

# **A Report on Support Service Providers (SSP)**



**Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities**

**January 5, 2017**

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# **The Committee on People with Disabilities**

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## **Support Service Providers (SSP)**

On May 4, 2016, during their nationwide rally, members of the Deaf Grass Roots Movement (DGM) met at the Capitol with the Executive Director of the Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities to express their concerns on not being able to independently access the community due to a lack of support services for Texans who are DeafBlind. Later this year, on September 30<sup>th</sup> at the Texas Association for the Deaf Symposium in New Braunfels, representatives from several deaf advocacy groups restated these same concerns over having no program in Texas to deliver Support Service Providers for Texans who are DeafBlind<sup>1</sup>.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) identifies a category of severe disabilities known as "low incidence disabilities." People who are both deaf and blind fall into this category. According to the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, DeafBlindness is a chronic condition in which a person not only has deafness, with their hearing impaired severely enough so that most speech cannot be understood with amplification, but who also has legal blindness, where their visual acuity is 20/200 or less in the better eye with best correction or their visual field is 20 degrees or less. In other words, DeafBlindness is a combination of sight and hearing loss that not only affects a person's ability to communicate or access information, but significant and unique adaptations may be required for the individual to maintain independence and move around in the world. DeafBlindness is a unique and diverse condition that may impact a wide range of sensory capabilities, include the presence of additional disabilities, and vary at the age of onset for vision and hearing loss. Estimates indicate that there are approximately 70,000 people in the United States who are DeafBlind. It is estimated that 2,486 Texans are DeafBlind according to the Helen Keller National Center's (HKNC) database.

So how can the critical needs of persons who are DeafBlind who want to live more independent and productive lives within their communities be met? Support Service Providers (SSPs), or Interveners, may be able to assist these individuals with their challenges.

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<sup>1</sup> DeafBlind is the spelling adopted by the [American Association of the DeafBlind](#) (AADB) to reflect the dual disability of a hearing and vision loss for the cultural community of the DeafBlind

## Research Summary on SSPs

Support Service Providers (SSPs) are specially trained professionals who enable people with combined vision and hearing losses (commonly referred to as persons who are "DeafBlind") who communicate with American Sign Language to access their environments and make informed decisions. SSPs provide individuals who are DeafBlind with visual and environmental information, sighted guide services, and communication accessibility. Presently, Texas does not have a mechanism to pay for SSP services.

Research gathered by the Helen Keller National Center in March 2016 on SSP programs/services in other states is summarized as follows. More in-depth information on state SSP programs/services provided by the HKNC and other sources can be found in Table 1.

- Most services are provided locally in metropolitan areas, not statewide;
- Most services are funded by grants and/or donations or for vocational rehabilitation (VR) clients through the state's VR agency;
- The number of people served per year vary from 5 to 80+ based on the 30 states who responded to inquiries on services provided;
- Most SSP services requested are shopping, errands, reading mail, attending community events, employment related tasks, attending appointments and transportation to events;
- The number of service hours provided per month vary across the country from 4-80; and
- **Most SSPs volunteer their services.**

The HKNC does not claim to have counted everyone in the information gathered. There are children in K-12 programs, adults in rural areas, and individuals who are unidentified by the HKNC and may be unaccounted for.

## Interveners

The Texas Health and Human Services DeafBlind with Multiple Disabilities (DBMD) waiver program "provides home and community-based services to people who are DeafBlind with multiple disabilities as a cost-effective alternative to institutional placement. The program focuses on increasing opportunities for consumers to communicate and interact with their environment." Services are intended to enhance, rather than replace, existing

informal or formal supports and resources. Residential habilitation, respite, intervener, supported employment, employment assistance, and support consultation are available through both the consumer directed and the traditional agency option.

An intervener is defined in [Texas Administrative Code §42.103](#) as “a service provider with specialized training and skills in DeafBlindness who, working with one individual at a time, serves as a facilitator to involve an individual in home and community services and activities, and who is classified as an "Intervener", "Intervener I", "Intervener II", or "Intervener III" in accordance with [Texas Government Code, §531.0973](#). The services of an Intervener are not to be confused with those of an SSP. Although both providers help people who are DeafBlind access the community and environment around them, they each provide additional services that are different.

## **SSP vs. Intervener**

Jackie Souhrada, DBMD Program Specialist for the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, explains that both Interveners and SSPs help someone who is DeafBlind connect to the world around them. Both provide the person who is DeafBlind “with access to clear and consistent sensory information.” However, the knowledge, skills and abilities needed for each type of job are different based on the level of services provided.

