

36.3

ARTICLE 2

36.4

DEAF, DEAFBLIND, AND HARD-OF-HEARING SERVICES

36.5 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.21, is amended to read:

36.6 **256C.21 DEAF, DEAFBLIND, AND HARD-OF-HEARING SERVICES ACT;**
36.7 **CITATION.**

36.8 Sections 256C.21 to ~~256C.26~~ 256C.261 may be cited as the "Deaf, DeafBlind, and
36.9 Hard-of-Hearing Services Act."

36.10 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective August 1, 2024.

36.11 Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.23, subdivision 1a, is amended to read:

36.12 Subd. 1a. **Culturally affirmative.** "Culturally affirmative" describes services that are
36.13 designed and delivered within the context of the culture, identity, language, communication,
36.14 and life experiences of ~~a person~~ persons who is are deaf, ~~a person~~ persons who is are
36.15 deafblind, and ~~a person~~ persons who is are hard-of-hearing.

36.16 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective August 1, 2024.

36.17 Sec. 3. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.23, is amended by adding a subdivision to
36.18 read:

36.19 Subd. 1b. **Linguistically affirmative.** "Linguistically affirmative" describes services
36.20 that are designed and delivered within the context of the language and communication
36.21 experiences of persons who are deaf, persons who are deafblind, and persons who are
36.22 hard-of-hearing.

36.23 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective August 1, 2024.

36.24 Sec. 4. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.23, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

36.25 Subd. 2. **Deaf.** "Deaf" means a hearing loss ~~of such severity that the individual must~~
36.26 ~~depend~~ where the person communicates primarily on visual communication such as through
36.27 American Sign Language or ~~other~~ another signed language, visual and manual means of
36.28 ~~communication such as~~ signing systems in English ~~or~~, Cued Speech, reading and writing,
36.29 speech reading, and gestures or other visual communication.

36.30 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective August 1, 2024.

36.31 Sec. 5. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.23, subdivision 2a, is amended to read:

36.32 Subd. 2a. **Hard-of-hearing.** "Hard-of-hearing" means a hearing loss ~~resulting in a~~
36.33 ~~functional loss of hearing, but not to the extent that the individual must depend~~ where the
36.34 person does not communicate primarily upon through visual communication.
36.35

29.7

ARTICLE 2

29.8

DEAF, DEAFBLIND, AND HARD-OF-HEARING SERVICES

29.9 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.21, is amended to read:

29.10 **256C.21 DEAF, DEAFBLIND, AND HARD-OF-HEARING SERVICES ACT;**
29.11 **CITATION.**

29.12 Sections 256C.21 to ~~256C.26~~ 256C.261 may be cited as the "Deaf, DeafBlind, and
29.13 Hard-of-Hearing Services Act."

29.14 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective August 1, 2024.

29.15 Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.23, subdivision 1a, is amended to read:

29.16 Subd. 1a. **Culturally affirmative.** "Culturally affirmative" describes services that are
29.17 designed and delivered within the context of the culture, identity, language, communication,
29.18 and life experiences of ~~a person~~ persons who is are deaf, ~~a person~~ persons who is are
29.19 deafblind, and ~~a person~~ persons who is are hard-of-hearing.

29.20 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective August 1, 2024.

29.21 Sec. 3. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.23, is amended by adding a subdivision to
29.22 read:

29.23 Subd. 1b. **Linguistically affirmative.** "Linguistically affirmative" describes services
29.24 that are designed and delivered within the context of the language and communication
29.25 experiences of persons who are deaf, persons who are deafblind, and persons who are
29.26 hard-of-hearing.

29.27 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective August 1, 2024.

30.1 Sec. 4. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.23, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

30.2 Subd. 2. **Deaf.** "Deaf" means a hearing loss ~~of such severity that the individual must~~
30.3 ~~depend~~ where the person communicates primarily on visual communication such as through
30.4 American Sign Language or ~~other~~ another signed language, visual and manual means of
30.5 ~~communication such as~~ signing systems in English ~~or~~, Cued Speech, reading and writing,
30.6 speech reading, and gestures or other visual communication.

30.7 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective August 1, 2024.

30.8 Sec. 5. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.23, subdivision 2a, is amended to read:

30.9 Subd. 2a. **Hard-of-hearing.** "Hard-of-hearing" means a hearing loss ~~resulting in a~~
30.10 ~~functional loss of hearing, but not to the extent that the individual must depend~~ where the
30.11 person does not communicate primarily upon through visual communication.

