

# Evaluation

## DEAF-BLINDNESS

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Model operating procedures created by



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**CONTENTS**

DEAF-BLINDNESS ..... 1

    What is Required ..... 1

    Additional Procedures ..... 2

    Evidence of Implementation ..... 2

    Resources ..... 3

CITATIONS ..... 3

## DEAF-BLINDNESS

### What is Required

A student must be assessed in all areas of suspected disability. Deaf-blindness refers to a student with both hearing and visual disabilities. The IDEA defines deaf-blindness as “concomitant [simultaneous] hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness.”

A student with deaf-blindness is one who has been determined to meet the criteria for deaf-blindness. A student with deaf-blindness is one who:

- Meets the criteria for auditory and visual impairment;
- Meets the eligibility criteria for a student with a visual impairment and has a suspected hearing loss that cannot be demonstrated conclusively, but there is not speech at an age when speech would normally be expected, as determined by a speech/language therapist, a certified speech and language therapist, or a licensed speech language pathologist;
- Has documented hearing and visual losses that, if considered individually, may not meet the requirements for auditory or visual impairment, but the combination of such losses adversely affects the student's educational performance; or
- Has a documented medical diagnosis of a progressive medical condition that will result in related auditory and visual losses that, without special education intervention, will adversely affect student's educational performance.

To assess for deaf-blindness, the District or Campus Assessment Personnel will comply with the general evaluation procedures. See [EVALUATION PROCEDURES]. In addition, the evaluation data reviewed by the District or Campus Assessment Personnel in connection with the determination of the student's disability based on deaf-blindness must comply with the evaluation procedures of deaf or hard of hearing and visual impairment. See [DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING] and [VISUAL IMPAIRMENT]. Further, the procedures and materials used for the assessment and placement of the student who is deaf or hard of hearing must be in the student's preferred mode of communication.

For a student from birth through 2 with a visual impairment and/or who is deaf or hard of hearing, an IFSP meeting must be held and the District must comply with the procedures for students ages 0-5. See [AGES 0-5].

## **Additional Procedures**

When a referral for a student suspected of visual and/or auditory impairments is first received, the Diagnostician/LSSP should contact a professional certified in AI/VI for assistance in determining the types, levels, and procedures for assessment of the student. However, the Diagnostician/LSSP, with the assistance of the AI/VI Professional, remains responsible for ensuring that the FIE and eligibility assessment is completed appropriately. When determining a student's disability based on deaf-blindness, District Assessment Personnel will comply with the procedures outlined in state and federal law. See [DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING] and [VISUAL IMPAIRMENT].

For a student with a suspected or documented deaf-blindness, the ARD Committee, which determines whether the student is a student with a disability and the educational needs of the student, must include a teacher certified in the education of students with auditory impairments and a teacher certified in the education of students with visual impairments.

The District must register all students who are eligible for special education as visually impaired or deaf-blind on TEA's annual Registration of Students with Visual Impairments. The District must register all students with combined hearing and vision loss on TEA's annual Deaf-blind Census, including students where combined vision and hearing loss are suspected, but assessment is not yet completed in one or both sensory areas.

If the student does not meet the eligibility criteria for VI, AI and/or Deaf-Blindness, or any other eligibility criteria under the IDEA, or does not need special education or related services due to his/her disability, Campus Personnel should refer the student to the Campus or District Personnel responsible for compliance with Section 504 to determine whether the student is eligible for accommodations or services as a student with a disability under Section 504.

## **Evidence of Implementation**

- Notice of Evaluation
- Consent for Evaluation
- Referral Information
- Assessment Plan
- Otological Examination
- Audiological Evaluation
- Communication Evaluation Report
- Ophthalmologist/Optomtrist Report
- Functional Vision Evaluation
- Learning Media Assessment
- Orientation and Mobility Evaluation

- FIE
- ARD/IEP

## **Resources**

[The Legal Framework for the Child Centered Special Education Process: Deaf-Blindness - Region 18](#)

[Texas Deafblind Project](#)

[IEP Quality Indicators for Students with Deaf-Blindness - Texas Deafblind Outreach](#)

[2017 Guidelines and Standards for Educating Students with Visual Impairments in Texas - Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired](#)

[Interveners for Students with Deafblindness in Texas – Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired](#)

[Deafblind - SPEDTEX](#)

## **CITATIONS**

Board Policy EHBA; Board Policy EHBAB; Board Policy EHBAC; Board Policy EHBH;  
34 CFR 300.8(c)(2), 300.304(c)(4); Texas Education Code 29.310(c); 19 TAC  
89.1040(b)–(c); 89.1050(a)–(c)