

**Active Support Service Provider (SSP) Programs  
March, 2016**

***Note: Services listed do not imply endorsement by HKNC. This listing is provided for informational purposes only. These are the known SSP programs in the United States. A number of other states/metropolitan areas have active committees or task forces investigating the possibility of establishing SSP services. Several additional states provide training for SSPs in conjunction with a workshop/retreat or periodic event.***

**+++++**

**ARIZONA**

**Community Outreach Program for the Deaf (COPD)**

**268 West Adams Street, Tucson, AZ 85705**

**520-314-4798 videophone**

**Brittany Ellenbecker, Program Coordinator**

**[brittanye@copdaz.org](mailto:brittanye@copdaz.org)**

**Carolyn Jaedecke, Program Director**

**[carolynj@copdaz.org](mailto:carolynj@copdaz.org)**

**520-792-1906 voice**

**520-477-0374 videophone**

**[www.copdaz.org](http://www.copdaz.org)**

**Service Area: Tucson, Arizona**

**Program Established: 2000**

**Funding Sources: private donations and community dollars**

**Eligibility: Deaf-blind consumers apply through COPD intake interview**

**Number of Consumers Served: average 10-20 consumers**

**Types of Service Requests: shopping, recreation, reading mail, errands, civic involvement, and to support participation in the Arizona Association of the deaf-blind meetings/events.**

**Training Requirements: Training provided by COPD which includes simulation training with individuals who are deaf-**

blind. The final training component is a 10-hour shadowing of an already employed SSP on the job.

**Program Coordination:** part-time; consumers request SSPs at any time but three business days or more in advance of the date needed is encouraged.

**Other:** Strong consumer advocacy and community established the program.

**Valley Center of the Deaf (VCD)**

5025 E. Washington St., Suite 114, Phoenix, AZ 85034

623-208-4351 videophone

602-267-1921 voice

Julie Stylinski, Deaf-Blind Program Coordinator

[julies@vcdaz.org](mailto:julies@vcdaz.org)

[www.vcdaz.org](http://www.vcdaz.org)

**Service Area:** Phoenix, Arizona (Maricopa County)

**Program Established:** 2006

**Funding Sources:** Grants, donations and community funds

**Eligibility:** Eligibility is based on a combined vision and hearing loss; Consumers apply through a VCD intake interview.

**Number of Consumers Served:** 22-25

**Types of Service Requests:** shopping, recreation, reading mail, errands, civic involvement, and to support participation in the Arizona Deaf-Blind Community meetings/events.

**Training Requirements:** 8-hour training provided by VCD or COPD which includes simulation training with individuals who are deaf-blind.

**Program Coordination:** part-time

**Other:** n/a

## **ARKANSAS**

**Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS)**

900 W. 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Little Rock, AR 72201

501-686-2800 voice

Cheryl Sugg, interpreter coordinator/SSP services

[Cheryl.Sugg@arkansas.gov](mailto:Cheryl.Sugg@arkansas.gov)

[www.arkansas.gov](http://www.arkansas.gov)

**Service Area:** Little Rock, Arkansas

**Program Established:** The DB Program was established in 1989 through a grant. It became a part of ARS in 1991. The agency began providing SSP services in 1997.

**Funding Sources:** Arkansas Rehabilitation Services funds the program which pays for SSPs who work on contract with the state program.

**Eligibility:** allowed up to 10 hours/week; have an SSP plan with consumer goals identified. Primary goals are socialization, independent living, and access to the community.

**Number of Consumers Served:** 30 consumers

**Types of Service Requests:** reading mail, shopping, errands (drug store), exercise classes, monthly social group, and occasionally weddings or funerals.

**Training Requirements:** Many of the SSPs attend classes at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, interpreting program; SSP workshops are also provided with collaboration with UALR interpreting instructors and local consumers; an annual training/workshop is provided to allow SSPs to brush up on their skills. Anyone interested in becoming an SSP must first provide 100 volunteer hours working as a SSP before they are eligible to be paid. They must also maintain yearly CEU requirements.

**Program Coordination:** part-time, but to adequately provide training, recruitment, advertisement, and education, it could be a full-time position

**Other:** Arkansas has developed a SSP guidelines document

## **CALIFORNIA**

**Deaf and Hard of Hearing Service Center (DHHSC)**

**5340 N. Fresno Street, Fresno, CA 93710**

**559-225-3382 voice**

**[interpreting@dhhsc.org](mailto:interpreting@dhhsc.org)**

**[www.dhhsc.org](http://www.dhhsc.org)**

**Service Area: an 8 county region in Central California**

**Program Established: The Deaf Blind Services program was established in May, 2000, as a deaf-blind consumer support group known as the Deaf Blind Support Group (DBSG). This group continues to meet monthly.**

**Funding Sources: The DHHSC Deaf Blind Services Program is incorporated into the core services provided by the agency. DHHSC received funding from the state Department of Social Services, grants, and fee for service programs. The services provided specifically for the deaf-blind community are case management, SSP services, SSP training, the DBSG, and interpreting. The Deaf Blind Services Program received a one-year non-renewable grant from the Department of Rehabilitation in 2005 to provide paid SSP services. The SSP program is currently operating on a volunteer basis. SSPs are recruited from several sources: the interpreter program at California State University Fresno, Certified Deaf Interpreters, community interpreters, ASL students, and family members of those who are deaf-blind. Tools used for recruitment include the DHHSC newsletter, DHHSC email, class presentations at the local colleges, and word-of-mouth**

**Eligibility: There are no set criteria but those who provide SSP services are strongly encouraged to participate in SSP training. The program serves children and adults.**

**Number of Consumers Served: average 10-15 consumers per month**

**Types of Service Requests: transportation, shopping, reading mail, making phone calls, exercising, travel out-of-**

town to DB events, computer assistance, independent living assistance, and assistance at recreational and social events.

**Training Requirements:** Training is provided for all people interested in working with the deaf-blind community including interpreters, ASL students, interpreting students, and family members. Training occurs in a workshop format and topics include causes of deaf-blindness, safe guiding, etiquette, communication techniques and deaf-blind protocol. The SSP training consists of six modules. The goal is to have training once a month so that the entire training is provided twice a year.

**Program Coordination:** Currently the program is coordinated by the Director of Interpreting Services. The agency is investigating grant opportunities in order to be able to hire staff specifically for the Deaf Blind Services Program.