An Intervener is typically a paraprofessional who has received in-depth, specialized training in DeafBlindness. Working with people of all ages who are DeafBlind, the Intervener works closely in a one-on-one relationship with the person who is DeafBlind to gain intimate knowledge of the person they are working with in order to help them “reach out and connect with the broader world.” The role of the Intervener is to provide specific intervention in three areas: access to information; access to communication; and access to social and emotional development. The Intervener’s personal connection with a person who is DeafBlind reduces any sense of isolation or disconnection from the world and helps them to build a bond of trust. The Intervener may be the one person in the DeafBlind person’s life who can help him or her begin to interact with others, express preferences, make choices, solve problems, and develop self-esteem. An Intervener is paid for the work they do and has an occupational career ladder.

On the other hand, Support Service Providers (SSPs) are typically unpaid volunteers who receive informal training of short duration (typically a two-day

overview with some experiential opportunities). SSPs generally act as a sighted guide and communication facilitator. According to the American Association for the DeafBlind, "An important aspect of the relationship between the person who is DeafBlind and an SSP is that the former makes all decisions. The SSP can provide information to the individual to assist in considering options, but at no point should the SSP make choices and decisions. The professional SSP strives to be helpful but objective, supportive yet empowering, and sparing in expressing their personal preferences while providing services." Services typically provided by SSPs include transportation to the store, communication in a social setting, serving as a human guide while walking, etc. While persons who are DeafBlind may have their favorite SSPs, some may never have met the SSP who is assigned to provide a needed service for them. Overall, the SSP's role does not have the depth nor the same level of expertise as that of an Intervener. In Texas, SSPs are usually volunteers as the state does not have funding or a strategy to pay for SSP services.

Haley Broadway, a DeafBlind constituent, explains the following about SSPs, many of whom are deaf themselves:

SSPs can:

- Serve as a guide when escorting a person to or from a meeting room, a restroom in an office, or through a lunch line during a workshop;
- Provide visual and environmental information which can take several forms: describing the activity, mood or who is in a room; reading the menu if the print is not legible and voicing/interpreting that information; or locating food items in a grocery store; and
- Provide support to the DeafBlind in their homes, at their place of employment, in their community or elsewhere.

SSPs cannot:

- Provide personal care, e.g., bathing and grooming;
- Run errands alone for the person who is DeafBlind;
- Make decisions for the person who is DeafBlind;
- Teach or instruct;
- Should refrain from formal interpreting in medical, legal, business, or other settings; and
- An SSP who is also a professional interpreter should be careful to differentiate which role they are assuming in any particular situation.

## **Funding**

Based on GCPD's research, SSPs are funded by other states in the following manner: private donations, grants, local taxes, vocational rehabilitation service funds, and/or state Medicaid dollars.

## **Recommendations**

Providing SSP services in Texas communities can have an enormous impact by allowing greater independence, self-determination, and a higher quality of life for Texans who are DeafBlind. This would be especially true in small and rural communities where limited or no services may be available to these citizens. Therefore, the GCPD proposes the 85th legislature implement the following recommendations:

1. Establish an SSP program that includes training for SSPs so that services are provided in a standard and consistent manner. The HKNC can assist with training information for SSPs as can a number of DeafBlind community members who have been formally trained as SSP Trainers.
2. Establish a pay rate for SSP services with a graded scale of wages similar to that of the Interpreter I, II and III career path. Pay should be based on SSP-level training requirements and American Sign Language (ASL) fluency. A proposed wage of \$20 per hour is recommended. As a note, the 2016-2017 State of Texas Salary Schedule published by the Texas State Auditor's Office reflects the beginning salary for an Interpreter I is approximately \$17 per hour.
3. Establish a voucher program to pay for SSP services. The Specialized Telecommunications Assistance Program (STAP) administered by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to provide assistive technology equipment is a voucher program that could be a model for an SSP voucher program. This may lessen the demands on state resources to administer this program. The state of Tennessee operates its SSP services as a voucher program and has provided GCPD with information on its voucher operations.

4. Establish the funding source for the SSP program, noting any inherent obligations that may be associated with the source of funds (e.g., Medicaid funds, general revenues, etc.)
5. Establish an initial proposed budget of \$5.808 million for the SSP program. This cost is derived as follows:
  - a. Estimated maximum number of hours per month for services to (1) individual (e.g., personal business, grocery shopping, attendance at a community event): 5 hours per week or 20 hrs per month = 240 SSP service hours/year per individual.
  - b. Estimated 44% of the estimated 2,486 people who are DeafBlind will need SSP services (many in this population are school age (K-12), already receiving Intervener services, are adults in the DBMD waiver program, or have enough vision or hearing to function without an SSP): 1100 individuals served.
  - c. Calculation for cost of program: 1,100 individuals x 240 service hrs/yr = 264,000 hrs/yr x \$20/hr = \$5,280,000/year.
  - d. Administrative Costs for SSP program: \$5,280,000 x 10% = \$528,000
  - e. Total Program Cost: \$5,280,000 + \$528,000 = \$5,808,000

