

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, Better Hearing Month calls attention to the fact that hearing loss is widespread and impacts many people in this community directly or because of family, friends and co-workers with hearing loss; and

WHEREAS, approximately 20% of the American population experiences hearing loss; and

WHEREAS, approximately 60% of people with hearing loss are in the work force or in school; and

WHEREAS, almost 15% of school-age children (ages 6-19) have some degree of hearing loss; and

WHEREAS, many individuals do not get treatment for hearing loss because of a perceived stigma or embarrassment; and

WHEREAS, untreated hearing loss can lead to communication challenges, isolation, depression, loss of functionality in the workplace, reduced earnings, increased falls, and possible progression to dementia; and

WHEREAS, diagnosis and treatment of hearing loss can help avoid these consequences; and

WHEREAS, the month of May has been designated as Better Hearing Month for over 75 years;

NOW, THEREFORE, I/WE, the undersigned, Mayor/Council of the City/County of (jurisdiction), Washington, do hereby proclaim May 2018 as

BETTER HEARING MONTH

and ask that:

1. The residents of (jurisdiction) get an audiology exam and follow-up recommendations for treatment, if any.
2. Microphones and hearing assistive devices be used in public meetings throughout the (City/County) to assure that people with hearing loss may fully participate.
3. Art venues in (jurisdiction) utilize the attached checklist to assure that hearing accommodations are available in their sites.

ADOPTED this ____ day of _____, 2018.

(add jurisdiction's signature block)

How hearing-friendly is your arts program?

About 48 million Americans experience hearing loss—from children to veterans to seniors and everyone in between. These folks and many others need hearing-friendly venues in order to fully engage in and enjoy Puget Sound’s rich arts scene.

You might not know if your patrons have a hearing loss—it’s an invisible disability, and many who don’t hear well won’t ask for help. But they’ll be looking for signage and information.

How inclusive and welcoming are YOU to people with hearing loss? Here’s a checklist.

- Do you have signage that advertises the assistive listening system? Is it likely to be seen and read? (Is it clearly visible by doorways, kiosks, and information desks?)
- Do you market your hearing access via your website, invitations, social media, newsletters, playbills, and flyers?
- Do you have a working PA system? Are staff trained how to use it?
- Do staff, presenters, and performers use the microphone *every time*? Do they repeat audience questions so all may understand?
- Do you have a working assistive listening system? A hearing loop, FM, infrared, caption readers?
- Are all staff trained to understand the assistive listening system and why it’s needed? Can they troubleshoot problems? Do staff know how to check out and maintain headsets and neck loops—and show patrons how to use them?
- Do you test your assistive listening system regularly? Do staff know whom to call for repairs?
- Is there a protocol for managing equipment that’s checked out (charging, replacing batteries, testing, repairing, sanitizing?)
- Are caption readers placed where people can see them? Are they correct and well-timed so patrons can follow them?
- For museums: Are your videos captioned? Is your theatre looped (and films captioned?) If you have audio interactive displays, are they looped and captioned?
- Are you familiar with CART (Computer Assisted Realtime Transcription), which shows visual text of speech as it happens? This technology helps people who are deaf, people with mild hearing loss, people who wear hearing aids, and English language learners.



This is the universal symbol for hearing access. It's easy to insert this symbol into your website, email, and marketing materials, along with a sentence about the hearing access you offer.

Remember that hearing access comes in two essential forms: aural and visual. Sometimes both aural and visual (with priority seating) are needed to ensure clear communication. American Sign Language is an example of a visual hearing access tool, but **just 5% of people with hearing loss can understand ASL.**

Contact the Hearing Association of America-Washington for more help: info@hearingloss-wa.org.

Resources

Communication Access Real-Time Translation (CART)

Wash-CAP

<http://wash-cap.com/>

Find a provider

http://www.stenosearch.com/connect/cart_reporters.htm#Washington_CART_Providers

Hearing Loops and Other Assistive Technology

http://www.hearingloss.org/sites/default/files/docs/Comparison_of_LargeAreaALS.pdf

www.loopseattle.org

www.hearingloop.org

<http://hearingloopnw.com/>

American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreters

<http://www.aslnetwork.com/>

Hearing Loss Resources

www.hearingloss.org

www.hearingloss-wa.org

<http://www.hsd.org/>