**Other:** n/a

## **COLORADO**

**HKNC Region 8 SSP Program**

**190 E. 9th Avenue, Suite 150, Denver, CO 80203**

**720-457-3676 voice/videophone**

**303-934-9037 voice**

**Ryan Odland, regional representative**

**[ryan.odland@hknc.org](mailto:ryan.odland@hknc.org)**

**[www.helenkeller.org/HKNC](http://www.helenkeller.org/HKNC)**

**Service Area: Colorado Statewide**

**Program Established: 2012**

**Funding Sources: \$10K grant from CO Commission f/t Deaf & Hard of Hearing, reauthorized annually**

**Eligibility: Deafblind resident of the state**

**Number of Consumers Served: 18**

**Types of Service Requests: Reading mail, attending DB social events and task force meetings, shopping, doctor appointments, legislative meetings, etc. Each consumer is**

allowed 10 hours per month at this time.

**Training Requirements:** SSPs attend a 3 hour training. Consumers are required to attend a 1 hour session on what an SSP can be used for and what is not covered.

**Program Coordination:** Part-time

**Other:** Background checks are done on all SSPs. SSPs receive \$15/hr.

## **CONNECTICUT**

**Communication Advocacy Network (CAN)**

151 New Park Ave, Suite 101, Hartford, CT 06106

860-566-9489 videophone (for information)

860-566-9490 videophone (for director)

Susan V. Pedersen, Chair, Board of Directors

[CANCoordinator@outlook.com](mailto:CANCoordinator@outlook.com) or [info@cancorp.org](mailto:info@cancorp.org)

[www.cancorp.org](http://www.cancorp.org)

**Service Area:** Connecticut statewide

**Program Established:** August, 2009

**Funding Sources:** (state agency) Department of Rehabilitation Services with Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind;

<http://www.ct.gov/besb/site/default.asp> and some grants and fundraising events

**Eligibility:** legally blind and deaf, including low vision

**Number of Consumers Served:** 12

**Types of Service Requests:** Support Service Providers (SSP), and deaf-blind services including monthly deaf-blind support group (facilitated by two professional counselors)

**Training Requirements:** Knowledge of ASL is preferred but not required; be familiar in the area of deaf-blind services; and to be able to work with hard of hearing deaf-blind consumers by using oral communication or other modes of communication.

**Program Coordination:** part-time SSP program coordination

on a volunteer basis; Deaf-blind services, Acting Director, Sue Pedersen, [CANCoordinator@outlook.com](mailto:CANCoordinator@outlook.com)  
Other: Deaf-Blind distribution program available provided by the Connecticut Tech Act Project, <http://www.cttechact.com/att/>

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA / WASHINGTON, DC**

**Gallaudet Interpreting Service Paraprofessional Program**  
800 Florida Ave NE, HMB 427, Washington, DC 20002  
202-250-2115 videophone (main office contact)  
202-651-5199 voice (main office contact)

**Rayni Plaster, program coordinator**

**[GIS.PP@gallaudet.edu](mailto:GIS.PP@gallaudet.edu) or [GIS.DB@gallaudet.edu](mailto:GIS.DB@gallaudet.edu)**

**<https://sites.google.com/a/gallaudet.edu/dbpp-pilot-program/>**

**Service Area: Currently only providing for Gallaudet**

**University's sponsored events**

**Program Established: January, 2014**

**Funding Sources: Gallaudet University**

**Eligibility: Services are only for current Gallaudet students, staff and faculty**

**Number of Consumers Served: to be determined**

**Types of Service Requests: Services are only for Gallaudet sponsored events**

**Training Requirements: 16 hours of program orientation training (including SSP and Tactile ASL workshops) and one semester of coursework as provided by the Department of Interpretation**

**Program Coordination: Part-Time**

**Other: Services are only for Gallaudet students for Gallaudet events. It is our goal to give students access to the student life on campus to reduce lack of access to unique college experiences that may occur between peers in a social setting.**

Also see Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind in MD who also serves the District of Columbia

## **FLORIDA**

**Florida Deaf Blind Association, Inc. (FDBA)**

**Florida Support Service Providers (FSSP)**

**5055 Dale Mabry Hwy, #734, Tampa, FL 33611**

**386-546-5706 voice/text**

**Darlene Laibl-Crowe, FSSP Program Coordinator**

**[dlaiblcrowe@att.net](mailto:dlaiblcrowe@att.net)**

**[www.fldeafblind.org](http://www.fldeafblind.org)**

**Service Area: Florida statewide**

**Program Established: 2012**

**Funding Sources: Funded by donations, workshops and fundraisers; however, we are working on grant proposals. At the moment, our services are on a volunteer basis.**

**Consumer Eligibility: Must be a resident of Florida over the age of 18 and able to make decisions as an adult.**

**Number of Consumers Served: About 20 at our social events and meetings**

**Types of Service Requests: Social (community activities)**

**Training Requirements: Completion of our FSSP**

**Training Workshops**

**Program Coordination: Part-time, volunteer basis**

**Other: Hopefully once grant(s) are received, the coordinator will become a full-time position with addition of Staff SSP. The SSPs will be paid.**

## **GEORGIA**

**Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA)**

**450 Riverside Parkway, Suite 200, Rome, GA 30161-2976**

**706-295-6400 voice**

**706-622-6948 videophone**



404-783-4193 cell/text

Rebecca Cowan-Story, State Coordinator of Deaf Blind Service

[Rebecca.Cowan-Story@gvra.ga.gov](mailto:Rebecca.Cowan-Story@gvra.ga.gov)

[www.gvra.ga.gov](http://www.gvra.ga.gov)

Service Area: Georgia Statewide

Program Established: 2015

Funding Sources: GVRA state funded for clients of VR working toward their vocational rehabilitation goals.