**Estimates for SSP Program Participant Costs**

| <b>Number of Participants</b> | <b>Times</b> | <b>Yearly Hours</b> | <b>Times</b> | <b>Hourly Rate</b> | <b>Equals</b> | <b>Annual Cost</b> |
|-------------------------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| <b>1,100</b>                  | <b>x</b>     | <b>240</b>          | <b>x</b>     | <b>\$20</b>        | <b>=</b>      | <b>\$5,280,000</b> |

**Estimates for Total SSP Program (Participant Plus Administrative Costs)**

| <b>Program Costs</b> | <b>Administrative Costs</b> | <b>Total Costs</b> |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>\$5,280,000</b>   | <b>\$528,000</b>            | <b>\$5,808,000</b> |

6. Establish the fee for service in rule to facilitate future changes.
7. Designate a state agency to run the SSP program.

**Table 1.**

| <b>State</b>    | <b>Service Area</b> | <b>Funding</b>  | <b>Services Requested</b>   | <b># Served</b> | <b>Hours Served</b> | <b>SSP Pay</b>   | <b>Provider Name/Address</b>  |
|-----------------|---------------------|---|---|-----------------|---------------------|--|---|
| <b>Arizona</b>  | Tucson              | Private donations and Community dollars   | Shopping, recreation, reading mail, errands, civic involvement and support participation in AZ Assoc DB meetings & events   | 10-20           |                     | P/T  | <b>Community Outreach Program for the Deaf (COPD)</b><br>268 West Adams Street, Tucson, AZ 85705<br>520-314-4798<br>videophone            |
| <b>Arizona</b>  | Phoenix             | Grants, Donations and Community funds   | Shopping, recreation, reading mail, errands, civic involvement & support participation in AZ DeafBlind Community mtgs/events  | 22-25           |                     | P/T  | <b>Valley Ctr for the Deaf</b><br>5025 E. Washington St. Suite 114, Phoenix, AZ 85034<br>623-208-4351<br>videophone<br>602-267-1921 voice |
| <b>Arkansas</b> | Little Rock         | Vocational Rehabilitation<br><br>Per Cheryl Sugg: Pd thru annual budget \$35,000 set aside from GR. Individual not on VR or IL caseloads. | Must have SSP plan w/ consumer goals identified. Primary goals socialization, ind living & access to community. Reading mail, shopping, errands, exercise class, monthly social group & occ weddings or funerals. | 30              | Up to 10 hrs/wk     | Must provide 100 SSP vol hrs before can be paid. Must maintain yrly CEUs | <b>Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS)</b><br>900 W. 7th St, Little Rock, AR 72201<br>501-686-2800 voice                               |

| <b>State</b>      | <b>Service Area</b>  | <b>Funding</b>  | <b>Services Requested</b>  | <b># Served</b>    | <b>Hours Served</b> | <b>SSP Pay</b>          | <b>Provider Name/Address</b>   |
|-------------------|--|---|--|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|--|
| <b>California</b> | 8 county region in central CA (58 co tot) Serves chdn and adults | DHHSC funded by Dept of Soc Svcs, grants & fee for svc. Rec'd 1-yr non-renew grant from Dept of Rehab in 2005 to prov paid SSP svcs SSP prog currently oper on volunteer basis. | Core svc of the agency. Svcs specific for DeafBlind community: case mgmt, SSP services, SSP training, DBSG & interpreting. Req Services: transp, shopping, reading mail, making phone calls, exercise, out-of-town travel to DB events, comp assistance, ind living assist & assist at rec & social events | 10-15              |                     | Volunteer               | <b>Deaf and Hard of Hearing Svc Center (DHHSC)</b><br>5340 N. Fresno St,<br>Fresno, CA 93710<br>559-225-3382 voice                   |
| <b>California</b> | San Diego Co Only - residents who are DeafBlind                  | Private donations; Task force working on statewide funding for the future   | Errands & appts, mail reading, food/clothes shopping, rec activities, ind living tasks, social & comm events & empl related tasks  | 45 per fiscal year |                     | P/T paid                | <b>HKNC Reg 9 SSP Program</b><br>9939 Hibert St, Ste 108,<br>San Diego, CA 92131<br>858-578-1600 V/TTY<br>858-397-5522<br>videophone |
| <b>Colorado</b>   | <b>Statewide</b>   | \$10K grant from CO Commission for Deaf & HoH, reauth annually  | Reading mail, attend DB soc events & task force mtgs, shopping, dr appts, legis meetings, etc.   | 18                 | 10 hrs/mo           | \$15/hr Bkgrd cks req'd | <b>HKNC Reg 8 SSP Prog</b><br>190 E. 9th Ave, Ste 150,<br>Denver, CO 80203<br>720-457-3676<br>voice/videophone<br>303.934.9037(V)    |

