Procedures for Installation of and Monitoring of the Warning Sign: DEAF CHILD

Statement of Need

Hearing loss is the most common birth defect in the United States and affects approximately three (3) out of 1,000 live births. Hearing loss incidence rises to six (6) out of 1000 by age five (5) due to illnesses, medications, accidents and delayed genetic onset.

Hearing aids and cochlear implants are common assistive technologies for hearing loss. Their effectiveness is directly related to the acoustic environment. Distance and background noise significantly impede auditory access. Localization of sound (where the sound is coming from) is particularly difficult.

Hearing loss can occur in one or both ears and can vary in type and severity. Most hearing losses cause a reduction in loudness and distortion of the incoming sounds. Although children with unilateral (one ear) or mild hearing losses function well in some listening situations; their ability to detect sound and localize its origin is still compromised.

Motorists may be alerted to areas where children with hearing loss live and play, so that they might reduce their speeds and be vigilant, for everyone's safety. However, the effectiveness of these types of "warning" signs as a deterrent to pedestrian/vehicle accidents has been difficult to measure. The DEAF CHILD warning sign is not intended to regulate speed and is not a guarantee that pedestrian/vehicle accidents will be avoided.

Families are allowed to apply for these signs when they are in a permanent residence (when an anticipated stay is greater than six months). Because of the labor expense involved, DelDOT limits the number of times it will relocate a sign for a child to two times for the duration the sign is needed.

Criteria/Procedures

1. Parents or legal guardians of children who have a documented hearing loss are eligible to apply for a DEAF CHILD sign.
2. Requests for the DEAF CHILD sign must be made in writing to the State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD) and signed by the parent or guardian of the deaf child. After verifying the required documentation, a request will be made to the appropriate responsible signing jurisdiction/agency for their consideration. Upon their approval, sign installation procedures will proceed.
3. On state maintained roadways, two signs will be placed at the primary residence for the child – one in each direction of travel at the appropriate warning distance to the child's primary residence. The appropriate location of the signs will be in accordance with

traffic operations and terrain within the proximity of the residence. Approved signs submitted to DelDOT for installation may only be placed on state maintained roadways, not on private roads. If a child resides within town limits, the municipality, which has the responsibility to install the sign, has the option of acquiring the sign and post materials as well as installation services from DelDOT. DelDOT will make every effort to work with the local municipality by providing the initial sign, post and installation labor. However, future installation, relocation and maintenance of the sign will be the responsibility of the municipality.

4. Additional signs for the same child will not be placed at the homes of family members, at the child's bus stop, or on neighboring streets (e.g. paths to school).
5. If distance from other warning signs for the DEAF CHILD warning sign is not available, a supplemental DEAF CHILD plaque may be attached to an existing roadway warning sign at or near where the DEAF CHILD sign were to have been placed.
6. It is the family's responsibility to notify SCPD if any of the following occur:
   a. The family moves to a new location, **or**
   b. The family determines the sign is no longer needed, **or**
   c. The family's contact information changes, **or**
   d. The child reaches age 18.
7. SCPD may contact the family, at a minimum, every three years to determine if the sign is still needed.

State Council for Persons with Disabilities

410 Federal Street - Suite 1

Dover, DE 19901

Phone: (302) 739-3620

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TO: State Council for Persons with Disabilities

RE: DEAF CHILD WARNING SIGN

I would like to request a Deaf Child Warning Sign(s) be posted for the following child. I understand that the effectiveness of these types of "warning" signs as a deterrent to pedestrian/vehicle accidents has been difficult to measure. I also accept that this sign will not guarantee my child's safety and that he/she should be accompanied/supervised by a responsible adult. I have attached the appropriate documentation (audiological report).

I also agree to notify the State Council for Persons with Disabilities (**302) 739-3620** should my child move, if he/she no longer requires use of this sign, if any contact information changes or if he/she reaches the age of 18.

Today's Date: _____

CHILD's NAME:_____

CHILD's BIRTHDATE:_____

ADDRESS:_____(street)

_____(development/apt)

_____(city/state/zip)

PHONE:_____

EMAIL: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____ Date_____

Signature: Parent/Guardian:_____ Date_____

Relationship to Child_____