37.6 EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective August 1, 2024.

37.7 Sec. 6. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.23, subdivision 2b, is amended to read:

37.8 Subd. 2b. **Deafblind.** "Deafblind" means any combination of vision and hearing loss
37.9 ~~which interferes with acquiring information from the environment to the extent that~~
37.10 ~~compensatory~~ where the person uses visual, auditory, or tactile strategies and skills ~~are~~
37.11 ~~necessary~~ such as the use of a tactile form of a visual or spoken language to access ~~that~~
37.12 ~~communication, information from the environment, or other information.~~

37.13 EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective August 1, 2024.

37.14 Sec. 7. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.23, subdivision 2c, is amended to read:

37.15 Subd. 2c. **Interpreting services.** "Interpreting services" means services that include:

37.16 (1) interpreting between a spoken language, such as English, and a visual language, such
37.17 as American Sign Language or another signed language;

37.18 (2) interpreting between a spoken language and a visual representation of a spoken
37.19 language, such as Cued Speech ~~and~~ or signing systems in English;

37.20 (3) interpreting within one language where the interpreter ~~uses natural gestures and~~
37.21 ~~silently repeats the spoken message, replacing some words or phrases to give higher visibility~~
37.22 ~~on the lips~~ make the message more readable;

37.23 (4) interpreting using low vision or tactile methods, signing systems, or signed languages
37.24 for persons who ~~have a combined hearing and vision loss or are deafblind;~~ and

37.25 (5) interpreting from one communication mode or language into another communication
37.26 mode or language that is linguistically and culturally appropriate for the participants in the
37.27 communication exchange.

37.28 EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective August 1, 2024.

38.1 Sec. 8. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.23, subdivision 6, is amended to read:

38.2 Subd. 6. **Real-time captioning.** "Real-time captioning" means a method of captioning
38.3 in which ~~a caption is~~ captions are simultaneously prepared and displayed or transmitted at
38.4 the time of origination by specially trained real-time captioners.

38.5 EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective August 1, 2024.

38.6 Sec. 9. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.23, subdivision 7, is amended to read:

38.7 Subd. 7. **Family and community intervener.** "Family and community intervener"
38.8 means a ~~paraprofessional, person who is~~ specifically trained in deafblindness, ~~who and~~
38.9 works one-on-one with a child who is deafblind to provide critical ~~connections~~ access to
38.10 language, communication, people, and the environment.

30.12 EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective August 1, 2024.

30.13 Sec. 6. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.23, subdivision 2b, is amended to read:

30.14 Subd. 2b. **Deafblind.** "Deafblind" means any combination of vision and hearing loss
30.15 ~~which interferes with acquiring information from the environment to the extent that~~
30.16 ~~compensatory~~ where the person uses visual, auditory, or tactile strategies and skills ~~are~~
30.17 ~~necessary~~ such as the use of a tactile form of a visual or spoken language to access ~~that~~
30.18 ~~communication, information from the environment, or other information.~~

30.19 EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective August 1, 2024.

30.20 Sec. 7. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.23, subdivision 2c, is amended to read:

30.21 Subd. 2c. **Interpreting services.** "Interpreting services" means services that include:

30.22 (1) interpreting between a spoken language, such as English, and a visual language, such
30.23 as American Sign Language or another signed language;

30.24 (2) interpreting between a spoken language and a visual representation of a spoken
30.25 language, such as Cued Speech ~~and~~ or signing systems in English;

30.26 (3) interpreting within one language where the interpreter ~~uses natural gestures and~~
30.27 ~~silently repeats the spoken message, replacing some words or phrases to give higher visibility~~
30.28 ~~on the lips~~ make the message more readable;

30.29 (4) interpreting using low vision or tactile methods, signing systems, or signed languages
30.30 for persons who ~~have a combined hearing and vision loss or are deafblind;~~ and

31.1 (5) interpreting from one communication mode or language into another communication
31.2 mode or language that is linguistically and culturally appropriate for the participants in the
31.3 communication exchange.

31.4 EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective August 1, 2024.

31.5 Sec. 8. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.23, subdivision 6, is amended to read:

31.6 Subd. 6. **Real-time captioning.** "Real-time captioning" means a method of captioning
31.7 in which ~~a caption is~~ captions are simultaneously prepared and displayed or transmitted at
31.8 the time of origination by specially trained real-time captioners.

31.9 EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective August 1, 2024.

31.10 Sec. 9. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.23, subdivision 7, is amended to read:

31.11 Subd. 7. **Family and community intervener.** "Family and community intervener"
31.12 means a ~~paraprofessional, person who is~~ specifically trained in deafblindness, ~~who and~~
31.13 works one-on-one with a child who is deafblind to provide critical ~~connections~~ access to
31.14 language, communication, people, and the environment.

38.11 EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective August 1, 2024.

38.12 Sec. 10. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.233, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

38.13 Subdivision 1. ~~Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard-of-Hearing~~ **Hard of Hearing State Services**

38.14 **Division.** The commissioners of commerce, education, employment and economic

38.15 development, and health shall advise partner with the commissioner of human services on

38.16 the interagency activities of the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard-of-Hearing Hard of Hearing

38.17 State Services Division. This division addresses the developmental and social-emotional

38.18 needs of provides services for persons who are deaf, persons who are deafblind, and persons

38.19 who are hard-of-hearing through a statewide network of programs, services, and supports.

38.20 This division also advocates on behalf of and provides information and training about how

38.21 to best serve persons who are deaf, persons who are deafblind, and persons who are

38.22 hard-of-hearing. The commissioner of human services shall coordinate the work of the

38.23 interagency advisers and partners, receive legislative appropriations for the division, and

38.24 provide grants through the division for programs, services, and supports for persons who

38.25 are deaf, persons who are deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing in identified areas

38.26 of need such as deafblind services, family services, interpreting services, and mental health

38.27 services.

