

Minnesota Relay

Providing access for people with hearing loss or speech disabilities to communicate over the telephone.



MINNESOTA
RELAY 



Minnesota Relay is a free service providing full telephone accessibility to persons who are deaf, deaf/blind, hard of hearing or speech disabled.

A specially trained communication assistant (CA) facilitates the telephone conversation between a person who has hearing loss or a speech disability and a hearing person.

Calls can be made to anywhere in the world (long distance charges apply), 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, with no restrictions on the number, length or type of calls.

All calls are strictly confidential and no records of any conversations are maintained.





Dial 7-1-1 to make a relay call

7-1-1 is a toll-free, nationwide relay access number. You may dial 7-1-1 from anywhere in the country and be connected to the relay service in the state you are calling from. Once connected to the relay service, inform the CA of the type of relay call you wish to make (i.e. HCO, VCO, STS, Spanish, etc.).

NOTE: The 7-1-1 access number is easy to remember, particularly for less experienced relay users. However, dialing the toll-free number specific for the type of relay call you wish to make may result in faster call set-up, as your call will not need to be transferred.

There are a number of different types of relay services available to meet specific telecommunications needs:

Standard Phone (hearing user) and TTY: 1-800-627-3529

This service allows telephone calls between a TTY (text-telephone) user and a hearing person. The CA reads the TTY user's words to the hearing person, and types the hearing person's words for the TTY user to read.

Hearing Carry Over (HCO): 1-800-627-3529

HCO allows a person who can hear but who has very limited or no speech capability to make and receive phone calls. Using HCO relay and a specially designed telephone with a text display, an HCO user can listen directly to the voice of the other person on the call and type his/her response to the CA, who voices the response to the other person.

To use HCO relay you must have a TTY and a telephone.

Voice Carry Over (VCO): **1-877-627-3024**

VCO is an option for people who can speak clearly, but have hearing loss significant enough to prevent them from hearing and

understanding conversations over the telephone. Using VCO relay and a specially designed telephone



with a text display, a VCO user

can speak directly to the other person on the call. The CA types what is spoken by the other person for the VCO user to read.

To use VCO relay you must have a TTY and a telephone, or a specially designed VCO phone.

Two-Line Voice Carry Over: **1-866-855-4611**

Two-line VCO allows you to use one telephone line for speaking directly to the other person, while the second line is used to receive the CA's typed response from the other person. This enhanced feature provides a more natural flow of conversation without the pauses of single-line VCO calls.

In order to use two-line VCO you must have two telephone lines with separate phone numbers and subscribe to 3-way calling from your local telephone service provider.

Captioned Telephone (CapTel™)



CapTel is an amplified telephone and relay captioning service that allows people who are hard of hearing to see word-for-word captions of their telephone conversation

on a bright, easy-to-read display window built into the CapTel phone, while also listening to what is being said using their residual hearing (much like TV captioning). The CapTel user speaks directly to the other person on the call, and the CA transcribes everything the other person says into written text.

To use CapTel relay you must have a CapTel phone.

Two-Line CapTel

Like standard CapTel, two-line CapTel provides live captions of everything the other party says during a phone conversation. With two-line CapTel, the conversation is carried on one telephone line and the captions are provided on the second line. This gives two-line CapTel users the ability to caption any phone call – incoming or outgoing – at any point in the conversation. Two-line CapTel also supports enhancements that the user has purchased from their telephone service, including call-waiting.

In order to use two-line CapTel you must have a CapTel phone and two telephone lines (one must be analog) with separate phone numbers.

Speech-to-Speech (STS):

1-877-627-3848

STS allows a person who has difficulty speaking or being understood on the telephone to communicate using his or her own voice or voice synthesizer. The CA revoices the words of the person with a speech disability so the other person on the call can understand them.

No special telephone equipment is needed to use STS, though some people may find it beneficial to use a speakerphone or hands-free telephone equipment.



Computer (ASCII):

1-800-627-3529

Computer users can access Minnesota Relay directly. Set your telecommunications software to the following protocols at speeds ranging from 300 to 2400 baud: 8 Bits; No Parity; 1 Stop Bit; Full Duplex. It may be helpful to set your "time out" to 100 seconds.

When calling at a rate of 300 or below, follow the above using Half Duplex.

Spanish Relay:

1-877-627-5448

Allows a Spanish speaking person to use Minnesota Relay. The CA relays calls between a Spanish speaking person with a hearing or speech disability and a Spanish speaking hearing person.

