

# Hearing Impairments

## State Definition

an impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child's educational performance but that is not included under the definition of deafness.

## District Eligibility Criteria

### Hearing Impairment

The term hearing impairment includes any degree of hearing loss ranging from mild to profound. A certified audiologist must confirm hearing loss. Adverse effect on learning will vary depending on the degree of loss. The child with a hearing impairment may have difficulty using language, which adversely affects many or all areas of classroom performance as well as social development.

### Hard of Hearing

The term hard of hearing refers to a hearing impairment that is less severe than the loss of totally deaf children but generally permits the use of the auditory channel to process information.

### Deaf

The term deaf is a hearing impairment that is so severe that it impairs the child's ability to process linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification.

### Residual Hearing

The amount of hearing a student has and the way the student uses that hearing receptively. This varies widely, can be independent of the student's actual hearing loss, and has impact on learning and educational performance.

### Minimal (Borderline) 16-25 dB HL

The student may have difficulty hearing faint or distant speech. The student may or may not use personal amplification. Background noise may have a negative effect on listening.

### Mild 26-40 dB HL

The degree of difficulty experienced in school will depend upon the noise level in the classroom, distance from the teacher and configuration of hearing loss. May or may not need amplification.

### Moderate 41-55 dB HL

Is likely to have delayed or defective syntax, limited vocabulary, imperfect speech production and atonal voice quality. The student will benefit from amplification.

### Moderate to Severe 56-70 dB HL

The student will have marked difficulty in school situations requiring verbal communication in both one-to-one and group situations. Delayed language, syntax, reduced speech intelligibility and atonal voice quality are likely. Amplification needed. May or may not need sign language.

**Severe 71-90 dB HL**

If loss is of pre-lingual onset, oral language and speech may not have developed spontaneously or may be severely delayed. If loss is of recent onset, speech is likely to deteriorate with quality becoming atonal. Amplification and sign language are necessary.

**Profound 91 dB HL or more**

Speech and language will not develop spontaneously and is likely to deteriorate rapidly if hearing loss is of recent onset. Amplification may or may not be effective. Sign language is necessary.

**Unilateral; one normal hearing ear and one ear with at least permanent mild hearing loss**

Usually has difficulty localizing sounds and voices. Unilateral listener may have greater difficulty understanding speech when environment is noisy and/or reverberant. May or may not have an adverse effect on learning. Amplification may or may not be needed.

**Adverse Educational Effect**

The impairment must have a direct and adverse effect on the child's ability to make adequate educational progress without special education and related services.