38.28 EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective August 1, 2024.

38.29 Sec. 11. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.233, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

38.30 Subd. 2. **Responsibilities.** The Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard-of-Hearing **Hard of Hearing**

38.31 **State Services Division** shall:

39.1 (1) establish and maintain a statewide network of regional culturally and linguistically

39.2 affirmative services for Minnesotans who are deaf, Minnesotans who are deafblind, and

39.3 Minnesotans who are hard-of-hearing;

39.4 (2) work across divisions within the Department of Human Services, as well as with

39.5 other agencies and counties, to ensure that there is an understanding of:

39.6 (i) the communication access challenges faced by persons who are deaf, persons who

39.7 are deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing;

39.8 (ii) the best practices for accommodating and ~~mitigating~~ addressing communication

39.9 access challenges; and

39.10 (iii) the legal requirements for providing access to and effective communication with

39.11 persons who are deaf, persons who are deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing;

39.12 (3) assess the supply and demand statewide for ~~interpreter~~ interpreting services and

39.13 real-time captioning services, implement strategies to provide greater access to these services

39.14 in areas without sufficient supply, and build the base of partner with interpreting service

39.15 providers and real-time captioning service providers across the state;

31.15 EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective August 1, 2024.

31.16 Sec. 10. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.233, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

31.17 Subdivision 1. ~~Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard-of-Hearing~~ **Hard of Hearing State Services**

31.18 **Division.** The commissioners of commerce, education, employment and economic

31.19 development, and health shall advise partner with the commissioner of human services on

31.20 the interagency activities of the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard-of-Hearing Hard of Hearing

31.21 State Services Division. This division addresses the developmental and social-emotional

31.22 needs of provides services for persons who are deaf, persons who are deafblind, and persons

31.23 who are hard-of-hearing through a statewide network of programs, services, and supports.

31.24 This division also advocates on behalf of and provides information and training about how

31.25 to best serve persons who are deaf, persons who are deafblind, and persons who are

31.26 hard-of-hearing. The commissioner of human services shall coordinate the work of the

31.27 interagency advisers and partners, receive legislative appropriations for the division, and

31.28 provide grants through the division for programs, services, and supports for persons who

31.29 are deaf, persons who are deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing in identified areas

31.30 of need such as deafblind services, family services, interpreting services, and mental health

31.31 services.

32.1 EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective August 1, 2024.

32.2 Sec. 11. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.233, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

32.3 Subd. 2. **Responsibilities.** The Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard-of-Hearing **Hard of Hearing**

32.4 **State Services Division** shall:

32.5 (1) establish and maintain a statewide network of regional culturally and linguistically

32.6 affirmative services for Minnesotans who are deaf, Minnesotans who are deafblind, and

32.7 Minnesotans who are hard-of-hearing;

32.8 (2) work across divisions within the Department of Human Services, as well as with

32.9 other agencies and counties, to ensure that there is an understanding of:

32.10 (i) the communication access challenges faced by persons who are deaf, persons who

32.11 are deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing;

32.12 (ii) the best practices for accommodating and ~~mitigating~~ addressing communication

32.13 access challenges; and

32.14 (iii) the legal requirements for providing access to and effective communication with

32.15 persons who are deaf, persons who are deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing;

32.16 (3) assess the supply and demand statewide for ~~interpreter~~ interpreting services and

32.17 real-time captioning services, implement strategies to provide greater access to these services

32.18 in areas without sufficient supply, and build the base of partner with interpreting service

32.19 providers and real-time captioning service providers across the state;

39.16 (4) maintain a statewide information resource that includes contact information and
39.17 professional ~~certification credentials~~ certifications of interpreting service providers and
39.18 real-time captioning service providers;

39.19 (5) provide culturally and linguistically affirmative mental health services to persons
39.20 who are deaf, persons who are deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing who:

39.21 (i) use a visual language such as American Sign Language, another sign language, or a
39.22 tactile form of a visual language; or

39.23 (ii) otherwise need culturally and linguistically affirmative ~~therapeutic~~ mental health
39.24 services;

39.25 (6) research and develop best practices and recommendations for emerging issues; and

39.26 (7) provide as much information as practicable on the division's stand-alone website in
39.27 American Sign Language; and.

39.28 (8) ~~report to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with~~
39.29 ~~jurisdiction over human services biennially, beginning on January 1, 2019, on the following:~~

39.30 (i) ~~the number of regional service center staff, the location of the office of each staff~~
39.31 ~~person, other service providers with which they are colocated, the number of people served~~
39.32 ~~by each staff person and a breakdown of whether each person was served on-site or off-site,~~
40.1 ~~and for those served off-site, a list of locations where services were delivered and the number~~
40.2 ~~who were served in person and the number who were served via technology;~~

40.3 (ii) ~~the amount and percentage of the division budget spent on reasonable~~
40.4 ~~accommodations for staff;~~

40.5 (iii) ~~the number of people who use demonstration equipment and consumer evaluations~~
40.6 ~~of the experience;~~

40.7 (iv) ~~the number of training sessions provided by division staff, the topics covered, the~~
40.8 ~~number of participants, and consumer evaluations, including a breakdown by delivery~~
40.9 ~~method such as in-person or via technology;~~