Eligibility: VR clients with dual sensory loss

Number of Consumers Served: 80+

Types of Service Requests: Only for services conducted through the scope of VR

Training Requirements: Completion of SSP training from Georgia Association of the Deaf-Blind

Program Coordination: As needed

Other: n/a

## HAWAII

Comprehensive Service Center (CSC) for People who are Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing or Deaf-Blind

1953 S. Beretania St., Suite 5A

Honolulu, HI 96826

808-223-0394 voice/text

Eleanor Macdonald, Program Coordinator

[Elemacdonald8@icloud.com](mailto:Elemacdonald8@icloud.com)

Rod Macdonald, Consultant/Program Development

[rjmacdonald@hawaiiantel.net](mailto:rjmacdonald@hawaiiantel.net)

Service Area: Hawaii Statewide but consumers currently only on Oahu

Program Established: 2017

Funding Sources: State Appropriation in HI Department of Human Services/HI Division of Vocational Rehabilitation executive budget. CSC funded via DVR Memorandum of

**Agreement/Request for Proposal SSP Project funded by CSC/DVR Agreement. Private donations also accepted. The program has a pay scale ranging from \$25 to \$75 an hour, depending on the consumer's needs, the SSP's skills and the specific nature of the assignment. The hourly rate can vary from assignment to assignment based on specific services provided.**

**Eligibility: 1) any consumer referred to the program as "Deaf-Blind" by a recognized agency, or 2) individual application with support documents (from doctor, DOE, DVR, etc.) documenting both vision and hearing loss.**

**Number of Consumers Served: 8 (Jan-Mar 2017)**

**Types of Service Requests: a) ASL/Sign Language Interpreting (visual, close, tactile); b) CAN, captioned, braille, fingerspelling Interpreting; c) Hard-of-Hearing support; d) guiding; e) reading/Information access; f) writing/filling out forms; g) driving; h) public transportation;**

**Activities include: a) appointments (attorney, dentist, doctor); b) community involvement (advocacy activities, apartment search, child's school/sports events, legislative participation, meetings/events, religious services/activities, senior activities, social/support group activities); c) Errands (banking, hair stylist, post office, shopping); d) information gathering (accessing news, filling out applications/forms, environmental information, information gathering, library services); e) leisure time/recreation activities (bowling, club activities, exploring the community, table games, spectator sports, tandem bike riding); f) travel (airport assistance, trips); g) personal services (paying bills, labeling, phone calls, reading/writing mail, text translating, videophone calls); h) social involvement (eating at restaurants, family gatherings, funerals, visiting shut-ins, weddings); i) other (write-in - encouraged). Assistive listening devices are used at all group activities.**

**Training Requirements: Four SSP/consumer training**

sessions have been conducted over the past three years, three with out-of-state presenters. A training class with college credit is being considered. SSP-related materials shared.

**Program Coordination:** Part-time, coordinator & consultant. Additional CSC staff as needed.

**Other:** CSC is a unit of the University of Hawaii at Manoa. The program is built around the "Service Coupon". Each consumer is issued 30 Coupons per quarter, each of which is redeemable for one hour of SSP support. Consumers must sign coupons when given to the SSP certifying the number of hours of service. Coupons contain generic service questions that the SSP completes prior to submitting with an invoice for payment. Submitted coupons/invoices are computerized and analyzed for program review, statistics, error detection or possible misuse. Regular contact is maintained between the coordinator or consultant and the program participants. The program developed its own Guidelines for Professional Conduct and participants are expected to follow these Guidelines and the program policies.

For the first three-month period (Jan-Mar 2017), 8 consumers used 126 hours of service (as invoiced to date; additional invoices are expected). Consumers range in age from 27-75, with an average age of 60.4 years.

SSPs are recruited to meet the specific needs of individual consumers. While education is not a specific requirement for being an SSP, all currently active SSPs have a minimum of two years of college education.

## **LOUISIANA**

**Affiliated Blind of Louisiana (ABL)**

409 West St. Mary Blvd., Lafayette, LA 70506

337-234-6492 voice

337-446-4648 videophone

Fallon Frederick, SSP/Interpreter Coordinator

[fallonf@affiliatedblind.org](mailto:fallonf@affiliatedblind.org)

[www.affiliatedblind.org](http://www.affiliatedblind.org)

**Service Area:** Specifically for 27 parishes in Louisiana.

Those covered around *Lafayette*: Acadia, Evangeline, Iberia, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, and Vermillion.

*Baton Rouge*: Ascension, Assumption, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Iberville, Livingston, Pointe Coupee, St. James, West Baton Rouge, West Feliciana.

*Lake Charles*: Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Jefferson Davis

*New Orleans*: Jefferson, Lafourche, Orleans, and Terrebonne.

**Program Established:** February, 2008

**Funding Sources:** A state grant from the Louisiana Commission for the Deaf

**Eligibility:** Consumers must provide documentation of combined hearing and visual loss or Usher syndrome. They must be adults (over the age of 18); communicate using American Sign Language; be independent; and have a valid identification card.

**Number of Consumers Served:** 74

**Types of Service Requests:** SSPs guide the Deaf-Blind person and bring them to places. The program does not allow traveling out of state or to be picked up and dropped off from point A to point B (transportation only). Activities can include shopping, visiting friends/family, eating at restaurants, looking around, mail reading, paying bills, phone calls, any medical/legal appointments, and/or exercising.

**Training Requirements:** SSPs go through a training session with the coordinator and a delegated deaf-blind person then meet with fellow SSP workers once every 3 months to help

each other better one other.

**Program Coordination:** full time in the office  
scheduling/payroll/files

**Other:** n/a

## **MAINE**

### **IRIS Network**

**“Independence Without Fear”**

**189 Park Avenue, Portland, ME 04102**

**207-774-6273 voice main**

**207-766-7097 videophone**

**207-380-1987 voice (John)**

**207-518-5030 voice (Cassie)**

**John Shattuck, SSP Program Coordinator**

**Cassie Diplock, SSP Program Assistant**

**(The program is a collaboration effort between several agencies. Our videophone access is through the Signed Language Research Laboratory at the University of Southern Maine-USM)**

**[IndependenceWithoutFear@theiris.org](mailto:IndependenceWithoutFear@theiris.org) or [IWF@theiris.org](mailto:IWF@theiris.org)**

**<http://www.theiris.org/services/independence-without-fear-2>**

**Service Area:** Maine statewide

**We attempt to encompass all of Maine; however, the majority of volunteers are in southern Maine.**

**Program Established:** 2010

**Funding Sources:** Currently has a Penobscot Grant. SSP’s presently are volunteers.

**Eligibility:** For the consumers: Verification form from Division of Blind and Visually Impaired & DDHLD. For the SSPs: Training, assessment, and evaluation are through USM as well as a background check and enrollment done by the Iris Network.

**Number of Consumers Served:** 18 at this time with application

**Types of Service Requests:** Transportation, bills, reading mail, meetings, human guide at events, etc. They can provide any support that allows an individual who is deaf-blind or an individual with a dual sensory impairment to complete tasks for themselves. SSPs cannot do the tasks for the consumer.

**Training Requirements:** Training for SSPs and for Interpreters for deaf-blind and dual sensory impaired consumers is conducted every 2 years by deaf-blind and sighted trainers at USM. (Thus far: 2010; 2012 July, 2015, 2016) Shorter refresher courses and mini-trainings are held in the fall and spring of each year. Students, SSPs, and consumers are also encouraged to participate in supervised internships at AADB (2 in 2011), Seabeck (1 in 2011, 2 in 2012), and HKNC (1 in 2012).

**Program Coordination:** The coordination of the SSP program is a joint effort of the University of Southern Maine (USM), The Iris Network, The Division of the Blind and Visually Impaired (DVBI), The Helen Keller National Center (HKNC), and The Department of the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened (DDHLD), with participation by the Disability Rights Maine; Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services.

**Other:** A formal application, written agreements (for SSPs and consumers), logs for documenting and submitting hours, and program information have been developed. The Iris Network provides the referral person who devotes 9 hours per week to referral and networking.

## **MARYLAND**

**Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind  
8720 Georgia Avenue, Suite 1011, Silver Spring, MD 20910  
240-454-3859 voice  
240-393-4009 videophone  
SSP coordinator position vacant**

**Tiffany Jones, Manager of Administrative Services**

[tjones@clb.org](mailto:tjones@clb.org)

[www.clb.org](http://www.clb.org)

**Service Area:** Maryland statewide and metropolitan Washington, DC area - specifically Arlington County, VA; City of Alexandria, VA and the District of Columbia

**Program Established:** 2010

**Funding Sources:** Various limited city and county grants; State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies

**Eligibility:** certifiable/documented dual sensory disability (deafness and blindness) and resident of specific county/city; other criteria based on grant requirements

**Number of Consumers Served:** 5-15 (rolling based on grant criteria)

**Types of Service Requests:**

**Training Requirements:** certified or qualified based on CLB established criteria

**Program Coordination:** part-time (less than 20 hours/week)

**Other:** Each consumer is provided 15 hours per month based on availability of SSPs. This is subject to grant funding and is analyzed annually. All SSPs are contractors and work based on their availability. Alternate SSPs can be requested. SSP hours do not transfer and are not cumulative. Each allocation is per month. For ongoing service to be provided each consumer must go through orientation and attend a predetermined number of educational meetings based on organization/grant requirements.

**Towson University Deaf Studies Program**

**8000 York Road, Towson, MD 21252-0001**

**410-704-2436 voice**

**443-377-3438 videophone**

**Sheryl Cooper, Ph.D., Deaf Studies Program Coordinator**

[scooper@towson.edu](mailto:scooper@towson.edu)

[www.towson.edu/asld](http://www.towson.edu/asld)

**Service Area:** Towson, Maryland

**Program Established:** 2000

**Funding Sources:** state university provides training for students to learn SSP skills

**Eligibility:** volunteer services provided by students as needs can be matched

**Number of Consumers Served:** varies by semester

**Types of Service Requests:** students offer companionship, transportation, and communication facilitation to deaf-blind individuals

**Training Requirements:** students are trained in academic program

**Program Coordination:** academic program is full-time during the 9-month school year.

**Other:** n/a

## **MASSACHUSETTS**

**DeafBlind Community Access Network (DBCAN)**

c/o D.E.A.F. Inc.

215 Brighton Avenue, Allston, MA 02134

617-254-4041 voice/TTY

Elaine Ducharme, Director of DBCAN

[educharme@deafinonline.org](mailto:educharme@deafinonline.org)

[www.deafinonline.org](http://www.deafinonline.org)

**Service Area:** Massachusetts statewide

**Program Established:** 2001 as an Act of the Massachusetts State Legislature. It was a result of intensive lobbying efforts on behalf of the DeafBlind Interpreter Alliance (DBIA) as well as members of the DeafBlind & Deaf community, Disability Policy Consortium, D.E.A.F. Inc., MA Commission for the Blind (MCB) and MA Commission for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing (MCDHH).

**Funding Sources:** The program is funded by a \$450,000



annual contract overseen by Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB) and MCDHH and operated by D.E.A.F. Inc.

**Eligibility:** up to 16 hours/month

**Number of Consumers Served:** 70 consumers

**Types of Service Requests:** errands/appointments, reading mail, clothes or food shopping, going to the gym, transportation and guidance to medical appointments, and social/recreational activities

**Training Requirements:** Providers must complete a 45-hour training program with certificate provided upon completion

**Program Coordination:** full-time director, full-time asst director and a part-time administrative assistant

**Other:** Services are provided by DBCAN Providers, this is the preferred term rather than support service providers.

## **MINNESOTA**

**DeafBlind Services Minnesota (DBSM)**

**Adult Community Services (SSP Program)**

**1936 Lyndale Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55403**

**612-843-3440 voice**

**952-388-2102 videophone**

**612-362-8422 TTY**

**Diane Lentsch, Adult Community Services Program Lead**

**[LentschD@dbsm.org](mailto:LentschD@dbsm.org)**

**[www.dbsmlc.org](http://www.dbsmlc.org)**

**612-362-8454 voice**

**952-388-2102 videophone**

**Kimberly Williams, SSP/Community Services Specialist**

**[williamsk@dbsm.org](mailto:williamsk@dbsm.org)**

**[www.dbsmlc.org](http://www.dbsmlc.org)**

**Service Area:** Minnesota statewide

**Program Established:** 1986 (SSP Service established in 1996)

**Funding Sources:** Minnesota State Dept of Human Services– Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Division; Hennepin

County through Human Services and Public Health--Children, Family and Adult Services Division; Medical Assistance (Medicaid) Waiver Program--Community Alternatives for Disabled Individuals (CADI). CADI services are considered "independent living skills" and must meet the requirements for CADI and be referred by CADI case manager.

**Eligibility:** Deaf-blind adults (over age 21; 18 if no longer covered by an IEP-Individualized Education Plan) must have a medically verifiable combined hearing loss and vision loss which interferes with individual's ability to independently maintain their independence or access their community; program provides an average between 20-25 hours a month.

**Number of Consumers Served:** approximately 55 deafblind adults with the majority residing in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. Another 11 deafblind adults who receive DBSM services live in greater, outstate Minnesota.

**Types of Service Requests:** grocery shopping, errands of daily living, guiding to health appointments and communication assistance for community groups such as beading craft class.

**Training Requirements:** DBSM prefers to have SSPs who have sign language skills. However, not all of the consumers use sign language. DBSM currently employs 30 part-time, hourly SSP staff--half of the SSPs are deaf or hard-of-hearing. SSPs receive paid training on the basics of deaf-blindness. This includes simulation activities, sighted-guide techniques and the basics of Pro Tactile communication. New hires are also trained on how to use the DBSM portal for submitting reports. When possible, new SSPs are offered "on-the-job" training (mentoring) by shadowing an experienced SSP before taking assignments. SSP staff pay range for new hires is \$14 to \$16 depending on experience. SSPs also earn the Federal Reimbursement rate for mileage-2016 \$.54 per mile-for any mileage while working with participant.

**Program Coordination:** Adult Community Services Program Lead is a full-time position which includes other duties beyond coordinating the SSP program. The ACS Coordinator is additionally responsible for report writing, contract compliance with the various funding sources. The SSP/Community Specialist is a part-time position focused mostly on coordinating substitute SSPs and coordinating all details of community activities and classes.

**Other:** the program was designed to assist the deaf-blind person to live as independently as possible. This SSP model works well for self-directed, proficient communicating deaf-blind consumers. DBSM is also exploring the provision of deaf-blind intervention services for congenitally deaf-blind adults living in group homes and nursing homes. DBSM also has a Children's Program that provides Community Intervention to deaf-blind children and youth from birth to age 22. The intervention assists deaf-blind kids to develop age-appropriate independence, communication and social skills. The contact person is John Filek, Children, Youth and Family Services Program Lead, 612-843-3441 voice, 612-362-8422 TTY, 952-388-2102 VP, [filekj@dbsm.org](mailto:filekj@dbsm.org).

**Minnesota Department of Human Services - Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Division**

**DeafBlind Consumer Directed Services Grant Program**

**P.O. Box 64969, St. Paul, MN 55164-0969**

**651-431-3253 voice**

**651-964-1714 direct videophone**

**Sharisse Leier, Program Manager**

**[Sharisse.leier@state.mn.us](mailto:Sharisse.leier@state.mn.us)**

**[www.mn.gov/dhs/deaf-hard-of-hearing/](http://www.mn.gov/dhs/deaf-hard-of-hearing/)**

**Service Area: Minnesota statewide**

**Program Established: 2002**

**Funding Sources: The state DeafBlind Consumer Directed Services grant funding was a direct appropriation from the**

**Minnesota State Legislature.** The purpose is to serve more DeafBlind Minnesotans to access supports and services to live independently, interact with their families and communities, and develop knowledge and skills.

**Eligibility:** Individuals of any age who have a medically verifiable hearing loss and vision loss that interferes with acquiring information or interacting in the environment; applicants are considered to be deaf-blind if their hearing cannot compensate for their vision loss and their vision loss cannot compensate for their hearing loss.

**Number of Consumers Served:** 61

**Types of Service Requests:** SSP, interveners, transportation, equipment, training, communication skills instruction (Note: this funding allows the consumer to determine which service they need. Not all consumers accessing this program will need/desire SSP support, but that is one option.)

**Training Requirements:** Each deaf-blind consumer decides what kind and how much training they want their SSP or other service provider to have.

**Program Coordination:** part-time; coordinator oversees other state grant funding for services to individuals who are deaf-blind.

**Other:** The program allows individuals to purchase services or goods (equipment, technology, etc.) they need to remain independent, become more independent and integrated into their community. Deaf-blind children and their families purchase goods and services to develop the child's independence, communication skills, or ability to integrate into their family and community. Each program participant identifies outcomes they want to achieve and then designs a budget to purchase the goods and services they need to accomplish the outcomes.

## **NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**Northeast Deaf & Hard of Hearing Services, Inc.**

**57 Regional Drive, Concord, NH 03301**

**603-224-1850 voice**

**603-968-5889 videophone**

**Susan Wolf-Downes, Executive Director**

**[info@ndhhs.org](mailto:info@ndhhs.org)**

**[www.ndhhs.org](http://www.ndhhs.org)**

**Service Area: New Hampshire statewide**

**Program Established: 2008**

**Funding Sources: Part B**

**Eligibility: Deaf-Blind / low vision NH residents**

**Number of Consumers Served: 7**

**Types of Service Requests: Guides for shopping, social events, errands, etc.**

**Training Requirements: SSP training course by the Coordinator**

**Program Coordination: part-time**

**Other: n/a**

## **NEW JERSEY**

**Support Service Providers of New Jersey (SSPNJ)**

**The College of New Jersey, School of Education**

**P.O. Box 7718, Ewing, NJ 08628**

**609-771-2795 (Voice only at this time)**

**Kathleen Spata, Statewide Program Coordinator**

**David Rims, Project Business Manager**

**[ssp.nj.tcnj@gmail.com](mailto:ssp.nj.tcnj@gmail.com)**

**[www.ssp-nj.org](http://www.ssp-nj.org)**

**Service Area: New Jersey statewide**

**Program Established: April, 2010**

**Funding Sources: NJ Department of Human Services, Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired**

**Eligibility: must be VR eligible to receive services**

**Number of Consumers Served: 60**

**Number of SSPs: 47**

**Types of Service Requests: Our Approved Activities list includes the following categories: post-secondary education/training, employment, health/well-being, household management, community integration**

**Training Requirements: SSPs must satisfactorily complete our 3-module, 10-hour training program as well as three probationary assignments; deaf-blind individuals must complete individualized training program**

**Program Coordination: part-time position**

**Other: DeafBlind individuals have 16 hours of services/month. These services are provided at no charge.**

## **NEW MEXICO**

**Community Outreach Program for the Deaf – New Mexico (COPD-NM)**

**Deafblind and Special Services**

**3908 Carlisle Blvd NE, Albuquerque, NM 87107**

**505-255-7636 voice**

**505-814-5663 videophone (Larry)**

**505-435-9283 videophone (Carla)**

**Larry Rhodes, Agency Director**

**Carla Weeaks, SSP Scheduler**

**[larryr@copdnm.org](mailto:larryr@copdnm.org)**

**[carlaw@copdnm.org](mailto:carlaw@copdnm.org)**

**[www.copdnm.org](http://www.copdnm.org)**

**Service Area: New Mexico statewide**

**Program Established: Service coordination and case management have been provided for several years. The Program's SSP supports started in March 2011. In July 2011, SSP supports were extended to deaf-plus (individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing with significant disabilities). The FCC's National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program (aka, iCanConnect) was launched on July 1, 2012, in**

collaboration with the Perkins School for the Blind.

**Funding Sources:** From the State of New Mexico's legislature through the New Mexico Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, from contracts with the New Mexico Centennial Care Medicaid Waiver Program, and the FCC's National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program.

