

Hi, my name is Amy Stornello, one of the members of the Monroe County / City of Rochester Deaf Equity Council (DEC).

The DEC represents Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing people throughout Monroe County and the City of Rochester. The DEC was established in 2025 through the endorsement of both the City of Rochester and Monroe County.

The DEC has five work groups based on what the community has shared with us:

1. **Public Safety:** Emergencies, and interactions with police officers, firefighters, and healthcare providers.
2. **Employment:** Removing barriers to work and supporting Deaf workers and entrepreneurs.
3. **Public Awareness:** Making sure our community is both visible and understood, plus aware of what services the City and County provide — and how to access those services.
4. **Data:** Collecting information to identify gaps and what's working.
5. **Policy:** Influencing the laws and policies that affect our day-to-day lives.

We are also looking for DeafBlind community members interested in helping us across all five areas.

If you yourself are Deaf, DeafBlind, or Hard of Hearing — or a family member or ally — and interested in supporting our work groups, or want to receive occasional updates, please visit us here: <https://www.monroecounty.gov/dei-deafequitycouncil>

We also want you to come attend the Plan Forward public meetings. This is Monroe County's first comprehensive plan in 40 years. It will impact and influence everything that each County department does, from transportation to emergency services to building homes and healthcare access.

There are two meetings:

- **June 3:** In-person, 6:00 – 7:30 PM at the MCC Brighton Campus
- **June 10:** Remote/virtual, 12:00 – 1:00 PM

ASL interpreting and captioning will be provided at both meetings. You can see more information and register here: <https://monroecounty.gov/PlanForward-events>

Between those two events, the DEC will also be at the **Rochester Deaf Festival on June 6**. Come find us there!

Our community is important. Together, we are making our area a better place to live.

Thank you.