40.10 (v) ~~the number of training sessions hosted at a division location provided by another~~
40.11 ~~service provider, the topics covered, the number of participants, and consumer evaluations,~~
40.12 ~~including a breakdown by delivery method such as in person or via technology;~~

40.13 (vi) ~~for each grant awarded, the amount awarded to the grantee and a summary of the~~
40.14 ~~grantee's results, including consumer evaluations of the services or products provided;~~

40.15 (vii) ~~the number of people on waiting lists for any services provided by division staff~~
40.16 ~~or for services or equipment funded through grants awarded by the division;~~

32.20 (4) maintain a statewide information resource that includes contact information and
32.21 professional ~~certification credentials~~ certifications of interpreting service providers and
32.22 real-time captioning service providers;

32.23 (5) provide culturally and linguistically affirmative mental health services to persons
32.24 who are deaf, persons who are deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing who:

32.25 (i) use a visual language such as American Sign Language, another sign language, or a
32.26 tactile form of a visual language; or

32.27 (ii) otherwise need culturally and linguistically affirmative ~~therapeutic~~ mental health
32.28 services;

32.29 (6) research and develop best practices and recommendations for emerging issues; and

32.30 (7) provide as much information as practicable on the division's stand-alone website in
32.31 American Sign Language; and.

33.1 (8) ~~report to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with~~
33.2 ~~jurisdiction over human services biennially, beginning on January 1, 2019, on the following:~~

33.3 (i) ~~the number of regional service center staff, the location of the office of each staff~~
33.4 ~~person, other service providers with which they are colocated, the number of people served~~
33.5 ~~by each staff person and a breakdown of whether each person was served on-site or off-site,~~
33.6 ~~and for those served off-site, a list of locations where services were delivered and the number~~
33.7 ~~who were served in person and the number who were served via technology;~~

33.8 (ii) ~~the amount and percentage of the division budget spent on reasonable~~
33.9 ~~accommodations for staff;~~

33.10 (iii) ~~the number of people who use demonstration equipment and consumer evaluations~~
33.11 ~~of the experience;~~

33.12 (iv) ~~the number of training sessions provided by division staff, the topics covered, the~~
33.13 ~~number of participants, and consumer evaluations, including a breakdown by delivery~~
33.14 ~~method such as in-person or via technology;~~

33.15 (v) ~~the number of training sessions hosted at a division location provided by another~~
33.16 ~~service provider, the topics covered, the number of participants, and consumer evaluations,~~
33.17 ~~including a breakdown by delivery method such as in person or via technology;~~

33.18 (vi) ~~for each grant awarded, the amount awarded to the grantee and a summary of the~~
33.19 ~~grantee's results, including consumer evaluations of the services or products provided;~~

33.20 (vii) ~~the number of people on waiting lists for any services provided by division staff~~
33.21 ~~or for services or equipment funded through grants awarded by the division;~~

40.17 ~~(viii) the amount of time staff spent driving to appointments to deliver direct one-to-one~~
40.18 ~~client services in locations outside of the regional service centers; and~~

40.19 ~~(ix) the regional needs and feedback on addressing service gaps identified by the advisory~~
40.20 ~~committees.~~

40.21 EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective August 1, 2024.

40.22 Sec. 12. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.24, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

40.23 Subdivision 1. **Location.** The Deaf, DeafBlind, and ~~Hard-of-Hearing~~ Hard of Hearing
40.24 State Services Division shall establish at least six regional service centers for persons who
40.25 are deaf, persons who are deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing. The centers shall
40.26 be distributed regionally to provide access for persons who are deaf, persons who are
40.27 deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing in all parts of the state.

40.28 EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective August 1, 2024.

40.29 Sec. 13. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.24, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

40.30 Subd. 2. **Responsibilities.** Each regional service center shall:

41.1 (1) employ qualified staff to work with persons who are deaf, persons who are deafblind,
41.2 and persons who are hard-of-hearing;

41.3 ~~(1) (2) establish connections and collaborations and explore colocating with other public~~
41.4 ~~and private entities providing services to persons who are deaf, persons who are deafblind,~~
41.5 ~~and persons who are hard-of-hearing in the region;~~

41.6 ~~(2) (3) for those in need of services, assist in coordinating services between service~~
41.7 ~~providers and persons who are deaf, persons who are deafblind, and persons who are~~
41.8 ~~hard-of-hearing, and the persons' families, and make referrals to the services needed;~~

41.9 ~~(3) employ staff trained to work with persons who are deaf, persons who are deafblind,~~
41.10 ~~and persons who are hard-of-hearing;~~

41.11 (4) if adequate or accessible services are not available from another public or private
41.12 service provider in the region, provide individual culturally and linguistically affirmative
41.13 assistance with service supports and solutions to persons who are deaf, persons who are
41.14 deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing, and the persons' families. ~~Individual~~
41.15 ~~culturally affirmative assistance may be provided using technology only in areas of the state~~
41.16 ~~where a person has access to sufficient quality telecommunications or broadband services~~
41.17 ~~to allow effective communication. When a person who is deaf, a person who is deafblind,~~
41.18 ~~or a person who is hard-of-hearing does not have access to sufficient telecommunications~~
41.19 ~~or broadband service, individual assistance shall be available in person;~~

