

**256C.233 DUTIES OF STATE AGENCIES.**

Subdivision 1. **Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Services Division.** The commissioners of human services, education, employment and economic development, and health shall create a distinct and separate organizational unit to be known as the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Services Division to address the developmental, social, educational, and occupational needs of deaf, deafblind, and hard-of-hearing persons through a statewide network of collaborative services and by coordinating the promulgation of public policies, regulations, legislation, and programs affecting deaf, deafblind, and hard-of-hearing persons. An interdepartmental management team shall advise the activities of the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Services Division. The commissioner of human services shall coordinate the work of the interagency management team and receive legislative appropriations for the division.

Subd. 2. **Responsibilities.** The Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Services Division shall:

(1) establish and maintain a statewide network of regional service centers for deaf, deafblind, and hard-of-hearing Minnesotans;

(2) assist the Departments of Human Services, Education, and Employment and Economic Development to coordinate the promulgation and implementation of public policies, regulations, legislation, programs, and services affecting deaf, deafblind, and hard-of-hearing persons; and

(3) provide a coordinated system of statewide interpreting or interpreter referral services.

Subd. 3. **Health.** The commissioner of health shall establish standards for screening for hearing loss with special emphasis on screening of persons from birth through school age and persons over age 65.

Subd. 4. **State commissioners.** The commissioners of all state agencies shall consult with the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Services Division concerning the promulgation of public policies, regulations, and programs necessary to address the needs of deaf, deafblind, and hard-of-hearing Minnesotans. Each state agency shall consult with the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Services Division concerning the need to forward legislative initiatives to the governor to address the concerns of deaf, deafblind, and hard-of-hearing Minnesotans.

**History:** 1996 c 392 s 2; 1999 c 149 s 2,3; 2003 c 130 s 12; 2004 c 206 s 36; 2009 c 86 art 1 s 89