| State                                      | Service Area   | Funding   | Services Requested  | # Served | Hours Served | SSP Pay         | Provider Name/Address   |
|--|--|---|---|----------|--------------|-----------------|---|
| <b>Connecticut</b>                         | <b>Statewide</b>   | State Agcy - Dept Rehab Svcs w/Bureau of Edu & Svcs for Blind: <a href="http://www.ct.gov/besb/site/default.asp">http://www.ct.gov/besb/site/default.asp</a> ; Some grants & fundraising events | SSP & DeafBlind svcs incl monthly DeafBlind supp grp facilitated by 2 prof counselors | 12       |              | P/T & Volunteer | <b>Communication Advocacy Network (CAN)</b><br>151 New Park Ave, Ste 101, Hartford, CT 06106<br>860-566-9489<br>videophone (for information)<br>860-566-9490<br>videophone (for director)               |
| <b>District of Columbia/ Washington DC</b> | Gallaudet University sponsored events – current Gallaudet students, faculty & staff only | University<br>Goal: to give stud access to student life on campus, reduce lack of access to uniq college exper that may occur btw peers in a social setting                                     | Only for Gallaudet sponsored events   | TBD      |              | P/T             | <b>Gallaudet Interpreting Svc Paraprof Program</b><br>800 Florida Ave NE, HMB 427, Washington, DC 20002<br>202-250-2115<br>videophone (main office contact)<br>202-651-5199 voice (main office contact) |
| <b>Florida</b>                             | <b>Statewide</b><br>Age 18 or older  | Donations, Workshops Fundraisers; Working on  | Social; comm activities   | 20       |              | P/T; Volunteer  | <b>Florida DeafBlind Assn, Inc. (FDBA) FL Support Svc Providers (FSSP)</b>  |

| State            | Service Area  | Funding  | Services Requested   | # Served | Hours Served | SSP Pay | Provider Name/Address  |
|------------------|---|--|--|----------|--------------|---------|--|
|                  |   | grant proposals.   |  |          |              |         | 5055 Dale Mabry Hwy, #734, Tampa, FL 33611<br>386-546-5706 V/text  |
| <b>Georgia</b>   | <b>Statewide</b><br>VR clients only   | Vocational Rehabilitation  | Svcs conducted thru scope of VR and client VR goals  | 80+      |              |         | <b>GA Voc Rehabilitation Agy (GVRA)</b><br>450 Riverside Parkway, Ste 200 Rome, GA 30161-2976<br>706-295-6400(V)<br>706-622-6948<br>videophone |
| <b>Louisiana</b> | Covers 27 Parishes (adults over 18):<br><i>Lafayette:</i> Acadia, Evangeline, Iberia, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, Vermillion.<br><i>Baton Rouge:</i> Ascension, Assumption, East Baton Rouge, E. Feliciana, Iberville, Livingston, | State grant from LA Commission for the Deaf.<br><br><i>Pointe Coupee, St. James, W. Baton Rouge, West Feliciana</i><br><br><i>Lake Charles:</i> Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Jefferson Davis<br><br><i>New Orleans:</i> Jefferson, | SSPs guide DeafBlind person & takes them places. Prog 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, medical/legal appointments, and/or exercising. | 74       |              | F/T     | <b>Affiliated Blind of LA (ABL)</b><br>409 West St. Mary Blvd., Lafayette, LA 70506<br>337-234-6492 voice<br>337-446-4648<br>videophone        |

| State            | Service Area  | Funding  | Services Requested  | # Served                                | Hours Served                        | SSP Pay                   | Provider Name/Address  |
|------------------|---|--|---|---|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
|                  |   | Lafourche, Orleans, and Terrebonne.  |   |   |                                     |                           |  |
| <b>Louisiana</b> | 20 Parishes BatonRouge Lafayette, L. Charles;<br>4 Parishes N. Orleans: Jefferson, Lafourche, Orleans, Terrebonne | Statutory dedicated fund<br>Program is being expanded to include additional parishes | Shopping, religious, medical, recreational & socialization events/activities  | Unk                                     |                                     | F/T                       | <b>Louisiana Commission for the Deaf (LCD)</b><br>P.O. Box 3198, Baton Rouge, LA 70821<br>800-256-1523(V)<br>225-341-4837<br>videophone          |
| <b>Maine</b>     | <b>Statewide</b> (most volunteers are in southern Maine)  | Penobscot Grant  | Transp, bills, reading mail, mtgs, human guide at events, etc. Can provide any support that allows ind who is DeafBlind or has dual sensory impairment to complete tasks for self. SSPs can't do tasks for consumer | 18                                      |                                     | Volun<br>teer             | <b>IRIS Network "Independence Without Fear"</b><br>189 Park Ave, Portland, ME 04102<br>207-774-6273 V (main)<br>207-766-7097<br>videophone       |
| <b>Maryland</b>  | Maryland statewide, Metro DC: Arlington Co, VA; City of Alexandria VA & the                                       | Various limited city and county grants; state VR agencies                            | None listed   | 5-15 (rolling based on grant criteria ) | 15 hrs/mo based on SSP availability | P/T (less than 20 hrs/wk) | <b>Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind</b><br>8720 Georgia Ave, Ste 1011, Silver Spring, MD 20910<br>240-737-5100(V)<br>240-393-4009<br>videophone |