41.20 (5) identify regional training and resource needs, ~~work with deaf and hard-of-hearing~~
41.21 ~~services training staff, and collaborate with others to~~ and deliver training and resources for
41.22 persons who are deaf, persons who are deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing, and

33.22 ~~(viii) the amount of time staff spent driving to appointments to deliver direct one-to-one~~
33.23 ~~client services in locations outside of the regional service centers; and~~

33.24 ~~(ix) the regional needs and feedback on addressing service gaps identified by the advisory~~
33.25 ~~committees.~~

33.26 EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective August 1, 2024.

33.27 Sec. 12. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.24, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

33.28 Subdivision 1. **Location.** The Deaf, DeafBlind, and ~~Hard-of-Hearing~~ Hard of Hearing
33.29 State Services Division shall establish at least six regional service centers for persons who
33.30 are deaf, persons who are deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing. The centers shall
33.31 be distributed regionally to provide access for persons who are deaf, persons who are
33.32 deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing in all parts of the state.

34.1 EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective August 1, 2024.

34.2 Sec. 13. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.24, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

34.3 Subd. 2. **Responsibilities.** Each regional service center shall:

34.4 (1) employ qualified staff to work with persons who are deaf, persons who are deafblind,
34.5 and persons who are hard-of-hearing;

34.6 ~~(1) (2) establish connections and collaborations and explore colocating with other public~~
34.7 ~~and private entities providing services to persons who are deaf, persons who are deafblind,~~
34.8 ~~and persons who are hard-of-hearing in the region;~~

34.9 ~~(2) (3) for those in need of services, assist in coordinating services between service~~
34.10 ~~providers and persons who are deaf, persons who are deafblind, and persons who are~~
34.11 ~~hard-of-hearing, and the persons' families, and make referrals to the services needed;~~

34.12 ~~(3) employ staff trained to work with persons who are deaf, persons who are deafblind,~~
34.13 ~~and persons who are hard-of-hearing;~~

34.14 (4) if adequate or accessible services are not available from another public or private
34.15 service provider in the region, provide individual culturally and linguistically affirmative
34.16 assistance with service supports and solutions to persons who are deaf, persons who are
34.17 deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing, and the persons' families. ~~Individual~~
34.18 ~~culturally affirmative assistance may be provided using technology only in areas of the state~~
34.19 ~~where a person has access to sufficient quality telecommunications or broadband services~~
34.20 ~~to allow effective communication. When a person who is deaf, a person who is deafblind,~~
34.21 ~~or a person who is hard-of-hearing does not have access to sufficient telecommunications~~
34.22 ~~or broadband service, individual assistance shall be available in person;~~

34.23 (5) identify regional training and resource needs, ~~work with deaf and hard-of-hearing~~
34.24 ~~services training staff, and collaborate with others to~~ and deliver training and resources for
34.25 persons who are deaf, persons who are deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing, and

41.23 the persons' families, and other service providers about subjects including the persons' rights
41.24 under the law, American Sign Language, and the impact of hearing loss and options for
41.25 accommodating it;

41.26 (6) have a mobile or permanent lab where persons who are deaf, persons who are
41.27 deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing can try a selection of ~~modern~~ assistive
41.28 technology, telecommunications equipment, and other technology and equipment to
41.29 determine what would best meet the persons' needs;

41.30 (7) collaborate with ~~the Resource Center for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Persons,~~
41.31 ~~other divisions of the Department of Education and local school districts to develop and~~
41.32 ~~deliver programs and services for~~ provide information and resources to families with children
41.33 who are deaf, children who are deafblind, or children who are hard-of-hearing and to ~~support~~
41.34 school personnel serving these children;

42.1 (8) provide training, resources, and consultation to ~~the social service or income~~
42.2 ~~maintenance staff employed by counties or by organizations with whom counties contract~~
42.3 ~~for services to ensure that~~ human services providers about communication barriers which
42.4 prevent access and other needs of persons who are deaf, persons who are deafblind, and
42.5 persons who are hard-of-hearing ~~from using services are removed;~~

42.6 (9) provide training to human service agencies in the region regarding program access
42.7 for persons who are deaf, persons who are deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing;

42.8 ~~(10)~~ (9) assess the ongoing need and supply of services for persons who are deaf, persons
42.9 who are deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing in all parts of the state;; annually
42.10 consult with the division's advisory committees to identify regional needs and solicit feedback
42.11 on addressing service gaps;; and ~~cooperate~~ collaborate with public and private service
42.12 providers ~~to develop these services~~ on service solutions;

42.13 ~~(11)~~ (10) provide culturally and linguistically affirmative mental health services to
42.14 persons who are deaf, persons who are deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing who:

42.15 (i) use a visual language such as American Sign Language, another sign language, or a
42.16 tactile form of a visual language; or

42.17 (ii) otherwise need culturally and linguistically affirmative ~~therapeutic~~ mental health
42.18 services; and

42.19 ~~(12)~~ (11) establish partnerships with state and regional entities statewide ~~that have the~~
42.20 ~~technological capacity~~ to provide Minnesotans with virtual access to the division's services
42.21 and ~~division-sponsored~~ training via through technology.

42.22 EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective August 1, 2024.

34.26 the persons' families, and other service providers about subjects including the persons' rights
34.27 under the law, American Sign Language, and the impact of hearing loss and options for
34.28 accommodating it;

34.29 (6) have a mobile or permanent lab where persons who are deaf, persons who are
34.30 deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing can try a selection of ~~modern~~ assistive
34.31 technology, telecommunications equipment, and other technology and equipment to
34.32 determine what would best meet the persons' needs;

35.1 (7) collaborate with ~~the Resource Center for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Persons,~~
35.2 ~~other divisions of the Department of Education and local school districts to develop and~~
35.3 ~~deliver programs and services for~~ provide information and resources to families with children
35.4 who are deaf, children who are deafblind, or children who are hard-of-hearing and to ~~support~~
35.5 school personnel serving these children;

35.6 (8) provide training, resources, and consultation to ~~the social service or income~~
35.7 ~~maintenance staff employed by counties or by organizations with whom counties contract~~
35.8 ~~for services to ensure that~~ human services providers about communication barriers which
35.9 prevent access and other needs of persons who are deaf, persons who are deafblind, and
35.10 persons who are hard-of-hearing ~~from using services are removed;~~

35.11 (9) provide training to human service agencies in the region regarding program access
35.12 for persons who are deaf, persons who are deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing;

35.13 ~~(10)~~ (9) assess the ongoing need and supply of services for persons who are deaf, persons
35.14 who are deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing in all parts of the state;; annually
35.15 consult with the division's advisory committees to identify regional needs and solicit feedback
35.16 on addressing service gaps;; and ~~cooperate~~ collaborate with public and private service
35.17 providers ~~to develop these services~~ on service solutions;

35.18 ~~(11)~~ (10) provide culturally and linguistically affirmative mental health services to
35.19 persons who are deaf, persons who are deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing who:

35.20 (i) use a visual language such as American Sign Language, another sign language, or a
35.21 tactile form of a visual language; or

35.22 (ii) otherwise need culturally and linguistically affirmative ~~therapeutic~~ mental health
35.23 services; and

35.24 ~~(12)~~ (11) establish partnerships with state and regional entities statewide ~~that have the~~
35.25 ~~technological capacity~~ to provide Minnesotans with virtual access to the division's services
35.26 and ~~division-sponsored~~ training via through technology.

35.27 EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective August 1, 2024.

42.23 Sec. 14. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.24, subdivision 3, is amended to read:

42.24 Subd. 3. **Advisory committee.** The director of the Deaf, ~~DeafBlind, and Hard-of-Hearing~~
42.25 Hard of Hearing State Services Division shall appoint eight advisory committees of up to
42.26 nine persons per advisory committee. Each committee shall represent a specific region of
42.27 the state. The director shall determine the boundaries of each advisory committee region.
42.28 The committees shall advise the director on the needs of persons who are deaf, persons who
42.29 are deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing and service gaps in the region of the
42.30 state the committee represents. Members shall include persons who are deaf, persons who
42.31 are deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing, persons who have communication
42.32 disabilities, parents of children who are deaf, parents of children who are deafblind, and
42.33 parents of children who are hard-of-hearing, parents of children who have communication
43.1 disabilities, and representatives of county and regional human services, including
43.2 representatives of private service providers. At least 50 percent of the members must be
43.3 deaf or deafblind or hard-of-hearing or have a communication disability. Committee members
43.4 shall serve for a three-year term, ~~and may be appointed to.~~ Committee members shall serve
43.5 no more than three consecutive terms and no more than nine years in total. Each advisory
43.6 committee shall elect a chair. The director of the Deaf, ~~DeafBlind, and Hard-of-Hearing~~
43.7 Hard of Hearing State Services Division ~~shall may~~ assign staff to serve as nonvoting members
43.8 of the committee. Members shall not receive a per diem. Otherwise, the compensation,
43.9 removal of members, and filling of vacancies on the committee shall be as provided in
43.10 section 15.0575.

43.11 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective August 1, 2024.

43.12 Sec. 15. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.26, is amended to read:

43.13 **256C.26 EMPLOYMENT SERVICES.**

43.14 The commissioner of employment and economic development shall work with the Deaf,
43.15 ~~DeafBlind, and Hard-of-Hearing~~ Hard of Hearing State Services Division to develop and
43.16 implement a plan to deal with the underemployment of persons who are deaf, persons who
43.17 are deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing persons.

43.18 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective August 1, 2024.

