



## Making Your Community Accessible to People with HEARING LOSS



Like other caring communities, you probably offer wheelchair ramps, automatic doors, Braille and other accommodations to help people with disabilities enjoy equal access to community services and events.

*But what are you doing to meet your ADA requirement to ensure inclusion for people with hearing loss?*

**FACT: Almost one million New Jersey residents\* struggle with hearing loss.**

- Many rely on hearing aids or cochlear implants for help with communication.
- A small percentage - around 2%\* - use American Sign Language (ASL) to communicate.

**FACT: Hearing loss affects people of all ages.**

- 25% of people over 60 suffer hearing loss.\*
- It is the major medical problem affecting young combat veterans.\*
- Increasingly, young people experience permanent hearing problems from over-exposure to loud noise.

**FACT: For those with hearing loss, community-accessibility challenges include:**

- Large meeting areas
- Background noise
- People speaking softly
- Several people speaking at once

Courtrooms, Municipal Offices, Libraries, Public Meetings, Outdoor Events, Emergency Preparedness -

*How are you making these accessible for citizens with hearing loss?*

Options might include:

- Captioning (various types for different situations)
- Assistive-Listening devices
- Bluetooth technology
- American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreters
- Hearing/Induction Loops

**FYI:** Now internationally recognized as the “access ramp” to community inclusion for most people with hearing loss, electro-magnetic hearing loops are easily-installed and deliver a speaker’s voice directly to a listener’s hearing aids or cochlear implant.

If your municipality needs help selecting short or long term solutions to meeting its ADA hearing-assistance requirements, your local Center for Independent Living can refer you to resources. CILs are listed by county on the SILC website ([www.njsilc.org](http://www.njsilc.org))

One of those resources is the NJ chapter of the Hearing Loss Association of America. HLAA-NJ can be reached at [info@hearingloss-nj.org](mailto:info@hearingloss-nj.org)

\*For fact sources/documentation, visit [www.hearingloss-nj.org](http://www.hearingloss-nj.org)

