

# Hearing Loss

There are many degrees of hearing loss.

**People who have hearing loss may be:**

- Deaf (a person with profound hearing loss)
- Deafened (a person who has become deaf later in life)
- Hard of hearing (a person who has some hearing loss)

Using words	
Don't say	Say
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the deaf</li><li>• the hearing impaired</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a person who is deaf</li><li>• a person who is deafened</li><li>• a person who is hard of hearing</li></ul>

People with profound hearing loss may communicate using sign language. Other people may use assistive devices, such as hearing aids, to communicate.

## Tips on how to interact with people with hearing loss

- Always ask how you can help. Don't shout.
- Attract the person's attention before speaking. The best way is a gentle touch on the shoulder or gently waving your hand.
- Make sure you are in a well-lighted area where the person can see your face.
- Look at and speak directly to the person. Address them, not their interpreter.
- If necessary, ask if another method of communicating would be easier, for example a pen and paper.
- Don't put your hands in front of your face when speaking.
- Be clear and precise when giving directions, and repeat or rephrase if necessary. Make sure you have been understood.
- Don't touch or address service animals — they are working and have to pay attention at all times.
- Any personal (e.g., financial) matters should be discussed in a private room to avoid other people overhearing.
- Be patient. Communication for people who are deaf may be different because their first language may not be English. It may be American Sign Language (ASL) or Langue des signes québécoise (LSQ).
- If the person uses a hearing aid, try to speak in a quiet area. Background noise can be distracting.