

State of North Carolina

JOSH STEIN
GOVERNOR

DEAF AWARENESS MONTH

2025

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, North Carolina is projected to experience a 27 percent increase in adults with hearing loss, from 1.35 million people in 2024 to 1.7 million by 2040; and

WHEREAS, the deaf population of North Carolina includes people born profoundly deaf who use American Sign Language (ASL) as a primary means of communication, along with those who use hearing aids, cochlear implants, assistive listening devices, or other forms of amplification; and

WHEREAS, ASL is a rich and sophisticated language with its own syntax, morphology, and structure and a deep capacity to convey complex thoughts, ideas, and emotions; early exposure to language, including English and ASL, provides a strong linguistic foundation for Deaf and Hard of Hearing children, fostering meaningful attachments with their parents, and increasing their readiness for kindergarten, their capacity to regulate their own behaviors and emotions, and their future success as self-sufficient adults; and

WHEREAS, people who identify as deaf belong to a cultural and linguistic community with shared language, social norms, rules of behavior, and history; and

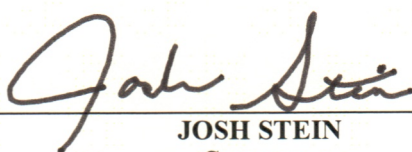
WHEREAS, North Carolina recognizes September as Deaf Awareness Month to commemorate the first Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf held in September 1951, and recognizes the United Nations' proclamation of September 23 as the International Day of Sign Languages; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, through the Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DSDHH) and their seven regional centers, provides services, including advocacy for communication access, consultation, deaf culture and ASL awareness, information and referral, to people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf and blind and their families in this state; and

WHEREAS, DSDHH joins organizations including but not limited to the North Carolina Association of the Deaf, North Carolina Black Deaf Advocates, Deaf Seniors of North Carolina, North Carolina DeafBlind Associates, North Carolina American Sign Language Teachers Association, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction – Office of Exceptional Children, North Carolina Division of Employment, Independence for People with Disabilities – Deafness and Communicative Disorders, North Carolina Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Use Services – Deaf Services, and North Carolina Early Hearing Detection and Intervention in encouraging increased awareness, understanding, and recognition of the many contributions made by deaf people across our state;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSH STEIN, Governor of the State of North Carolina, do hereby proclaim September 2025 as “DEAF AWARENESS MONTH” in North Carolina and commend its observance to all citizens.





JOSH STEIN
Governor

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in Raleigh this twenty-first day of August in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty-fifth and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and forty-ninth.