to information provided by returning candidates to determine if they have used Diagnostic Feedback from a previous assessment to prepare for a subsequent one. The Rater Summary sheet prepared for each candidate will be marked and the percentage of candidates who used the feedback and whose scores improved since the previous assessment will be calculated.

- Number of Qualified Sign Language Interpreters Eligible and Available to accept VDDHH Coordinated assignments in Virginia Courts.

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

- Cost efficiency in providing Interpreter Services to Virginia courts, state agencies and 12-Step programs.

Measure Class:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: Cost per request in FY2007

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description:

Data Source and Calculation: Total cost of providing interpreter services, including all administrative costs by VDDHH (numerator) divided by total number of interpreter requests coordinated by VDDHH (denominator). This will give the total average cost per request coordinate

- 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 represents only a small portion of the total need for such services 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 and impact the provision of interpreters in both public and private sectors.

#### Alignment to Agency Goals

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

#### Objective Strategies

- ○ Begin formal tracking of requests for services in private sector and follow-up to determine success. 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. Contact Virginia interpreters identified on the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf as certified and provide Directory Release forms.

#### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

#### Objective Measures

- Percentage of Eligible Qualified Interpreters who have provided authorization to include their names and contact information in the VDDHH Directory of Qualified Interpreters

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

Measure Baseline Description: This is a new measure. The baseline will be determined at the end of FY10.

Measure Target Value:  Date:

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

Data Source and Calculation: The number of eligible interpreters will represent the number of VA interpreters identified on the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) website as qualified by VA standards and the number of interpreters with current valid VA Quality Assurance Screening levels. The measure will be calculated based on the percentage of that base number of interpreters who are submit release forms to be listed in the Directory Of Qualified Interpreters each year.

- Percentage of Consumers who request assistance in securing interpreter services in private health care settings who report that such services were provided after VDDHH assistance.

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

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: This is a new measure. Baseline to be determined in FY10.

Measure Target Value:  Date:

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

Data Source and Calculation: Using Tracking Spreadsheet to capture requests received and responses to follow up with consumers (To be developed), calculate the percentage of consumers who report that services were provided in the situation.

- Number of "hits" on the VDDHH Directory of Qualified Interpreters online.

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 hits on the VDDHH website for the Directory of Qualified Interpreters.

- 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 objective will focus on the provision of services related to effective communication in state agencies, specifically Interpreter Services and CART services by encouraging the participation of state agencies in the VDDHH contract for interpreter services and encouraging the active use of that contract by agencies.

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

#### Objective Strategies

- Promote VDDHH Contract for Interpreter Services to agencies via Communique, Agency Heads meetings and other avenues. Send quarterly reminders and tips to agencies who participate in the contract. Encourage consumers to request interpreting services from agencies who participate in the contract by publicizing that information through Outreach and the VDDHH website.

#### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

#### Objective Measures

- Percentage of state agencies, colleges and universities and their local counterparts participating in the VDDHH Interpreter Services Contract who utilize the contract to secure interpreter services.

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

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: This is a new measure. Baseline will be established in FY10.

Measure Target Value:  Date:

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

Data Source and Calculation: Using data available from eVA and the Department of Accounts showing payments to VDDHH contracted interpreters, we will calculate the percentage of contracted agencies who utilize these services annually.

- 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

- Percentage of Virginia Quality Assurance Screening (VQAS) Candidates who respond to the quarterly survey indicating that they are "satisfied" or "very satisfied" overall with the VQAS process, from registration through results.

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 disseminated quarterly.

- Average Number of Working Days from the date a Virginia Quality Assurance Screening Candidate participates in the Performance Assessment until the date that candidate's Results are mailed

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 calculated based on the number of working days (excluding weekends, holidays and emergency closings) between candidate assessment date and the results completed date. Data source is the rater summary sheet showing 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 an Outreach Specialist Evaluation form and provide this form to consumers attending or participating in a variety of Outreach activities, including formal presentations, training activities, and TAP. An on-line version of this form is posted on the VDDHH Website. A separate evaluation form, with emphasis on the TAP program, will be mailed to consumers following assignment of equipment. An on-line version of this form is also linked on the Technology Main Page of the VDDHH website.

#### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

#### Objective Measures

- Percentage of respondents to Outreach Services Survey who rate services received as "Very Good" or "Excellent"

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

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: To Be Determined after implementation of new satisfaction survey

Measure Target Description: 90% 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.

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## Service Area Strategic Plan

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

3/11/2014 10:04 am

Biennium: 2010-12 ▼

## 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	41	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:*  
[Nothing entered]
- *Anticipated Changes to the Products and/or Services*  
[Nothing entered]
- *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 2011		FY 2012	
	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund
Base Budget	\$337,150	\$0	\$337,150	\$0
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Service Area Total</b>	<b>\$337,150</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$337,150</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**Human Resources**

- *Human Resources Overview*

[Nothing entered]

- *Human Resource Levels*

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

- *Factors Impacting HR*

[Nothing entered]

- *Anticipated HR Changes*

[Nothing entered]

**Service Area Objectives**

- 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: 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: 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.

#### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

#### Objective Measures

- Percent of administrative measures marked as “meets expectations” (green indicator) for the agency.

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

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: The FY09 score of the agency.

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description:

Data Source and Calculation: There are currently 13 administrative measures organized into five categories. Each measure has a different data source. Agencies should refer to the administrative measures data source information table to locate the data source for each measure. The table is located in Virginia Performs / Agency Planning and Performance / Administrative Measures. Calculation: Agencies select the appropriate colored indicator (green, yellow, red) for each measure, depending on results. A gray indicator is used for measures where data are unavailable. The agency administration measure is the percent of the administrative measures that have a green indicator (meets expectations). Exclude items with a gray indicator from the calculation

- 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 regular communication with the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, and other Commonwealth Preparedness Working Group agencies.

#### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

#### Objective Measures

- Agency Preparedness Assessment Score

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: 67.5 Date: 6/30/2009

Measure Baseline Description: VDDHH score on 2009 Preparedness Assessment

Measure Target Value: 75 Date: 6/30/2012

Measure Target Description:

Data Source and Calculation: The Agency Preparedness Assessment is an all-hazards assessment tool that measures agencies' compliance with requirements and best practices. The assessment has components including Physical Security, Continuity of Operations, Information Security, Vital Records, Fire Safety, Human Resources, Risk Management and Internal Controls, and the National Incident Management System (for Virginia Emergency Response Team – VERT - agencies only).