



Deaf-Blind Census: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. **What is the North Carolina Deaf-Blind Project (NCDBP)?** The North Carolina Deaf-Blind Project (NCDBP) is a five year federally funded project which provides Technical Assistance, a system of program development and support, to improve services for infants and toddlers, children, and youth ages birth - 21 years who are deaf-blind. Staff training and assistance are provided in the home, the school, and/or agency setting to improve the quality of life and improve outcomes for individuals who are deaf-blind.

The NCDBP is based at the NC Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) Exceptional Children's Division in Raleigh, NC and is funded by the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Program (OSEP).

2. **It is 2020. Why is this the 2019 Deaf-Blind Census?** The count is a point-in-time snapshot and should reflect those individuals identified and eligible for services from state deaf-blind projects on December 1st of the current reporting period (2019).
3. **What is the *Census of Children Who are Deaf-Blind*?** The North Carolina State Project for Deaf-Blind Services conducts an annual count of all children from birth through age 21 years old who have both hearing and vision losses. This is a requirement of our federal grant. The information on the census is confidential and only specific data is submitted to the federal government.
4. **What exactly are the eligibility requirements for a child to be placed on the NC Deaf-Blind census?** The child must have a documented hearing AND vision loss. There are no acuity or decibel thresholds. If a hearing and/or vision loss is suspected, the child can be put on the census for one year pending formal assessment. Children who require accommodations to actively participate in classroom instruction should be included.
5. **Who should be reported?** Any child, birth through 21 years of age, with combined vision and hearing loss which may interfere with their ability to a) communicate and interact with others in educational and/or social settings; to access information (spoken, social media, print); and b) move about safely and efficiently in familiar and unfamiliar environments". The definition also includes individuals with documented functional loss

and/or with progressive conditions such as Usher's Syndrome, Batten disease or CHARGE syndrome.

6. **What are some etiologies which frequently include deaf blindness?** Some of the most common etiologies include Prematurity, CHARGE syndrome, Usher syndrome, Down Syndrome, Traumatic Brain Injury/Severe Head Injury, Norrie disease, Moebius syndrome, Batten disease, Dandy Walker syndrome, Cytomegalovirus (CMV), Microcephaly, and Hydrocephaly. Children with these conditions should always be observed for functional use of hearing and vision.
7. **What if the child has documented mild hearing and vision loss? Should the child be reported?** Yes, if communication, safety, instructional accommodations, and mobility are affected. Most children have usable vision and hearing but do require accommodations to fully access classroom and recreational activities.
8. **What if the child is able to see or hear?** There is a wide variety in the degrees of hearing and vision loss. Some children have mild losses of both hearing and vision while others may have a more significant loss of one or the other or both. Some children may have functional losses or progressive conditions. For example, a child with a cortical vision impairment and mild hearing loss should be included on the DB Census. Also, children with progressive conditions such as Usher's syndrome should be included.
9. **What if the child has been diagnosed with a degenerative/progressive condition which affects hearing and vision?** The child should be reported. Examples include children with Usher syndrome, Norrie's disease, and Batten disease.
10. **What if the child has multiple disabilities but vision and hearing evaluations are inconclusive?** If the child functions as if he/she has a combined hearing and vision loss they should be reported. Vision and hearing loss have a significant impact regardless of multiple disabilities.
11. **Is it okay to have Central Auditory Processing Disorder (CAPD) indicated and no primary classification of hearing impairment indicated?** Yes, if appropriate to individual hearing impairment. Also, in some instances it may be appropriate to have a primary classification of hearing impairment and CAPD marked.
12. **What if the child is identified as having multiple disabilities on the IFSP/IEP?** The child should be included on all counts for which they qualify, including the DB Census and APH registry for those who are legally blind.
13. **What about infants and toddlers who are identified as "at risk" for vision and hearing losses?** Infants and toddlers who are identified as at risk should be on the census. If it is determined at a later time that the child is not at risk, he/she can be removed from the census.
14. **How can our school/program receive services from the Project?** Contact the NCDPI Consultant for DB. When the student has been reported on the DB Census, family information is shared with the NCDBP Family Engagement Specialists

who will contact the family member. Teachers and family members are added to the appropriate DB listserv where notification of upcoming training and resources are sent. Technical Assistance is available upon request.

15. **Does including a child on the census obligate the school program to provide services such as vision, hearing, speech, orientation & mobility, etc.?** No. Individualized needs and services are determined by the IFSP or IEP Team, which includes the parent/family.
16. **What if our team just is not sure if the child is eligible or have additional questions regarding the census?** Contact Dottie Snyder at 919.807.3690 or Dorothy.snyder@dpi.nc.gov for assistance.
17. **What if my school system does not currently have any students who are considered deaf-blind?** Return the data sheet "*No Students to Report*" indicating you have no students at this time. This will enable us to maintain and cross-reference data.
18. **Where do I send the No Student to Report forms when completed?** Forms should be emailed to: Dorothy.snyder@dpi.nc.gov. Please put "No Students to Report" in the subject line.
19. **Is the information I enter secure?** Yes, the new submission process is designed to ensure that all reported information is confidential and secure. NCDBP adheres to HIPPA and FERPA compliant procedures regarding the gathering and release of information.
20. For more information regarding the NC DB Census go to our website at <http://ec.ncpublicschools.gov/disability-resources/deaf-blind/census>