900 Pay-Per-Call Services: 1-900-230-3324

Relay user may dial the above access number and provide the CA with the pay-per-call service phone number that they would like to call. Callers are billed directly by the pay-per-call service at the rate specified by that provider. Billing will begin upon connection to the pay-per-call service.

International Calls:

- Allows relay users to place and receive calls from anywhere in the world (using English or Spanish languages only).
- Callers within the US can dial 7-1-1.
- Callers outside the US can dial 1-605-224-1837.





Calling features available through Minnesota Relay:

Emergency Assistance

TTY callers should dial 9-1-1 or other existing emergency numbers directly in emergency situations. All 9-1-1 centers are equipped to handle TTY calls. Minnesota Relay can process emergency calls, but doing so may result in a delay in getting your call through.

Directory Assistance

You can use Minnesota Relay to place calls to directory assistance (DA). When a relay user requests to call DA, the CA will contact the appropriate DA operator. After obtaining the number, the caller may choose to place the call through Minnesota Relay or to dial the number directly. (Note: DA is often subject to charges by the caller's local service provider.)

Voice Mail/Answering Machine Retrieval

Allows relay users to retrieve voice messages on their answering machine or voice mail.

Deaf-Blind Transmission Speed

Minnesota Relay users with low vision who use a TTY equipped with a telebraille or large visual display typically prefer slower typing speeds. During this type of relay call, the CA will type at a normal speed, but the text will come across at a rate of 15 words per minute, allowing for a more readable transmission speed. Users may request to increase or decrease the transmission speed in increments of 5 words per minute.

Relay Calls Using Public Payphones

Minnesota Relay users can make local relay calls from payphones free of charge. Long distance relay calls can be charged to a calling card or prepaid card, by calling collect, or billed to a third party. Coins can not be used to pay for a long distance relay call from a payphone.



Long Distance Calls

The long distance carrier you have chosen for your home service is NOT automatically applied to Minnesota Relay calls. To make sure your long distance calls are carried and billed through your existing long distance service or calling plan, it is recommended that you submit a Minnesota Relay Customer Preference form. You may also inform the CA of your preferred carrier of choice prior to placing a long distance relay call.

If no carrier is indicated, long distance Minnesota Relay calls will be carried and billed by Sprint.

Billing Options for Long Distance Relay Calls

- Direct
- Collect
- Pre-paid calling card
- Carrier calling card
- Third-party billing

Customer Preference Form

The Customer Preference form allows you to customize your relay call. By completing and submitting a Minnesota Relay Customer Preference form, the relay is able to store your call preferences in their database. This will allow your relay calls to be set up quickly and ensures that your preferred carrier is used for long distance calls.

Call 1-800-657-3775 to request a Customer Preference form, or download the form at www.mnrelay.org.

Complements or Complaints

If you would like to file a complement or complaint regarding Minnesota Relay, please call 1-800-657-3775 (voice/TTY). You will need to provide the date and time of the relay call, the CA's identification number and the nature of your complement or complaint.



To file a relay complaint with the Federal Communications Commission, call 1-888-225-5322 (voice) / 1-888-835-5322 (TTY) or file online at www.fcc.gov/cgb/complaints.html.

Specialized Telecommunications Equipment

If you meet certain eligibility requirements, you may qualify to receive telecommunications equipment at no cost through Minnesota's Telephone Equipment Distribution (TED) Program. The TED Program loans telecommunications equipment to people who are hard of hearing, deaf, deaf/blind, speech disabled or physically disabled. If you do not qualify, TED Program staff can provide you with a directory of vendors where equipment can be purchased.

To contact the TED Program, call 1-800-657-3663 (voice) / 1-888-206-6555 (TTY), or visit their web site at www.tedprogram.org.

Contact the Minnesota Relay Consumer Relations Office:

- **For more information on other services offered through Minnesota Relay**
- **To request Minnesota Relay call instruction sheets**
- **To schedule a free presentation**

1-800-657-3775 (voice/TTY)

E-mail: mn.relay@state.mn.us

www.mnrelay.org

The Telecommunications Access Minnesota (TAM) program within the Department of Commerce is the state administrative office responsible for ensuring equal access to the telecommunications network for Minnesotans who are deaf, deaf/blind, hard of hearing, speech disabled or physically disabled.

Minnesota Relay and the TED Program are funded by a telephone surcharge.