| State                | Service Area         | Funding   | Services Requested   | # Served           | Hours Served                            | SSP Pay   | Provider Name/Address   |
|----------------------|----------------------|---|--|--------------------|---|-----------|---|
|                      | District of Columbia |   |  |                    |   |           |   |
| <b>Maryland</b>      | Campus Students      | University  | Students offer companionship, transportation, communication facilitation to DeafBlind individuals  | Varies by semester | Program is F/T during 9 mo acad prog yr | Volunteer | <b>Towson Univ Deaf Studies Program</b><br>8000 York Rd, Towson, MD 21252-0001<br>410-704-2436 voice<br>443-377-3438 vidphone   |
| <b>Massachusetts</b> | <b>Statewide</b>     | \$450,000 annual contract overseen by MA Comm for Blind (MCB) & MCDHH and operated by D.E.A.F. Inc.   | Errands/appts, reading mail, clothes or food shopping, gym, transportation & guidance to medical appts & social/rec activities   | 70                 | Up to 16 hrs/mo                         |           | <b>MA DeafBlind Comm Access Network (DBCAN)</b><br>c/o D.E.A.F. Inc.<br>215 Brighton Ave, Allston, MA 02134<br>617-254-4041<br>voice/TTY<br>Elaine Ducharme, Director   |
| <b>Michigan</b>      | <b>Statewide</b>     | Cash-match agmt btw MCB & oth entities incl Comm MHealth & Int Sch Dist as sit dictates. Ptnr agy must use local, not fed, \$. Pays apx 27% tot | Termed Intervenor svcs not SSP. Including but not limited to shopping, cooking, transportation, increased communication & language skills, job coach, leisure time activities. Goal: assist consumer to become as independent as possible by facilitating communication. End goal: | 1-13               | Up to 20 hrs/wk (i.e., 80 hrs/mo)       | P/T       | <b>MI Bureau of Svcs for Blind Persons (BSBP)</b><br>DeafBlind Unit–<br>Intervenor Prog<br>201 N. Washington Square, 2nd Floor, P.O. Box 30652, Lansing, MI 48909<br>517-335-2871 or 800-292-4200 (V)<br>517-373-4025 or 888-864-1212 (TTY) |

| State            | Service Area   | Funding  | Services Requested  | # Served | Hours Served | SSP Pay   | Provider Name/Address  |
|------------------|--|--|---|----------|--------------|---|--|
|                  |  | prog cost. MCB cvrs 73%; can use ptr share 4 for fed match   | achieve employment in community.  |          |              |   |  |
| <b>Minnesota</b> | <b>Statewide</b><br>Mostly Twin Cities DeafBlind adults (over 21; 18 if no longer covered by IEP- Individualized Education Plan) | MN State Dept Human Svcs-Deaf & HoH Svcs Div; Hennepin Co thru Hum Svcs & Pub Health-Chdn, Fam & Adult Svcs Div; Medicaid Waiver Prog-Comm Alt for Disabled Ind (CADI) | Food shopping, errands of daily living, guided to health appts & comm assist for community groups such as beading craft class.  | 66       | 20-25 hrs/mo | \$14-16/hr + 54¢/mile (federal reimb. rate)<br><br>Note: Employs 30 P/T hrly SSP staff; half are deaf/HoH | <b>DeafBlind Svcs MN (DBSM)</b><br>Adult Comm Svcs (SSP Prog)<br>1936 Lyndale Ave South, Minneapolis, MN 55403<br>612-843-3440(V)<br>952-388-2102<br>videophone<br>612-362-8422 (TTY)                  |
| <b>Minnesota</b> | <b>Statewide</b>   | State grant funding-direct appropriation from MN State Legis   | SSP, interveners, transp, equip, training, comm skills instruct (Note: this funding allows consumer to det svc they need. Not all consumers will need/desire SSP support)<br><br>Add'l info: Program allows ind to purchase svcs or | 61       |              | P/T   | <b>MN Dept of Human Svcs - Deaf &amp; HoH Svcs Div DeafBlind Consumer Directed Svcs Grant Program</b><br>P.O. Box 64969, St. Paul, MN 55164-0969<br>651-431-3253 (V)<br>651-964-1714 direct videophone |

