

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



## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

### **DCFS Deaf Services Coordinator**

Division of Clinical Services  
Rebecca Patton  
406 E. Monroe St., Sta. 50  
Springfield, IL 62701  
rebecca.patton@illinois.gov

217-785-2651

### **DCFS Advocacy Office for Children and Families**

800-232-3798

### **Child Abuse Hotline**

800-252-2873

### **Foster Parent Hotline**

800-624-5437

### **Youth Hotline**

800-232-3798

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



Illinois Department of  
**DCFS**  
Children & Family Services

## 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 licensed 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 relay 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 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.*