



**CALIFORNIA RELAY**



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[caconnect.org/relay](https://caconnect.org/relay)



**Stay Connected**

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CALIFORNIA RELAY

# What Is California Relay Service?

California Relay Service is a free public service available to California residents, free of charge, 24 hours a day.

California Relay Service was established in 1987 as part of the Deaf and Disabled Telecommunications Program (California Connect) to help individuals who were deaf or had difficulty hearing stay connected. Over the years, California Relay Service has expanded to serve all California residents who require support using the phone.

As the first state to mandate and establish a relay program, California remains a leader in making sure all of its residents can stay in touch.

Do you or a loved one require assistance using the phone? California Relay Service could be for you.



# How Does a Relay Call Work?

Relay users typically use a TTY (TeleTypewriter/ Text Phone) or other specialized equipment to place and receive telephone calls. Calls are placed through specially-trained Communication Assistants (CAs) who relay the conversation as it takes place between the calling parties.

## TALK BACK AND FORTH THROUGH CA



# Making the Most of Your Relay Experience

## 711: Easy Access to Relay Anywhere

711 is the national three-digit number for relay access (similar to 411 for information or 911 for emergencies). Simply dial 711 to be connected. Dialing 711 is for everyone, not only those who have difficulty using a standard telephone. Friends, family, and business contacts can dial 711 for relay calls, too.

To make sure your calls are placed through California Relay Service, you may also dial the direct toll-free numbers: 800-735-2929 (TTY) and 800-735-2922 (Voice).

## The Role of the Communication Assistant (CA)

All relay calls are confidential. The CA's sole role is as a facilitator. