

The Deaf and Hard of Hearing Population in Colorado

This information is an estimate based on information from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that estimates approximately 8.6% of the United States population 3 years of age and older were reported not to have total hearing acuity. The Colorado population estimate is from the U.S. Census Bureau annual population estimate.

Colorado Estimated Deaf and Hard of Hearing Population		
CO Census (2012)	Total Colorado Residents	5,187,582
Deaf and Hard of Hearing	(5,187,582 x 8.6%)	446,132
Deaf	(5,187,582 x 0.9%)	46,688
Hard of Hearing	(5,187,582 x 7.7%)	399,444

FACTS ABOUT THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

- ◆ More than 26.9 million Americans are deaf or hard of hearing. (8.6% of the population)
- ◆ One in three people know someone who is deaf or hard of hearing.
- ◆ Age of onset of deafness or hearing loss: 5.4% before age 3; 14.2% between 3 and 18; 76.3% 19 and over
- ◆ Causes of deafness and hearing loss: 33.7% noise; 28% age; 17.1% infection or injury; 4.4% present from birth
- ◆ For all ages, 10.5% percent of men and 6.8% of women are deaf or hard of hearing.
- ◆ Since 1980, hearing loss associated with excessive noise has tripled. An estimated 20% of young people are regularly exposed to excessive volumes of loud music.
- ◆ 1.3 million people are exposed to excessive levels of noise at work. The number of people with noise-induced hearing loss has tripled since 1980. It is the most common occupational injury.
- ◆ Only 30% of all spoken sounds are visible on the lips, adding to the challenge of lip-reading.
- ◆ It is commonly assumed that lip-reading is widely used by the deaf and hard of hearing as a method of communication. In reality most use little or no lip-reading.

FACTS ABOUT DEAF PEOPLE

- ◆ 65% of deaf people were born deaf, 27% became deaf before age 3; and 8% became deaf after 3.
- ◆ 93 percent of deaf children are born into hearing families.
- ◆ Approximately 1 of every 1,000 infants is born deaf, while 6 of every 1,000 infants are born hard of hearing.
- ◆ Children who are born deaf are sometimes called “prelingually” deaf, because they were deaf before they acquired language.

FACTS ABOUT HARD OF HEARING PEOPLE

- ◆ 20-30% of hearing loss in children occurs during infancy or early childhood.
- ◆ Age-related hearing loss often begins around age 45-50, and 55% of people over 60 are deaf or hard of hearing.
- ◆ Hearing loss is 7 times more prevalent for persons over 65 than for those under 65.
- ◆ Hearing loss is the third most common condition in the older population, after hypertension and arthritis
- ◆ The hearing aid is the second most widely used assistive technology equipment, after the walking cane. More than 70% of hearing aid users are over 64.
- ◆ Majority of the hard of hearing population do not use sign language at all.

COLORADO COMMISSION FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

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