**Eligibility:** Must meet the Program definition of deaf-blindness (combined auditory and visual losses) or deaf-plus (deaf or hard of hearing with a significant disability)

**Number of Consumers Served:** 70+

**Types of Service Requests:** Advocacy and support at appointments with doctors, the Social Security Administration, Human Services and Case Management Services, referrals to other sources such as Representative Payee Services and vocational services. SSP requests include text-translating and transportation. Access technology through the FCC's National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program (iCanConnect). Personnel development training to other service providers in the state.

**Training Requirements:** Three days of initial training, 6 hours of defensive driving class, 1 day-long supplemental training every 6 months, 2 hour meeting/training once a month.

**Program Coordination:**

- Agency Director: Larry Rhodes, full-time
- Service Coordinator: vacant, full-time
- SSP Scheduler: Carla Weeaks, part time (20 hrs/wk)
- SSPs: Currently 15 located across the state but the number fluctuates
- FCC Technology Coordinator: Vacant, full time (northern and eastern New Mexico), Susanne Hogan, part time (southwestern New Mexico)

**Other:** n/a

## **NEW YORK**

**Center for Disability Rights, Inc.**

**497 State Street, Rochester, NY 14608**

**585-286-2727 videophone/voice/TTY**

**Catherine Stutzman, Manager of Deaf Services**

**[cstutzman@cdrnys.org](mailto:cstutzman@cdrnys.org)**

**[www.cdrnys.org](http://www.cdrnys.org)**

**Service Area: Rochester, New York (Monroe County)**

**Program Established: 2001 by RCIL (Regional Center for Independent Living); transitioned over in 2007 to the Center for Disability Rights, Inc.**

**Funding Sources: vendor-contracts; grants and donations utilized to operate SSP Services (ongoing recruitment for additional funds).**

**Eligibility: Individuals with documented hearing and vision loss, age 18 and older**

**Number of Consumers Served: 20 consumers**

**Types of Service Requests: grocery shopping, medical/legal appointments, and social events; community-based meetings**

**Training Requirements: 1-1 instruction and peer mentoring is provided by SSP personnel and Deaf-Blind consumers.**

**Program Coordination: as needed**

**Other: The mission is to assist people who are deaf-blind to lead fully independent lives. We continue to strive in expanding the number of consumers in hopes of securing state-wide funding support.**

## **NORTH CAROLINA**

**North Carolina Deaf-Blind Associates (NCDBA)**

**NCDBA Communication Access Team**

**[NCDBASSPs@gmail.com](mailto:NCDBASSPs@gmail.com)**

**[www.ncdba.org](http://www.ncdba.org)**

**Service Area: North Carolina statewide**



**Program Established: 2004**

**Funding Sources: All the services provided are done by volunteers**  
**Eligibility: Consumers send in a request via email or contact their State Deaf & Deaf-Blind Specialists to assist with sending in a request which then goes out to a statewide database of approximately 200 volunteers. Those who can assist will then contact the consumer, agree on the services needed and make the needed arrangements.**

**Number of Consumers Served: Approximately 5 consumers are served a month directly and around 45 - 50 during the local conference, camp and various DB events across the state all year.**

**Types of Service Requests: The services range from transportation to and from doctor appointments, family functions and sporting activities to attending local conferences, camp and other DB events. Informal communication is facilitated for social functions, sighted guide and transportation.**

**Training Requirements: The SSPs who agree to be on the volunteer database have gone through 6 to 10 hours of training provided by the NCDBA Communication committee in partnership with the Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Services for the Blind.**

**Program Coordination: Volunteers assist with the coordination of sending out emails to the volunteer database, get the consumers connected with the SSPs and encourage the consumers to finalize the plans with the SSP who meets their needs.**

**Other: n/a**

## **OHIO**

**Comprehensive Program for the Deaf  
c/o Columbus Speech & Hearing Center  
510 E. North Broadway, Columbus, OH 43214**

614-263-5151 voice

Barb Rathmell, SSP coordinator

[brathmell@columbussspeech.org](mailto:brathmell@columbussspeech.org)

[www.columbussspeech.org](http://www.columbussspeech.org)

**Service Area:** Columbus, Ohio (Franklin County)

**Program Established:** 1993 (SSP services in 2001)

**Funding Sources:** Senior Options is Franklin County's tax-levy program for senior citizens. Funds support several programs that serve older adults including Meals-on-Wheels, hearing aids, transportation, and minor home improvements.

**Eligibility:** for adults 60 years and older who meet income guidelines through the tax-levy program and can receive between 10 - 15 hours/month. CPD also provides SSP services to several private-paying consumers. The SSP program is just one of many services provided by CPD. Each program has different eligibility requirements

**Number of Consumers Served:** 6 - 12

**Types of Service Requests:** grocery shopping, trips to the bank, eating out at restaurants, reading mail, making telephone calls, searching the web at the library, recreation, with some folks getting really creative such as using an SSP to watch sporting events on television or playing table games. Each consumer develops a routine and requests SSP support to achieve it.

**Training Requirements:** The coordinator provides informal training to new SSPs in sighted guide and some ASL (for those consumers who sign), additional training is provided as needed.

**Program Coordination:** 5-10 hours a week

**Other:** n/a

## **OREGON**

**Brookdale Chestnut Lane Gresham**

**1219 NE 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Gresham, OR 97030**

503-674-0364 voice

503-405-4766 videophone

Bradley J. Flynn, Executive Director

[Bradley.Flynn@Brookdale.com](mailto:Bradley.Flynn@Brookdale.com)

[www.Brookdale.com](http://www.Brookdale.com)

Service Area: Residents of Brookdale Chestnut Lane in Gresham, Oregon

Program Established: SSP services began in July, 2012

Funding Sources: Medicaid reimbursement

Eligibility: Deaf-Blind residents of Chestnut Lane, an Assisted Living Facility

Number of Consumers Served: 14

Types of Service Requests: shopping, activities, videophone calls, reading mail, sending emails, accompany on doctor appointments

Training Requirements: experience working with Deaf-Blind people

Resident Program Coordination: paid full-time, with SSP coordination as one of the many job responsibilities.