43.19 Sec. 16. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.261, is amended to read:

43.20 **256C.261 SERVICES FOR PERSONS WHO ARE DEAFBLIND.**

43.21 (a) The commissioner of human services shall use at least ~~35~~ 60 percent of the deafblind
43.22 services biennial base level grant funding for programs, services, and other supports for a
43.23 ~~child~~ adults who are deafblind and for children who is are deafblind and the child's family
43.24 children's families. ~~The commissioner shall use at least 25 percent of the deafblind services~~
43.25 ~~biennial base level grant funding for services and other supports for an adult who is deafblind.~~

43.26 The commissioner shall award grants for the purposes of:

35.28 Sec. 14. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.24, subdivision 3, is amended to read:

35.29 Subd. 3. **Advisory committee.** The director of the Deaf, ~~DeafBlind, and Hard-of-Hearing~~
35.30 Hard of Hearing State Services Division shall appoint eight advisory committees of up to
35.31 nine persons per advisory committee. Each committee shall represent a specific region of
35.32 the state. The director shall determine the boundaries of each advisory committee region.
36.1 The committees shall advise the director on the needs of persons who are deaf, persons who
36.2 are deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing and service gaps in the region of the
36.3 state the committee represents. Members shall include persons who are deaf, persons who
36.4 are deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing, persons who have communication
36.5 disabilities, parents of children who are deaf, parents of children who are deafblind, and
36.6 parents of children who are hard-of-hearing, parents of children who have communication
36.7 disabilities, and representatives of county and regional human services, including
36.8 representatives of private service providers. At least 50 percent of the members must be
36.9 deaf or deafblind or hard-of-hearing or have a communication disability. Committee members
36.10 shall serve for a three-year term, ~~and may be appointed to.~~ Committee members shall serve
36.11 no more than three consecutive terms and no more than nine years in total. Each advisory
36.12 committee shall elect a chair. The director of the Deaf, ~~DeafBlind, and Hard-of-Hearing~~
36.13 Hard of Hearing State Services Division ~~shall may~~ assign staff to serve as nonvoting members
36.14 of the committee. Members shall not receive a per diem. Otherwise, the compensation,
36.15 removal of members, and filling of vacancies on the committee shall be as provided in
36.16 section 15.0575.

36.17 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective August 1, 2024.

36.18 Sec. 15. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.26, is amended to read:

36.19 **256C.26 EMPLOYMENT SERVICES.**

36.20 The commissioner of employment and economic development shall work with the Deaf,
36.21 ~~DeafBlind, and Hard-of-Hearing~~ Hard of Hearing State Services Division to develop and
36.22 implement a plan to deal with the underemployment of persons who are deaf, persons who
36.23 are deafblind, and persons who are hard-of-hearing persons.

36.24 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective August 1, 2024.

36.25 Sec. 16. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.261, is amended to read:

36.26 **256C.261 SERVICES FOR PERSONS WHO ARE DEAFBLIND.**

36.27 (a) The commissioner of human services shall use at least ~~35~~ 60 percent of the deafblind
36.28 services biennial base level grant funding for programs, services, and other supports for a
36.29 ~~child~~ adults who are deafblind and for children who is are deafblind and the child's family
36.30 children's families. ~~The commissioner shall use at least 25 percent of the deafblind services~~
36.31 ~~biennial base level grant funding for services and other supports for an adult who is deafblind.~~

36.32 **(b)** The commissioner shall award grants for the purposes of:

43.27 ~~(f)~~ providing programs, services, and supports to persons who are deafblind; ~~and,~~
43.28 ~~(2) developing and providing training to counties and the network of senior citizen~~
43.29 ~~service providers. The purpose of the training grants is to teach counties how to use existing~~
43.30 ~~programs that capture federal financial participation to meet the needs of eligible persons~~
43.31 ~~who are deafblind and to build capacity of senior service programs to meet the needs of~~
43.32 ~~seniors with a dual sensory hearing and vision loss.~~

44.1 (b) The commissioner may make grants:

44.2 (1) for services and training provided by organizations to persons who are deafblind;
44.3 ~~and~~

44.4 (2) to develop and administer consumer-directed services; for persons who are deafblind;
44.5 ~~and~~

44.6 (3) to develop and provide training to counties and service providers on how to meet
44.7 the needs of persons who are deafblind.

44.8 ~~(c) Consumer-directed services shall must be provided in whole by grant-funded~~
44.9 ~~providers. The Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Services Division's regional service centers shall~~
44.10 ~~not provide any aspect of a grant-funded consumer-directed services program.~~

44.11 ~~(d) Any entity that is able to satisfy the grant criteria is eligible to receive a grant under~~
44.12 ~~paragraph (a).~~

44.13 ~~(e) (d)~~ Deafblind service providers may, but are not required to, provide ~~intervener~~
44.14 ~~intervener~~ services as part of the service package provided with grant funds under this
44.15 section. Intervener services include services provided by a family and community intervener
44.16 as described in paragraph ~~(f)~~ (e).

44.17 ~~(f) (e)~~ The family and community intervener, as defined in section 256C.23, subdivision
44.18 7, provides services to open channels of communication between the child and others;
44.19 facilitates the development or use of receptive and expressive communication skills by the
44.20 child; and develops and maintains a trusting, interactive relationship that promotes social
44.21 and emotional well-being. The family and community intervener also provides access to
44.22 information and the environment; and facilitates opportunities for learning and development.
44.23 A family and community intervener must have specific training in deafblindness, building
44.24 language and communication skills, and intervention strategies.

44.25 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective August 1, 2024.

44.26 Sec. 17. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.28, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

44.27 Subdivision 1. **Membership.** (a) The Commission of the Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of
44.28 Hearing consists of ~~seven ten~~ members appointed at large and one member each from ~~each~~
44.29 up to five advisory ~~committee~~ committees established under section 256C.24, subdivision
44.30 3. At least 50 percent of the voting members must be deaf or deafblind or hard-of-hearing.