| State                | Service Area               | Funding   | Services Requested  | # Served     | Hours Served                 | SSP Pay                               | Provider Name/Address  |
|----------------------|----------------------------|---|---|--------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
|                      |                            |   | goods (equip, tech, etc.) needed to remain indep, become more indep & integrated into their community.  |              |                              |                                       | Each prog P/ identifies outcomes they want to achieve then designs budget to purchase goods/svcs they need to accomplish the outcomes.                         |
| <b>Missouri</b>      | Kansas City/St. Joseph, MO |   | Assistance w/appts, food shopping, deaf events  | Less than 10 |                              | Volunteer & Paid (No pay rate stated) | <b>Midland Empire Resources for Indep Living (MERIL)</b><br>4420 S. 40th St,<br>St. Joseph, MO 64503<br>816-396-0234<br>videophone/voice                       |
| <b>New Hampshire</b> | <b>Statewide</b>           | Part B (Medicare)   | Guides for shopping, social events, errands, etc.<br>Trng Rqmts: SSP training course by the Coordinator | 7            |                              | P/T                                   | <b>NE Deaf &amp; HoH Svcs, Inc.</b> 57 Regional Dr,<br>Concord, NH 03301<br>603-224-1850(V)<br>603-968-5889 vidphone   |
| <b>New Hampshire</b> | <b>Statewide</b>           | Ind Liv grant-negoc for SSP svcs in State Plan for Ind Living since beg of svc (10 yrs).<br>NEDHHS successfully rec, funding & providing this svc -Wm Finn<br>Off of Svcs for Blind & Vis Imp |   | 10           | 1-8 hrs/wk (i.e., 32 hrs/mo) | \$15-20/hr                            | <b>NE Deaf and HoH Services</b><br>Paul Baravella<br><a href="mailto:pbaravella@ndhhs.org">pbaravella@ndhhs.org</a><br>Can answer questions about SSP program. |

| <b>State</b>      | <b>Service Area</b>         | <b>Funding</b>   | <b>Services Requested</b>   | <b># Served</b> | <b>Hours Served</b> | <b>SSP Pay</b>                         | <b>Provider Name/Address</b>   |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|--|---|-----------------|---------------------|--|--|
| <b>New Jersey</b> | <b>Statewide</b><br>VR only | Voc rehab-VR eligible. Dept Human Svcs, Comm for Blind & Visually Imp  | Approved Act list includes: post-secondary education/training, employment, health/well-being, household mgmt, community integration   | 60              | 16 hrs/mo           | P/T<br>47 SSPs<br>(No pay rate stated) | <b>Support Svc Prov of NJ (SSPNJ)</b><br>College of NJ, Sch of Edu<br>P.O. Box 7718, Ewing,<br>NJ 08628<br>609-771-2795 (V)  |
| <b>New Mexico</b> | <b>Statewide</b>            | State legis thru NM Comm for Deaf & HoH; contracts w/ NM Centennial Care Medicaid Waiver Prog; FCC's Nat'l D-B Equip Distrib Program | Advoc & supp at appts w/ drs, SSA, HS & Case Mgmt Svcs, referrals to other sources such as Rep Payee Svcs & voc svcs. SSP req incl text-translating & transp. Access technology thru FCC Prog (iCanConnect). Personnel dev trng to other svc prov in state. | 70+             |                     | F/T<br>15 SSPs                         | <b>Comm Outreach Prog for Deaf-NM (COPD-NM)</b><br><b>DeafBlind &amp; Spec Svcs</b><br>3908 Carlisle Blvd NE,<br>Albq, NM 87107<br>505-255-7636(V)<br>505-814-5663 vidphone (Larry)<br>505-435-9283 vidphone (Carla) |
| <b>New York</b>   | HKNC in Sands Pt, NK        | Volunteer Program  | Food shopping, errands, recreational activities (e.g., sightseeing in NYC), religious services  | 20-30           | Hrs prov as needed  | Volunteer                              | <b>Helen Keller Nat'l Ctr (HKNC)</b><br>141 Middle Neck Rd,<br>Sands Point, NY 11050<br>516-944-8900(V)<br>516-570-3246<br>videophone  |
| <b>New York</b>   | Rochester (Monroe Co)       | Vendor contracts; Grants and donations to operate SSP  | Food shopping, medical/legal appointments, social events; community-based meetings  | 20              | As needed           |  | <b>Ctr for Disability Rights, Inc.</b><br>497 State Street,<br>Rochester, NY 14608   |