Other: n/a

## PENNSYLVANIA

DeafBlind Living Well Services

Center for Independent Living of Central Pennsylvania (CILCP)

207 House Ave., Suite 107, Camp Hill, PA 17011

717-731-1900 voice/800-323-6060 toll free voice

717-737-1335 TTY/800-829-7404 TTY toll free

717-255-0124 videophone

[www.facebook.com/dblwsonline](https://www.facebook.com/dblwsonline)

Marsha Drenth, DBLWS Program Manager

[dblws@cilcp.org](mailto:dblws@cilcp.org)

[www.cilcp.org](http://www.cilcp.org)

Service Area: Pennsylvania Statewide

**Program Established: 2014**

**Funding Sources: Grant from Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), Bureau of Blindness & Visual Services (BBVS), Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH), and Pennsylvania statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)**

**Eligibility: consumers must have a combined vision and hearing loss, residents of Pennsylvania who are adults (over the age of 18 and out of the K-12 school system), living in the community, and who are capable of directing and managing an SSP.**

**Number of Consumers Served: 50**

**Types of Service Requests: Grocery shopping, basic banking, clothes shopping, doctor appointments, community events and meetings, fair and festivals, eating out, organizing and sorting household items, reading mail and other paperwork, amusement parks, taking walks around the park, and attending sporting events.**

**Training Requirements - SSPs:**

**Complete DBLWS's training program. The training program includes exposing trainees to deafblind culture, communication methods, O&M skills of human guide and guide dog information, providing environmental information, technology used by persons who are deafblind, eye conditions, conditions that cause hearing loss, ProTactile/Haptics/Touch signals, resources available to SSP and persons who are deafblind, and sensitivity to Deafblindness.**

**Agree to participate in at least three approved professional development educational seminars/programs and/or volunteer opportunities within the field of sensory disabilities every two years.**

**Training Requirements - Consumers: All consumers are trained one-on-one about the program requirements, the roles and responsibilities of both consumers and SSP, what an SSP can do and not do, the differences of a SSP and an**

interpreter, how to request hours, and how to advocate for services.

**Program Coordination:** full-time

**Other:** Consumers receive a set amount of SSP hours based upon funding. Hours can be used from the beginning at the first of the month until the end and cannot be carried over.

All consumers are required to keep track of their own hours. SSPs are independent contractors, or self-employed, they are not employees of the program, therefore they do not receive any employee benefits.

DBLWS SSPs do not provide transportation. Consumers are responsible for arranging their own transportation.

**DeafCAN! – Deaf Community Action Network**

**A Human Services Program of Christ the King Deaf Church**

**730 S. New Street, West Chester, PA 19382**

**484-319-4245 videophone**

**610-436-9751 voice**

**Scott Stoffel, SSP Coordinator**

**[ScottMStoffel@yahoo.com](mailto:ScottMStoffel@yahoo.com)**

**William Lockard, DeafCAN! Program Director**

**[BillLockard@deafcanpa.org](mailto:BillLockard@deafcanpa.org)**

**[www.deafcanpa.org](http://www.deafcanpa.org) (features video of the SSP program)**

**Service Area:** 8 counties in SE Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, Delaware, Chester, Montgomery, Bucks, Berks, Lancaster and Lebanon)

**Funding Sources:** Grants and other donations, as well as some fee-for-service

**Eligibility:** Verify deaf-blindness and be able to direct the services of an SSP

**Number of consumers served:** 32

**Types of service requests:** each consumer can have up to 10 hours of SSP service each month and can use SSPs at their own discretion.

**SSP Training Requirements:** Each candidate is evaluated as

to their knowledge and experience and must pass a functional evaluation of the basic skills of being an SSP.  
**Program Coordination:** All requests are made through the SSP Coordinator which is a part-time, paid position.  
**Other:** This service is separate from the state's DBLWS service. Consumers can and do use both services.

## **SOUTH CAROLINA**

**South Carolina Commission for the Blind**  
**P.O. Box 2467, Columbia, SC 29202-2467 (mailing address)**  
**1430 Confederate Avenue, Columbia, SC 29201(physical location)**

**803-898-8775 voice**

**803-403-9622 videophone**

**Jerry Francis, Region II Director/Deafblind Consultant**

**[jfrancis@sccb.sc.gov](mailto:jfrancis@sccb.sc.gov)**

**[www.sccb.state.sc.us](http://www.sccb.state.sc.us)**

**Service Area: South Carolina statewide**

**Program Established: July 1, 2012**

**Funding Sources: Vocational Rehabilitation general funds**

**Eligibility: Must be an active Vocational Rehabilitation consumer, classified as deaf-blind, and whose vision and hearing loss warrant the need for the service.**

**Number of Consumers Served: less than 5**

**Types of Service Requests: shopping, medical appointments, independent living training**

**Training Requirements: SSP vendors must have completed an official SSP training workshop sponsored by SCCB, SC Association of the Deaf (SCAD), or HKNC.**

**Program Coordination: Full time, as incorporated within the duties of the Deafblind Consultant.**

**Other: Services are currently limited to fifteen hours per week, per consumer.**

## **TENNESSEE**

**Knoxville Center of the Deaf (KCD)**

**3731 Martin Mill Pike, Knoxville, TN 37920**

**865-579-0832 voice**

**865-573-5640 TTY**

**865-622-2308 videophone**

**Craig Lemak, COO**

**[clemak@kcdtn.org](mailto:clemak@kcdtn.org)**

**[www.kcdtn.org](http://www.kcdtn.org)**

**Service Area: Knoxville, Tennessee and surrounding counties**

**Program Established: March 2006**

**Funding Sources: KCD is funded by the United Way and the Tennessee Dept of Human Services; the Tennessee Deaf Golfers Association TDGA-KCD Annual Golf Tournament provided the start-up funding and ongoing financial support for the SSP program; additional foundation/grant funding is also being pursued. Deaf-blind persons receive monthly vouchers by which they are able to employ SSPs.**

**Eligibility: there are no formal eligibility guidelines; consumers are self-identified**

**Number of Consumers Served: approximately 10 consumers**

**Types of Service Requests: consumers receive vouchers which they can give to SSPs in exchange for SSP services such as shopping, and deaf senior citizen social group activities; assistance getting to/from doctor appointments where an interpreter is used for the actual appointment, but an SSP helps with transportation, guiding to and within the building, and provides environmental information while waiting for the appointment**

**Training Requirements: no requirements however training is provided to interested SSPs and interpreters; emphasis on self-advocacy by deaf-blind persons**

**Program Coordination:** little or no coordination required  
**Other:** deaf-blind consumers identified the need for the service and designed the program; almost all of the consumers use ASL as their primary language; almost all of the SSPs are Deaf

## **TEXAS**

**Travis County Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**  
2201 Post Road, Ste 100, Austin TX 78704

512-410-6529 voice/TTY/videophone

Stacy Landry, LPC - Program Manager

Doug Rollins, Office Manager

[doug.rollins@co.travis.tx.us](mailto:doug.rollins@co.travis.tx.us)

[www.austindeafservices.org](http://www.austindeafservices.org)

**Service Area:** Travis County (Austin) and surrounding counties

**Program Established:** 1970s

**Funding Sources:** State, county and city funds

**Eligibility:** Hearing loss and 18 years and older.

**Number of Consumers Served:** <5 but can serve more

**Types of Service Requests:** by appointment only for mail reading, bill paying, making videophone calls, budgeting, coordinating services with other agencies. All services are provided in office.