37.1 ~~(f)~~ providing programs, services, and supports to persons who are deafblind; ~~and,~~
37.2 ~~(2) developing and providing training to counties and the network of senior citizen~~
37.3 ~~service providers. The purpose of the training grants is to teach counties how to use existing~~
37.4 ~~programs that capture federal financial participation to meet the needs of eligible persons~~
37.5 ~~who are deafblind and to build capacity of senior service programs to meet the needs of~~
37.6 ~~seniors with a dual sensory hearing and vision loss.~~

37.7 ~~(b) (c)~~ The commissioner may make grants:

37.8 (1) for services and training provided by organizations to persons who are deafblind;
37.9 ~~and~~

37.10 (2) to develop and administer consumer-directed services; for persons who are deafblind;
37.11 ~~and~~

37.12 (3) to develop and provide training to counties and service providers on how to meet
37.13 the needs of persons who are deafblind.

37.14 ~~(e) (d)~~ Consumer-directed services shall must be provided in whole by grant-funded
37.15 providers. The Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Services Division's regional service centers shall
37.16 not provide any aspect of a grant-funded consumer-directed services program.

37.17 ~~(d) Any entity that is able to satisfy the grant criteria is eligible to receive a grant under~~
37.18 ~~paragraph (a).~~

37.19 ~~(e)~~ Deafblind service providers may, but are not required to, provide ~~intervener~~ intervener
37.20 services as part of the service package provided with grant funds under this section. Intervener
37.21 services include services provided by a family and community intervener as described in
37.22 paragraph (f).

37.23 ~~(f)~~ The family and community intervener, as defined in section 256C.23, subdivision 7,
37.24 provides services to open channels of communication between the child and others; facilitates
37.25 the development or use of receptive and expressive communication skills by the child; and
37.26 develops and maintains a trusting, interactive relationship that promotes social and emotional
37.27 well-being. The family and community intervener also provides access to information and
37.28 the environment; and facilitates opportunities for learning and development. A family and
37.29 community intervener must have specific training in deafblindness, building language and
37.30 communication skills, and intervention strategies.

37.31 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective August 1, 2024.

38.1 Sec. 17. Minnesota Statutes 2022, section 256C.28, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

38.2 Subdivision 1. **Membership.** (a) The Commission of the Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of
38.3 Hearing consists of ~~seven ten~~ members appointed at large and one member each from ~~each~~
38.4 up to five advisory ~~committee~~ committees established under section 256C.24, subdivision
38.5 3. At least 50 percent of the voting members must be deaf or deafblind or hard-of-hearing.

44.31 Members shall include ~~persons who are deaf, deafblind, and hard-of-hearing, parents at~~
44.32 ~~least one parent or guardian of children a person who are is deaf, deafblind, and or~~
45.1 ~~hard-of-hearing, and representatives of county and regional human services, including~~
45.2 ~~representatives of private service providers. The commissioners of education, health, human~~
45.3 ~~rights, and employment and economic development and the director of the Deaf and~~
45.4 ~~Hard-of-Hearing Services Division in the Department of Human Services, or their designees,~~
45.5 ~~shall serve as ex officio, nonvoting members of the commission. The commission may~~
45.6 ~~appoint additional ex officio members from other bureaus, divisions, or sections of state~~
45.7 ~~departments directly concerned with the provision of services to persons who are deaf,~~
45.8 ~~deafblind, or hard-of-hearing.~~

45.9 (b) ~~Commission~~ Voting members of the commission are appointed by the governor for
45.10 a four-year term and until successors are appointed and qualify. ~~Commission~~ Voting members
45.11 of the commission shall serve no more than three consecutive full terms, ~~and no more than~~
45.12 ~~12 years in total.~~

45.13 (c) Annually, by January 31, the commission shall select one member as chair and one
45.14 member as vice-chair to serve until January 31 of the following year or until the commission
45.15 selects a new chair or vice-chair, whichever occurs later.

38.6 Members shall include ~~persons who are deaf, deafblind, and hard-of-hearing, parents at~~
38.7 ~~least one parent or guardian of children a person who are is deaf, deafblind, and or~~
38.8 ~~hard-of-hearing, and representatives of county and regional human services, including~~
38.9 ~~representatives of private service providers. The commissioners of education, health, and~~
38.10 ~~employment and economic development and the director of the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard~~
38.11 ~~of Hearing State Services Division in the Department of Human Services, or their designees,~~
38.12 ~~shall serve as ex officio, nonvoting members of the commission. The commission may~~
38.13 ~~appoint additional ex officio members from other bureaus, divisions, or sections of state~~
38.14 ~~departments directly concerned with the provision of services to persons who are deaf,~~
38.15 ~~deafblind, or hard-of-hearing.~~

38.16 ~~Commission~~ (b) Voting members of the commission are appointed by the governor for
38.17 a four-year term and until successors are appointed and qualify. ~~Commission~~ Voting members
38.18 of the commission shall serve no more than three consecutive full terms, ~~and no more than~~
38.19 ~~12 years in total.~~

38.20 (c) Annually, by January 31, the commission shall select one member as chair and one
38.21 member as vice-chair to serve until January 31 of the following year or until the commission
38.22 selects a new chair or vice-chair, whichever occurs later.