



# Deaf and Hard of Hearing Employees

UNDERSTANDING AND WORKING WITH THEM

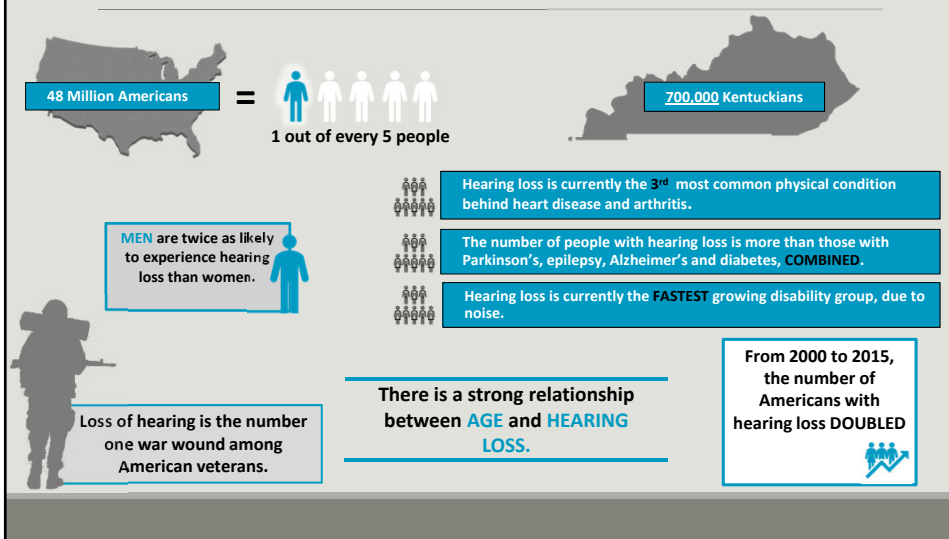
KC2HH  
Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

## Who Am I?

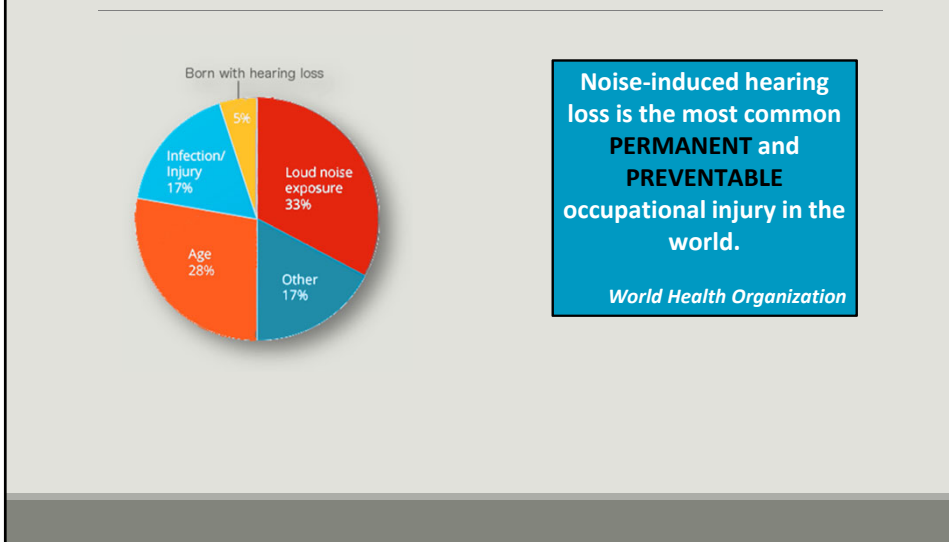


- Diagnosed with profound hearing loss at 8 yrs old
- Educated in the public school system with no accommodations
- Attended Gallaudet University
- Graduated from Eastern Ky University
- Mom of two adult daughters, both with hearing loss
- Executive Director, KY Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- President Emeritus, KY Hands & Voices
- Board member, National Hands & Voices
- Advisory Board member-
  - KY Early Hearing Detection & Intervention (EHDI)
  - Governors Office of Early Childhood (GOEC)

## Who Has a Hearing Loss



## What Causes Hearing Loss



# Deaf or Hard of Hearing?

MANY variables determine how hearing loss will affect an individual, their communication needs, and ultimately how they identify themselves.