| State                 | Service Area               | Funding  | Services Requested  | # Served   | Hours Served | SSP Pay   | Provider Name/Address  |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|--|---|--|--------------|-----------|--|
|                       |                            | svcs-ongoing recruitment for add'l funds                               |   |  |              |           | 585-286-2727<br>vidphone/V/TTY   |
| <b>North Carolina</b> | <b>Statewide</b>           | Volunteer Program<br><br>Approx 200 volunteers statewide               | Transport to and from doctor appointments, family functions, sport activities, local conferences, camp, other DB events; facilitate informal communication facilitation for social func, sighted guide & transport. | 5/mo directly<br><br>45 - 50 during local conf, camp & statewide DB event all year |              | Volunteer | <b>NC DeafBlind Assoc (NCDBA)</b><br>NCDBA Communication Access Team<br><a href="mailto:NCDBASSPs@gmail.com">NCDBASSPs@gmail.com</a><br><a href="http://www.ncdba.org">www.ncdba.org</a> |
| <b>Ohio</b>           | Columbus( Franklin County) | Senior Options: Franklin County's tax-levy program for senior citizens | Food shopping, trips to bank, restaurants, reading mail, phone calls, library internet, recreation, using SSP to watch sports on tv or play table games   | 6-12   | 10-15 hrs/mo |           | <b>Comprehensive Prog for the Deaf</b><br>c/o Columbus Speech & Hearing Ctr,<br>510 E. North Broadway,<br>COH 43214<br>614-263-5151 (V)  |
| <b>Ohio</b>           | Columbus Only age 60+      | Medicaid (if qualified) or Tax levy                                    | Reading mail, attending DB social events & task force mtgs, shopping, dr appts, legis mtgs, etc.  |  | 10 hrs/mo    |           | Senior Citizen Options   |

| <b>State</b>        | <b>Service Area</b>   | <b>Funding</b>  | <b>Services Requested</b>   | <b># Served</b> | <b>Hours Served</b>   | <b>SSP Pay</b> | <b>Provider Name/Address</b>   |
|---------------------|---|---|---|-----------------|---|----------------|--|
| <b>Oregon</b>       | Resident: Brookdale Chestnut Lane in Gresham, Oregon  | Medicaid reimbursement  | Shopping, activities, videophone calls, reading mail, sending emails, accompany on doctor appointments  | 14              |   | P/T            | <b>Brookdale Chestnut Lane Gresham</b><br>1219 NE 6th St<br>Gresham, OR 97030<br>503-674-0364(V)<br>503-405-4766<br>videophone   |
| <b>Pennsylvania</b> | <b>Statewide</b><br>Age 18 + & out of K-12  | Grant fr Office of Voc Rehab (OVR), Bureau of Blindness & Visual Svcs (BBVS), Off of Deaf & HoH (ODHH) & PA statewide Ind Living Council-SILC | Food shopping, basic banking, buy clothes, dr appts, comm events/mtgs, fairs-festivals, eating out, organize/sort household items, reading mail and other paperwork, amusement parks, walks around the park, attending sports events. | 50              | Set # SSP hrs/mo based on funds. Hrs allotted at beg of mo; no carry-over to next mo. | F/T            | <b>DeafBlind Living Well Svcs; Ctr for Ind Liv of Central PA (CILCP)</b><br>207 House Ave, Ste 107<br>Camp Hill, PA 17011<br>717-731-1900(V)<br>800-323-6060<br>717-737-1335 (TTY)<br>800-829-7404 (TTY)<br>717-255-0124<br>vidphone |
| <b>Pennsylvania</b> | 8 counties in SE PA:<br>Philadelphia<br>Delaware<br>Chester<br>Montgomery<br>Bucks, Berks<br>Lancaster<br>Lebanon | Grants, donations;<br><br>Some fee for service  | Requests made through SSP Coordinator. Although separate from state's DBLWS service, consumer can use both services.  | 32              | Up to 10 hrs/mo   | P/T            | <b>DeafCAN!–Deaf Comm Act Network (A Human Svcs Prog of Christ the King Deaf Church)</b><br>730 S. New St,<br>West Chester, PA 19382<br>484-319-4245 vidphone<br>610-436-9751(V)   |

