

FISCAL IMPACT OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION**Measure: SB 449 - A**Seventy-Eighth Oregon Legislative Assembly – 2015 Regular Session
Legislative Fiscal Office**Only Impacts on Original or Engrossed
Versions are Considered Official**Prepared by: Kim To
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Date: 3/27/2015**Measure Description:**

Creates Office for Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing Services in Department of Human Services.

Government Unit(s) Affected:

Department of Human Services (DHS)

Summary of Expenditure Impact:

	2015-17 Biennium	2017-19 Biennium
Personal Services	\$586,331	\$941,608
Services & Supplies	417,352	418,432
Total General Fund	\$1,003,683	\$1,360,040
Positions	6	6
FTE	3.76	6.00

Local Government Mandate:

This bill does not affect local governments' service levels or shared revenues sufficient to trigger Section 15, Article XI of the Oregon Constitution.

Analysis:

Senate Bill 449 creates the Office for Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing Services in the Department of Human Services. The bill instructs the DHS director to appoint a 12-member advisory committee to advise, review, evaluate and make recommendations to the director and the Office. The Office is required to provide support to this advisory committee. The bill charges the Office with:

1. Employing at least one individual who is proficient in American Sign Language;
2. Conducting statewide and community needs assessments for the entire state no less frequently than every five years, and no more frequently than every two years. The bill permits this assessment to be conducted by employees of the Office or by contracted entities. The Office must report the findings of the assessments to DHS, the Governor and the Legislative Assembly.
3. Consulting with applicable offices of DHS to promote compliance with the requirements of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
4. Advising and training state agencies and other public private entities on the requirements of ADA and other laws prohibiting discrimination based on disability.
5. Establishing a tracking system to measure compliance with accommodation requests.
6. Collecting and disseminating information and providing technical assistance regarding issues of concerns of individuals who are deaf, deaf-blind or hard of hearing.
7. Contracting with state agencies to provide services to the agencies' employees, and to consumers of the agencies' services, who are deaf, deaf-blind or hard of hearing.
8. Cooperating with and assisting groups interested in the rehabilitation and employment of individuals who are deaf, deaf-blind or hard of hearing.
9. Increasing public awareness of and sensitivity to the needs of individuals who are deaf, deaf-blind or hard of hearing.
10. Encouraging public and private employers to take affirmative steps toward ensuring equal treatment in hiring and employment practices.

11. Providing assistance to individuals who are deaf, deaf-blind or heard of hearing in securing suitable training, employment and the realization of their full vocational potential.
12. Coordinating deaf, deaf-blind and hard of hearing interpretation services for all state agencies and establishing the rates paid to the interpreters with whom state agencies contract.

The bill requires the Office for Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing Services program manager to be fluent in American Sign Language. The bill permits the program manager to contract with entities to perform any functions of the office including advocacy, peer support counseling and case management.

The Department of Human Services estimates the fiscal impact of this bill to be \$1,003,683 General Fund; 6 positions; and 3.76 FTE for the 2015-17 biennium. This amount includes Personal Services and related Services and Supplies for six positions. To comply with the provisions of this bill DHS will create the Office in Salem using existing facilities to avoid the cost of leasing space. The Office will be staffed with five permanent positions with support provided by the Office of Equity and Multicultural Services (OEMS):

1 Principal Executive Manager D	0.75 FTE
1 Administrative Specialist 1	0.62 FTE
1 Public Service Representative 4	0.75 FTE
1 Operations and Policy Analyst 3	0.50 FTE
1 Operations and Policy Analyst 2	0.50 FTE
1 Operations and Policy Analyst 3 (OEMS)	0.62 FTE

Position pricing includes American Sign Language differential for three staff members. Staff will conduct the statewide community needs assessments as well as perform the duties and functions outlined above.

Not included in this fiscal pricing are the costs associated with the advisory committee because the existing Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advisory Committee and all related stipends, support and travel currently in the DHS budget will transfer to this new advisory committee. In addition, the only service currently offered by the Oregon Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services program in DHS is interpreter scheduling. This function will transfer to the new Office for Deaf, Deaf-Blind and Hard of Hearing Services program established in this bill.

Also not included in this fiscal is the cost for the development and implementation of an IT tracking system to measure compliance with ADA accommodation requests. This component of the fiscal impact is indeterminate depending on the development of specifications for the system.