



Virginia Department for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing
Agency Updates
for the
Virginia Interagency Coordination Council Meeting

December 13, 2017

VDDHH Open House - 45th Anniversary! – All of us at VDDHH take this opportunity to thank those who joined us as we celebrated our 45th Anniversary. Approximately 150 persons came to celebrate with us over those two days.

New Staff – Tressela Kimball Bateson comes to VDDHH as the Community Services Specialist. She joined VDDHH on September 1, 2017 and brings a wealth of experiences. She and the Community Services Manager will be working together on many projects. Tressela will be training new police officers of Criminal Justice Academies and first responders throughout the Commonwealth. She is also working on developing a “Directory of Services” that provides a listing of niche services available to deaf and hard of hearing Virginians.

Also joining us at VDDHH is Brittany Howard in the position of Technology Assistance Program (TAP) Specialist Coordinator. Prior to joining the VDDHH staff, Brittany, worked as an Outreach Specialist for the disAbility Resource Center in Fredericksburg, VA. In her new position, she will serve as the Coordinator overseeing the delivery, installation and training on assistive devices distributed through VDDHH’s TAP Training contracts.

More information about them is in the “Commonwealth Caller,” a VA Relay newsletter to be provided during the meeting. We are excited to have both of them join VDDHH as our new team members and look forward to their successes. Please extend a warm welcome.

Virginia Relay – VDDHH is seeking Virginia Relay users to join the Virginia Relay Advisory Council (VRAC)! The VRAC need new representatives to fill these vacancies:

- Internet/Wireless Relay user
- Captioned Telephone Service (CTS) user
- Video Relay Service (VRS) user

Attached a flyer with more detailed information. Also, copies of the “Commonwealth Caller,” a VA Relay newsletter will be available during the meeting.

Virginia Quality Assurance Service Materials Launch – After extensive review and development, the new VQAS version went into use the week of October 23, 2017. Rater standardization meetings have been scheduled last November where raters had the opportunity to rate the materials with actual candidates for the first time. VDDHH will monitor the rating process and candidate response to these materials. A second version is on track for implementation in late 2018.

Guidance for the Virginia General Assembly – After much discussion with the Clerks of the House and the Senate, a draft document has been developed by VDDHH and submitted to the Clerks for review and implementation. The document will serve as the procedures for the Staff and members of the General Assembly to ensure effective communication both during and between sessions. Every member will receive training on the guidelines.