| State                              | Service Area                       | Funding   | Services Requested   | # Served    | Hours Served  | SSP Pay | Provider Name/Address   |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|--|-------------|---|---------|---|
| <b>South Carolina</b>              | <b>Statewide</b>                   | Voc Rehab general funds<br><br>Eligibility: Must be an active VR consumer   | Shopping, medical appts, independent living training   | Less than 5 | Up to 15 hrs/wk (i.e., 60 hrs/mo)   | F/T     | <b>South Carolina Commission for the Blind</b><br>P.O. Box 2467, Columbia, SC 29202-2467 / 1430 Confederate Ave, Columbia, SC 29201<br>803-898-8775(V)<br>803-403-9622 videophone   |
| <b>Tennessee (Voucher program)</b> | Knoxville and surrounding counties | United Way & TN Dept of Human Svcs; TN Deaf Golfers Assn. TDGA-KCD; add'l found/ grant funds pursued.<br><br>Note: Appropriated funds for dept. budget. Annual Golf Tournament prov start-up funds + ongoing supp for SSP voucher prog. | Shopping, deaf senior citizen social group activities, assistance to and from doctor appts where interpreter is used at appt but SSPO helps with transportation, guiding to and within the building and provides environmental information while waiting for the appt. | 10          | Hrs/mo based on annual money raised.<br><br>Consumer controls use of mthly vouchers; unused vouchers cannot be carried over to next mo. |         | <b>Knoxville Ctr of the Deaf (KCD)</b><br>3731 Martin Mill Pike, Knoxville, TN 37920<br>865-579-0832(V)<br>865-573-5640 (TTY)<br>865-622-2308 vidphone<br><br>Little to no coordination-consumers use vouchers to purchase services.<br><br>Almost all SSPs are deaf. |
| <b>Texas</b>                       | Travis County (Austin) and         | State, County & City funds  | By appt only: reading mail, bill pay, videophone calls, budget, coordinating svcs w/other agencies. All  | Less than 5 |   |         | <b>Travis Co Svcs for Deaf &amp; HoH</b><br>2201 Post Road, Ste 100<br>Austin TX 78704  |

| <b>State</b>    | <b>Service Area</b>  | <b>Funding</b>  | <b>Services Requested</b>  | <b># Served</b> | <b>Hours Served</b>   | <b>SSP Pay</b>   | <b>Provider Name/Address</b>   |
|-----------------|----------------------|---|--|-----------------|---|--|--|
|                 | surrounding counties |   | services are provided in office.<br><br>Note: No SSP on staff. Handled by case mgrs, soc workers or interpreters   |                 |   |  | 512-410-6529<br>V/TTY/videophone   |
| <b>Utah</b>     | <b>Statewide</b>     | Legis allocates \$283,000 each year   | Shopping, mail reading, paying bills, legislative participation, looking for jobs/filling out job apps, pers activities (attending child's school activity, scrapbooking, gardening, skiing), religious activities, meetings, writing Christmas cards, exercise, socializing, keeping up with local/national news, searching internet. No personal or self-care svcs are provided (e.g., bathing, diabetic testing) but help getting to doctor appts is allowed. | 45-55           | 10 hrs/wk (i.e., 40 hrs/mo)<br>No carry-over from week to wk. | SSPS are encouraged to work w/ at least 2 consumers; become state employee but are at-will & have no benefits (annual & sick leave); drive own vehicles & must show proof of auto ins. |  |
| <b>Virginia</b> |                      | In VA, svcs prov by Dept for Blind & Vision Impr'd (per Mary Margaret Cash) | <a href="https://www.vdbvi.org/deafblind.htm">https://www.vdbvi.org/deafblind.htm</a><br><br><a href="mailto:Mary.Cash@dars.virginia.gov">Mary.Cash@dars.virginia.gov</a>  |                 |   |  | <b>Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind in MD</b> serving Arlington Co & City of Alexandria, VA |

| State      | Service Area                 | Funding  | Services Requested   | # Served | Hours Served  | SSP Pay                               | Provider Name/Address   |
|------------|------------------------------|--|--|----------|---|---------------------------------------|---|
| Washington | Puget Sound area, Yakima, WA | Seattle Off of Deaf & HoH, private donations, fundraising, foundation grants | Food shopping, errands, material reading, basic banking, self-care, transport to airport, train or bus station | 80       | Ages 18-65: 6-10 hrs/mo<br><br>Over 65: 9-12 hrs/mo | Volunteer & Paid (No pay rate stated) | <b>DeafBlind Svc Ctr (DBSC)</b><br>1620 18th Ave, Ste 200<br>Seattle, WA 98122-7007<br>206-452-0062<br>videophone |

**Note:** 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.

### Resources

Molly Sinanan, [molly.sinanan@hknc.org](mailto:molly.sinanan@hknc.org), Helen Keller National Center

Andrew Cohen, Constituent who is DeafBlind

Haley Broadway, Constituent who is DeafBlind