**Training Requirements:** None. Staff who provide services are either Case Managers, Social workers or Interpreters. No SSP staff.

**Program Coordination:** There are three case managers and one social worker on staff.

**Other:** n/a

## **UTAH**

**Div. of Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DSBVI)**



**250 North 1950 West Suite B, Salt Lake City, UT 84116-7902  
801-323-4358 V/TTY/VP direct line  
800-284-1823 voice**

**Position vacant, deaf-blind specialist  
(email to be determined after hire)  
no website**

**Service Area: Utah statewide**

**Program Established: July, 2001 through strong consumer advocacy seeking assistance through the Legislature**

**Funding Sources: DSVBI is allocated \$238,000 each fiscal year by the state of Utah**

**Eligibility: adults out of the public school system; consumers must be able to independently make choices and give directions to SSPs; Legally Blind and Pure Tone Average of 40 or worse in both ears.**

**Number of Consumers Served: approximately 45-55 consumers; DB individuals receive 10 hours per week for a variety of activities to assist them with their vocational rehabilitation case, independent living goals, and inclusion in the community.**

**Types of Service Requests: shopping, mail reading, paying bills, legislative participation, looking for jobs/filling out job applications, personal activities (attending a child's school activity, scrapbooking, gardening, skiing), religious activities, meetings, writing Christmas cards, exercising, socialization, keeping up-to-date with local and national news, and searching the Internet. Involvement in the community is encouraged. No personal medical or self-care services are provided (e.g., help with blood testing for diabetics, bathing), however, help getting to an appointment and during an appointment at a facility providing those services is allowed (i.e. doctor's appointment).**

**Training Requirements: provided as needed; not formalized; exception: State of Utah safe driving and sexual harassment prevention training must be completed before an SSP may**

begin working with consumers and are required again at three year intervals. Background checks are required before hire.

**Program Coordination:** full-time with additional secretarial support provided by DSBVI

**Other:** Consumers are allowed to identify their own SSPs through natural resources or are recruited from the community. SSP's are all encouraged to work with at least 2 consumers. The 10 weekly hours cannot be carried over from week to week. Consumers are responsible for entrance fees and parking fees to activities. SSPs become state employees and therefore cannot already be employed full-time by the state of Utah. SSP positions are at-will, have no benefits (annual and sick leave) and SSPs drive their own vehicles and must show proof of auto insurance.

## **VIRGINIA**

Also see Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind in MD who serve Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, VA

## **WASHINGTON**

Deaf-Blind Service Center (DBSC)

1620 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 200, Seattle, WA 98122-7007

206-452-0062 videophone

Debra Kahn, SSP Coordinator

[ssp@seattledbcs.org](mailto:ssp@seattledbcs.org)

[www.seattledbcs.org](http://www.seattledbcs.org)

**Service Area:** Puget Sound area and Yakima, Washington

**Program Established:** 1985

**Funding Sources:** Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing, City of Seattle, private donations, fundraising events and foundation grants

**Eligibility:** Deaf-Blind Washington residents, ages 18 to 65 receive up to a range of 6 to 10 hours a month. Deaf-Blind senior citizens over age 65 may receive a range of 9 to 12 hours per month. Guidelines are reviewed with all new consumers. New Deaf-Blind participants with no experience of using a SSP are required to take “How to Use SSP Service” training.

(Note: New Deaf-Blind persons must be Washington residents before receiving any SSP service and once s/he becomes a resident, the person will then go through intake screening to determine qualification and possibly receive up to 4 hours per month for a trial period.)

**Number of Consumers Served:** approximately 80 consumers

**Types of Service Requests:** grocery shopping, errands, material reading, basic banking, self-care and transportation to airport, train or bus station

**Training Requirements:** SSPs - 15 hours of training and must already be fluent in ASL (minimum ASL 3). Exemption from ASL skills depends on the need for hearing SSPs to work with non-ASL hard of hearing consumers preferring oral communication. DBSC provides training on guiding and how to convey visual and environmental information to Deaf-Blind participants. DBSC also provides workshops about Deaf-Blind culture and other workshops.

**Program Coordination:** 30 hours per week is ideal for the program of this size

**Other:** Some SSP services are paid and some are volunteered. SSPs are required to have Washington State business license to work as independent contractor as well as driver’s license and auto insurance to be copied and filed. A background check is also required. SSP mentorships are also offered to SSPs to gain skills and confidence. During mentorship, the mentor is paid while the SSP volunteers their time.

## **WISCONSIN**

**The Center for Deaf-Blind Persons, Inc.  
3195 South Superior Street, Milwaukee, WI 53207  
414-481-7477 voice/TTY**

**The videophone is a public phone, so please call  
the voice line and ask to be called back via VP**

**Joan M. Schneider, Executive Director**

**[jschneider@deaf-blind.org](mailto:jschneider@deaf-blind.org)**

**[www.deaf-blind.org](http://www.deaf-blind.org)**

**Service Area: Metropolitan Milwaukee and Southeastern  
Wisconsin**

**Program Established: Center established in 1985; SSP  
program in 1997 with a local grant**

**Funding Sources: foundations, civic organizations,  
churches, businesses, individuals, memorials and service  
agreements: DVR, County adult service and County older  
adult services**

**Eligibility: youth and adults (of any age) with combined  
hearing-vision impairments**

**Number of Consumers Served: 20+ by paid SSPs;**

**Types of Service Requests: includes but is not limited to:  
mail reading, bill paying, apartment search, labeling, home  
organization, medical appointments, airport assistance,  
visiting shut-ins, and clothing/grocery/gift shopping.**

**Primarily, interpreter students and other volunteers provide  
interpreting, guiding and other assistance at the support and  
social groups under the supervision of paid Center staff.**

**Training Requirements: paid staff members participate in  
ongoing staff development sessions. For interpreter student  
volunteers, the Center offers in-service training and  
workshops on etiquette, safe guide techniques,  
communication methods, relaying visual information, eye  
diseases, use of assistive listening devices, and simulation  
experiences.**

**Program Coordination: part-time**

**Other: SSP and consumer guidelines are discussed with new consumers. The goal of the SSP program is to empower – not to create dependence.**