

PRESS RELEASE

September 3, 2020 — for immediate release

Respect the ADA. Inclusivity is for Everyone. Everyone is Responsible.

Systems by Audio Directions Solve Hearing and Comprehension Issues in Public Spaces

Our hard of hearing neighbors and colleagues need our help. Their hearing aids and cochlear implants work extremely well in quiet spaces where the source of sound is within a few feet. Sound that (1) needs to travel more than six feet, (2) comes from behind a plastic shield or (3) is muffled by a face mask is **almost always distorted and unintelligible.**

Not only do face masks reduce sound by as much as 12 decibels, they prevent lip-reading and block the non-verbal, facial cues that people rely on. Even people with “average” hearing find it difficult to understand speech clearly while masks are worn.

One of the most disturbing commentaries on this subject appeared in the *Wall Street Journal* on July 16. “**The Pandemic Has Made My Hearing Problem Even More of a Problem**” was written by a professional communicator who happens to wear hearing aids. Mary Louise Kelly is co-host of the NPR program, “*All Things Considered.*” What prompted her to share her story is the experience that she had at a pharmacy counter while trying to pick up a prescription for her son.

Kelly wrote, “**How can I navigate the country and the world on behalf of NPR listeners when I can’t navigate the neighborhood CVS?**” [Read her whole story here>](#)

What’s most discouraging about her experience right now, in 2020, is that millions of people just celebrated the 30th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). It was signed on July 26, 1990 by President George H. W. Bush and it makes perfectly clear what the “rules of engagement” are for all members of our communities. It’s not funded, and not often enforced, but the ADA does exist.

One specific ADA requirement: “Title II and III entities provide the means to **communicate effectively** with people who have communications disabilities.” The ADA’s goal: “communication with people with these disabilities is equally effective as communication with people without disabilities.”

“Assistive listening systems and devices” are explained in the updated and amended ADA that went into effect on March 15, 2011. It’s been **nine years** since we’ve known how newer technology should be utilized. [Read the full set of rules here.](#)

Rarely does a writer or reporter on this subject raise the point that **most organizations do not respect or comply with the rules and intent of the ADA when it comes to providing "effective communications."** If they did respect ADA rules, every face-to-face conversation would be served by an audio induction (hearing) loop system or captioning or, better yet, both forms of assistive technology.

A hearing loop system is a seamless, wireless solution that delivers a clear, filtered audio signal to all brands of hearing aids, cochlear implants and telecoil receivers. Hearing loop systems are the consumer-preferred choice for assistive hearing technology and solve a clarity and comprehension problem for all parties to any conversation.

Is your organization ready to recognize the needs, and embrace the solutions that will deliver access to effective communications?

Beyond ADA compliance, being the most inclusive and "hearing-friendly" organization available to a group of potential customers, patients or employees is a distinct advantage. For examples of this, or a free site analysis for ADA compliance at your place of business, please visit www.ad4h.com or call 1-833-234-4411.

Specific solutions by Audio Directions are as follows:

- [Portable Hearing Loop Kit](#)
- [Under-Counter Hearing Loop System](#)
- [Rubber Floor Mat Loop System](#)
- [Two-Way Talker Shield with Intercom and Hearing Loop](#)
- [Overhead Hearing Loop Systems](#)
- [Large Room Hearing Loop Systems](#)
- [Home Theater Hearing Loop Systems](#)

Additional resources on hearing loss, effective communications and assistive hearing technology may be found here: <https://ad4h.com/resources/>.

To advocate for hearing loop systems in your community, visit the Hearing Loss Association of America's website for the "[Get in the Hearing Loop" Tool Kit](#). The tool kit is published by HLAA on behalf of the 48 million Americans who are hard of hearing.

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