



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Feb. 3, 2023

Contact:

Phil Pitchford

Public Information Officer

951-826-5975

ppitchford@riversideca.gov

City of Riverside Accepting Applications for Commission of the Deaf

New advisory board was created by the City Council on Jan. 24

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The City of Riverside is now accepting applications to fill the new Commission of the Deaf, which was created by the City Council Jan. 24 to advise city leaders on issues important to the deaf community.

The creation of the 13-member Commission reflects the need for the city to be aware and informed of issues facing the significant number of deaf and hard of hearing people in Riverside.

“Riverside is an inclusive city, and our deaf community makes strong contributions to our overall quality of life,” Mayor Patricia Lock Dawson said. “This new commission will ensure these members have a place where their concerns can be addressed.”

More than 156,000 people with hearing difficulty lives in the Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario metropolitan area, according to the U.S. Census Bureau 2019 American Community Survey. The city also is home to the California School for the Deaf Riverside (CSDR), which serves young people across Southern California and elsewhere.

City Council members will appoint members of the Commission to serve staggered terms. Members will include two representatives from Ward 3, where CSDR is located, and one representative from Wards 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, & 7, two youth ex officio members, and three citywide members.

Youth ex officio members must be under 18 years of age and a current high school student attending a high school within the City of Riverside. Youth ex officio members will serve two-year terms, while other members will serve four-year terms.

Duties of the new Commission of the Deaf include serving in an advisory capacity to help create an integrated community that promotes full participation in society, education and employment, effective communication, and cultural awareness; reviewing community policies, programs, and actions which affect persons within the deaf community and make appropriate recommendations to City Council; render advice and assistance as requested to other City boards, commissions, and City departments on

matters affecting members of the deaf community; and performing other functions, community outreach, and duties as may be directed by the City.

“Our city is proud to see this officially established,” Mayor Pro Tem Clarissa Cervantes said. “The Commission of the Deaf will help ensure that the perspectives and voices of our Deaf community are heard so City Council can proactively address and improve quality of life issues impacting residents. Working together, we can transform how to promote belonging across Riverside.”

The Commission of the Deaf replaces a different organization within the city known as the Model Deaf Community Committee (MDCC), which was created in April 1998. A Commission, which is stronger than a committee, follows the same rules as other city boards and commissions, and is subject to Brown Act/Sunshine Ordinance requirements.

The initial make-up of the commission is:

* one youth ex officio seat to a one-year term through March 1, 2024.

* one person each from City Council wards 1, 3, 5 and 7, one Citywide seat, and one youth ex officio seat to two-year terms through March 1, 2025.

* one person each from wards 2, 4, and 6, another person from Ward 3 seat, and two more Citywide seats to four-year terms through March 1, 2027.