

## **FAQ's about Virginia Relay Services**

Virginia Relay is a free public service, Virginia Relay enables people who are deaf, hard of hearing, DeafBlind or speech disabled to communicate with standard telephone users. The conversation is relayed between the two by a specially trained Virginia Relay Communications Assistant (CA).

Relay services are available 24 hours a day, 365 days per year, with no limit on the number or length of calls a user may make. By law, every call is handled with the strictest confidentiality. Special features are available for speech-disabled, Spanish-speaking and sign language users.

► **Anyone can make a Virginia Relay call just by dialing 7-1-1**

### **Save Time with a Relay Choice Profile**

Virginia Relay users can establish a personal profile that automatically lets the CA know their communication preferences, such as connection mode, customized greetings, frequently dialed numbers and long-distance billing information. All Relay Choice Profile information is kept confidential, and Multi-User Relay Choice Profiles are available for several users calling from the same business or residence.

[Create a Relay Choice Profile](#)

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Who is Virginia Relay's service provider?**

Virginia Relay's telecommunications service provider is Hamilton Telecommunications. This means that every call is routed to a Hamilton Relay call center and answered by the first available Communication Assistant (CA). All Hamilton Relay CAs receive the same training and follow the same rules and protocols for call handling. That means we can expect each and every call made through Virginia Relay to accommodate personal calling preferences and be processed promptly, professionally and accurately by Hamilton's specially-trained CAs.

**Does Virginia Relay cost money to use?**

There is no charge to use Virginia Relay and there are no set-up fees.

**Will my conversations be kept confidential?**

Yes! By law, our CAs must maintain absolute confidentiality about all conversations and there is no record of the conversation.

**Why does Virginia Relay recommend completing a Customer Profile and how is it used?**

Customer Profiles allow individuals to establish calling preferences that are automatically displayed on the relay operator's screen. This can save on call-time and make relay calls smoother and easier.

**What is a Captioned Telephone Service (CTS)? Is it available to Virginia Relay users?**

A specialized technology, captioned telephone, allows people who are hard of hearing to read a captioned version of their conversations on the text screen of their phones and listen directly to the voice of the person they are calling at the same time. Captioned telephones are available through the Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (VDDHH). Call 1-800-552-7917 (Voice) to request an application.

**Are there any features specifically designed for sign language users?**

Video Relay Service (VRS) makes it possible for sign language users to communicate in their native language using a videophone or an app. Click [here](#) for details.

**What about features for Spanish speakers?**

Virginia Relay offers many features for Spanish users, including Spanish-to-English and English-to-Spanish translation and Speech-To-Speech (STS). To access these services, dial 7-1-1 and tell the CA which type of translation you need.

**How do I apply for specialized telecommunications equipment?**

Call VDDHH at 1-800-552-7917 (Voice) or 1-804-325-1290 (VP) to request an application or visit [www.vddhh.org](http://www.vddhh.org) to learn more.

**Is there a place where I can test telecommunication equipment that I am interested in purchasing? What if I am homebound but still want to test telecommunication equipment?**

VDDHH's Technology Assistance Program has offices at several locations across

Virginia to give individuals the opportunity to test equipment before applying or purchasing. Each Center features knowledgeable staff members who can explain and demonstrate the various types of equipment offered.

For those who are homebound, staff members are available to provide in-home equipment demonstrations. To request a home visit, call VDDHH at 1-800-552-7917 (Voice).

**I have a three-year-old child who is deaf. Is relay equipment designed for all ages, or do I need to purchase age-specific equipment?**

Certain types of relay equipment are designed specifically for children who are deaf, hard of hearing, DeafBlind or speech-disabled. To learn more call VDDHH at 1-800-552-7917 (Voice).

**What is Virginia Relay Partner?**

A free, educational program for the business community, Virginia Relay Partner helps teach businesses how to make and receive Relay calls, thereby reducing or eliminating the hang ups Relay users sometimes experience when conducting business by phone. Any business, large or small, based in Virginia is eligible. After joining, businesses can download an assortment of helpful training and educational materials, including employee and employer guides, a Virginia Relay calling tips poster and more. Click [here](#) to learn more.

**Can I request a Relay Partner presentation for my business or organization?**

Absolutely! Virginia Relay representatives are always available to visit your business and make a free presentation on the benefits of taking and placing Relay calls. To schedule a presentation, call 1-800-552-7917 (Voice).

**Does Virginia Relay offer sign language courses?**

While Virginia Relay does not offer sign language classes, several opportunities are available throughout the state. For a complete list of classes, contact VDDHH at 1-800-552-7917 (Voice).

**VDDHH Resources**

- [Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing \(VDDHH\)](#)
- [Virginia Relay Telecommunications Options](#)
- [Virginia Relay Partner](#)

- [Virginia Relay Speech-to-Speech \(STS\)](#)
- [Technology Assistance Program \(TAP\)](#)
- [Veterans Program](#)

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