



January 24, 2022

Ms. Joyce McStotts
Utah Health Department
Family Health and Preparedness, Children with Special Health Care Needs
4453 Cannon Health Building
288 N 1460 W
Salt Lake City, UT 84116

Re: Proposed Newborn Hearing Screening Regulations

Dear Ms. McStotts:

On behalf of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, I write to express support for the proposed newborn hearing screening regulations which meet the requirements of Executive Order 2021-12.

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) is the national professional, scientific, and credentialing association for 218,000 members and affiliates who are audiologists; speech-language pathologists; speech, language, and hearing scientists; audiology and speech-language pathology support personnel; and students. Over 1,600 ASHA members reside in Utah.¹

ASHA supports the proposed regulations that clarify the definition of newborn hearing screening. The regulations require follow-up screening after a failed test result and provide for outpatient rescreening if a child is born in a hospital. Newborn hearing screening is now the standard of care in hospitals nationwide. In 2014, 96.1% of babies born in the United States had their hearing screened before one month of age and 6,163 infants were diagnosed with permanent hearing loss.² According to the Joint Committee on Infant Hearing, there is a growing body of literature indicating that when identification and intervention occur at no later than six months of age for infants who are deaf or hard of hearing, the infants perform as much as 20 to 40 percentile points higher on school-related measures (vocabulary, articulation, intelligibility, social adjustment, and behavior).³

Thank you for helping to ensure proper hearing health care in newborns and infants. If you or your staff have any questions, please contact Eileen Crowe, ASHA's director, state association relations, at ecrowe@asha.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judy Rich". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Judy Rich, EdD, CCC-SLP, BCS-CL
2022 ASHA President

¹ American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2020). *Utah* [Quick Facts]. <https://www.asha.org/siteassets/uploadedfiles/utah-state-flyer.pdf>.

² American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (n.d.). *Newborn Hearing Screening*. <https://www.asha.org/practice-portal/professional-issues/newborn-hearing-screening/>.

³ Joint Committee on Infant Hearing. (2007). *Year 2007 Position Statement: Principles and Guidelines for Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Programs*. https://www.infanthearing.org/resources/2007_JCIH.pdf.