

HEALTH LICENSING OFFICE



Susan K. Wilson, Director
 700 Summer St NE • Suite 320
 Salem, Oregon 97301-1287

Phone (503) 378-8667
 TTY (503) 373-2114
 Fax (503) 370-9004
 Web site www.oregon.gov/HLO
 E-mail hlo.info@state.or.us



Advisory Council on Hearing Aids

Position Statement

Athletic Trainers

Barbers

Body Piercing Technicians

Denturists

Direct Entry Midwives

Electrologists

Environmental Health Specialists

Facial Technicians

Hair Designers

Hearing Aid Specialists

Nail Technicians

Permanent Color Technicians

Respiratory Therapists

Tattoo Artists

Waste Water Specialists

Board of Athletic Trainers

Board of Cosmetology

Board of Direct Entry Midwifery

Board of Denture Technology

Environmental Health Registration Board

Respiratory Therapist Licensing Board

Advisory Council on Hearing Aids

Advisory Council for Electrologists, Permanent Color Technicians & Tattoo Artists

Standardized Hearing Test Best for Consumers

The Oregon Advisory Council on Hearing Aids recommends that all licensed Hearing Aid Specialists in Oregon use a standardized hearing test to measure the hearing level of consumers.

Hearing tests, known as “audiograms,” measure a person’s ability to hear sounds based on the frequency (pitch) and decibel level (loudness) of sounds.

While the tendency is to think that the only factor in hearing loss is loudness, there are actually two factors involved: loudness and clarity. Loss generally occurs first in the high pitch, quiet range. A mild loss can cause one to miss 25-40 percent of speech, depending on the noise level of the surroundings and distance from the speaker. When there is background noise it becomes difficult to hear well; the speech may be audible but may not be understandable. Hearing loss may have an even greater affect on children than adults. The degree of hearing loss does not necessarily reflect the degree of impairment.

The Council believes that consumers are best served if the audiogram used by Hearing Aid Specialists contains a uniform set of measurement standards. These standards are the following:

DEGREES OF HEARING LOSS

Loss in dB HL*	Degree of Loss	Criteria
0 – 24	<i>Normal</i>	No loss
25 – 40	<i>Mild Loss</i>	Faint or distant speech may be difficult to hear. Lip reading can be helpful.
41 – 55	<i>Moderate Loss</i>	Conversational speech can be understood at a distance of three to five feet. As much as 50% of discussions may be missed if the voices are faint or not in line of vision.
56 – 70	<i>Moderately Severe</i>	Speech must be loud in order to be understood; group discussions will be difficult to follow.
71 – 90	<i>Severe Loss</i>	Voices may be heard from a distance of about one (1) foot from the ear.
91 – plus	<i>Profound Loss</i>	Loud sounds may be heard, but vibrations will be felt more than tones heard. Vision, rather than hearing, is the primary avenue for communication.

*Decibel hearing loss

More →

Advisory Council on Hearing Aids

Position Statement

Standardized Hearing Test Best for Consumers _____ *Page 2*

In developing these standards, the Council has reviewed various audiograms currently in use by practitioners and by the State of Oregon through the Oregon Health Plan. The Council has also considered external information from other hearing-related organizations such as the Oregon Board of Examiners of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology and Self Help for Hard of Hearing Oregon.

The Council recommends incorporating these standards into Oregon Administrative Rules and encourages public comment during the rulemaking process.