

*The primary goal of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services is to ensure safety, well-being, and permanency for children and to help families achieve and maintain a positive environment.*

*People who are deaf/hard of hearing have the right to:*

- *Clear communication*
- *Interpreter services*
- *Auxiliary aids*
- *DCFS information*
- *Participation in plans*
- *Specialized services*
- *Appeals*



## Contact Information

### DCFS Deaf Services Coordinator

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#### Chicago Area:

TTY/VP: 312-814-4117  
Voice: 866-327-8877

#### DeKalb Area:

VP: 815-787-5322  
TTY: 815-787-5304  
Voice: 815-787-5300

### DCFS Advocacy Office for Children and Families

TTY: 800-513-4980  
Phone: 800-232-3798

### Child Abuse Hotline

TTY: 800-358-5117  
Phone: 800-252-2873

### Foster Parent Hotline

TTY: 800-572-2390  
Phone: 800-624-5437

### Youth Hotline

TTY: 800-513-4980  
Phone: 800-232-3798

Printed by Authority of the State of Illinois  
DCFS #651 – January 2008 – 3,000 Copies  
CFS 1050-62-1

# Know Your Rights as a Deaf/Hard of Hearing Client



## DCFS is here to help

The primary goal of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is to ensure safety, well-being, and permanency for children and to help families achieve and maintain a positive environment.

### DCFS has the responsibility to:

- Identify your communication needs
- Provide interpreter services
- Provide auxiliary aids
- Provide information about the DCFS process and your children
- Ensure your understanding
- Include you in the planning process
- Provide equal access to supportive services
- Address your appeals



## What kind of help will I receive from DCFS?

If you are deaf/hard of hearing, you have the following rights:

- **CLEAR COMMUNICATION**  
DCFS is required by law to identify and document from the very first contact that you are deaf/hard of hearing and what form of communication you use. Your communication needs must be met and reviewed on a regular basis, especially at Administrative Case Reviews.
- **INTERPRETER SERVICES**  
It is not appropriate or legal to use family members or friends as interpreters for any purpose including investigations of abuse or neglect, court hearings, child and family meetings, visits or appeals. DCFS will provide a certified interpreter to you *at no cost*.
- **AUXILIARY AIDS**  
You are entitled to communication aids such as flashing monitors and alerts to ensure the safety of your children.
- **INFORMATION**  
You are entitled to a clear understanding of the DCFS process. If your child is placed in foster care, DCFS will inform you by use of an

interpreter or a TTY/TDD of any critical decisions and the right to appeal these decisions.

- **SUPPORTIVE SERVICES**  
You are entitled to equal access to supportive services that meet your communication needs including counseling, homemakers, and drug and alcohol treatment programs. If your child is deaf/hard of hearing and in foster care, DCFS will provide your child's foster parents with supportive services including equipment used to facilitate communication with your child.
- **APPEALS OR COMPLAINTS**  
You have the right to appeal a service decision through the DCFS Advocacy Office at TYY 800-513-4980 or file a complaint of discrimination at the Office of Affirmative Action at 312-814-4692.

*you have a **RIGHT** to understand and be understood whenever you communicate with someone employed by or providing services for DCFS.*