- Age of onset
- Type of Hearing Loss
- Degree of Hearing Loss

## Acceptable

- ✓ Deaf
- ✓ Hard of Hearing
- ✓ Late Deafened
- ✓ DeafBlind
- ✓ Deaf w/ Limited Vision
- ✓ Deaf Plus

## Not- Acceptable

- ⊗ Hearing-Impaired
- ⊗ Deaf-Mute
- ⊗ Deaf & Dumb
- ⊗ Death
- ⊗ Handicapped





**\*\*SITUATIONAL DEAFNESS\*\***

# Myths

- ⊗ Individuals who can speak clearly, can hear.
- ⊗ All people with a hearing loss can lip read.
- ⊗ Hearing aids and cochlear implants correct hearing loss.
- ⊗ Shouting can allow a deaf/hard of hearing person to hear.
- ⊗ All deaf and hard of hearing individuals use sign language to communicate.

**FALSE**

# American Sign Language

-  Used primarily by Deaf and Hard of Hearing Americans and Canadians.
-  Distinct visual language with its own grammar and syntax.
-  ASL has no written form.
-  Recognized by many states as a modern language for public schools and universities.



# The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)



The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) makes it unlawful to discriminate in employment against a qualified individual with a disability.

Employers, whether public, private, state and local government agencies, employment agencies, or labor organizations are required under the ADA to provide auxiliary aids and services to ensure effective communication with deaf and hard of hearing employees.

This law applies to ALL employment related activities, including but not limited to:

- ✓ Interview Process
- ✓ Hiring
- ✓ Orientation
- ✓ Trainings
- ✓ Meetings
- ✓ Evaluations
- ✓ Conference Calls
- ✓ Disciplinary Actions/Firing

# Reasonable Accommodation

Reasonable accommodation is any adjustment to a job or work environment that allows a qualified applicant or employee with a disability to participate in the job application process, perform the essential functions of a job, or enjoy benefits and privileges of employment equal to those of employees without disabilities.

**Employers are required to provide reasonable accommodation to a qualified applicant/employee with a disability unless they can show that doing so would create undue hardship.**

- ✓ *providing or modifying equipment or devices*
- ✓ *job restructuring*
- ✓ *adjusting or modifying examinations, training materials, or policies*
- ✓ *providing readers and interpreters*
- ✓ *making the workplace readily accessible to and usable by people with disabilities.*

# Assistive Technology



# INTERPRETERS

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- ❖ Knowing some sign language is NOT the same as being an interpreter.
- ❖ Interpreters are highly skilled professionals with specialized expertise.
- ❖ Kentucky has a licensure law that requires the use of **LICENSED** interpreters.
- ❖ Family members should not be allowed to interpret.

## A Word of Warning

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### WRITTEN NOTES

Tiring, Time Consuming, Incomplete

**USE ONLY WHEN NECESSARY FOR  
SIMPLE & BRIEF MESSAGES**

Typing or using a dictation app may be  
more effective and efficient.



### LIP READING

Research has proven that lip reading  
**AT BEST** is only 30%-35%  
accurate.

This leaves a 65%-70%  
margin of error!



# Communication Tips

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Get the persons attention before you speak.

Speak slowly and clearly but do not over exaggerate.

Look directly at the person when you speak and maintain eye contact.

Don't put anything in or around your mouth when speaking.

If at first you don't succeed, try again. If you fail the second time, try to rephrase it.

Use facial expressions, body language and pantomime.

Write simple notes. Emphasize the important information.

Use technology to make written communication easier, ie. Email, Text, Apps, Wireless Devices.

Remember...Take your time. Patience is the key.



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