

# Initial Evaluation Process for Determining Eligibility for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

## How to use this document:

This document may not account for every situation, given that each student with a hearing loss is unique and varied. Consult the district's [Policies and Procedures Manual \(SP&P\)](#) for specific procedures. For further clarification, consult with the district compliance team.

Refer to the flowchart for assistance with navigating the process for determining eligibility for deaf or hard of hearing (DHH) services. The numbers in parentheses in some of the boxes refer to additional explanatory information on the addendum page.

The **green** boxes correspond to "GO", meaning the process should move forward. The **orange** boxes indicate the necessity for further action before proceeding. A **red** line means "STOP", no further action is needed.

## Resources:

- Rule 6A-6.03013, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), [Exceptional Student Educational Eligibility for Students Who Are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing](#)
- Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C., [General Education Intervention Procedures, Evaluation, Determination of Eligibility, Reevaluation and the Provision of Exceptional Student Education Services](#)
- Rule 6A-6.03022, F.A.C., [Exceptional Student Education Eligibility for Students with Dual Sensory Impairments](#)

Adapted by the Resource Materials and Technology Center for the Deaf/Hard of Hearing from Initial Evaluation Process for Determining Eligibility for Students with Visual Impairments, Florida Instructional Materials Center for the Visually Impaired. Approved by the Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services.  
Revised December 2021. For more information, contact [info@rmtcdhh.org](mailto:info@rmtcdhh.org)

# Initial Evaluation Process for Students Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

## A student is suspected of having a hearing-related disability. (1)

School-based team receives audiological documentation related to the suspicion of a hearing-related disability. (2)

School-based team requests consent to evaluate the student to determine eligibility for DHH services.

School-based team obtains consent and reviews the audiological report to determine if sufficient eligibility criteria is present per Rule 6A-6.03013, F.A.C.. (3) This team may include a ToDHH and audiologist.

**Did the parent consent to evaluation to determine if there is a need for DHH services?**

If yes, then:

If no, then:

Audiological evaluation demonstrates non-qualifying hearing loss according to Rule 6A-6.03013, F.A.C. criterion.

The report does not provide enough or has conflicting information.

Audiological evaluation demonstrates qualifying hearing loss as defined in Rule 6A-6.03013, F.A.C..

Continue evaluation.

The school-based team determines which assessments/evaluations will be conducted but must include: an audiological evaluation, evaluation of developmental/academic skills, assessment of social development, assessment of receptive and expressive communication, a comprehensive nonverbal assessment or developmental scales (for under age 7) as per Rule 6A-6.03013, F.A.C.. (4)

The team determines if they will proceed with mediation or due process if evaluation is required to provide FAPE.

The team considers additional services: ESE or 504.

Contact audiological professional to obtain additional information.

District conducts evaluation to include offers of support and assistance to parents to obtain audiological evaluation. This includes offering to pay for the exam, providing transportation, or bringing in an audiologist, etc. The LEA maintains documentation of extensive offers of assistance (34 CFR §300.306(a)(2), IDEA, 2004).

IEP team reviews assessments including current audiological evaluation and determines eligibility.  
**EVALUATION IS COMPLETE**

**Did the team determine the student met eligibility criteria for specially designed instruction from a teacher of the deaf/hard of hearing?**

If yes, then:

If no, then:

Follow federal, state, and district guidelines for development of a Communication Plan that drives the development of an IEP to address the student's specific needs for all IEP domains.

District support team reconvenes to determine if other evaluations or accommodations are needed. If the data supports the use of accommodations such as strategic seating, extra time, hearing assistive technology, etc.; follow district guidelines for developing a 504 Plan.



## Addendum

**DHH** - Deaf or Hard of Hearing  
**ESE** – Exceptional Student Education  
**FAPE** – Free Appropriate Public Education  
**IEP** – Individual Educational Plan

**LEA** – Local Education Agency  
**RtI** – Response to Intervention  
**ToDHH** – Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

(1) A school staff member, family member or guardian, or other individual suspects a student has a hearing-related disability and informs the LEA. More information is needed to determine if the student requires specially designed instruction and/or related services in order to receive FAPE. The LEA must obtain consent to evaluate for the DHH program which requires either the review of a parentally-provided audiological evaluation or a district-obtained audiological evaluation. The district may need to arrange for an audiological evaluation using school- or district-based audiologists or contracted audiology services.

(2) For an initial evaluation, consent must be obtained by the district prior to reviewing an existing audiological evaluation for the purpose of determining eligibility. This report should be reviewed by a team member knowledgeable with hearing levels and their impact on access to FAPE to determine if the provided information meets the State Board of Education Rule for eligibility (Rule [6A-6.03013](#), F.A.C.).

(3) State Board of Education [Rule 6A-6.03013](#)(4)(a), F.A.C., Exceptional Student Educational Eligibility for Students Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing - The audiological evaluation should include hearing thresholds at 500, 1000, and 2000Hz or 1000, 2000, and 3000Hz for suspected high frequency loss. An Auditory Evoked Potential report can also be used.

(4) Additional assessments and evaluations can be included in the evaluation process including a functional listening evaluation, an assessment of Expanded Skills Standards mastery, an evaluation of listening and spoken language skills, American Sign Language proficiency, etc. Please [contact RMTc-D/HH](#) for an up-to-date list of assessments for students who are DHH.

### **Notes:**

#### **General Education Interventions for Eligibility - Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C.**

*General Education Intervention Procedures, Evaluation, Determination of Eligibility, Reevaluation and the Provision of Exceptional Student Education Services, the general education interventions requirements (RtI) may not be required for students suspected of having a disability if a team that comprises qualified professionals and the parent determines that the general education interventions are not appropriate for a student who demonstrates a speech disorder or severe cognitive, physical or **sensory disorders** [emphasis added], or severe social/behavioral deficits that require immediate intensive interventions to prevent harm to the student or others.*

**Dual Sensory Impairment** - In the event that a vision condition is concomitant with a hearing loss, the team should review the eligibility criteria for dual-sensory impaired.

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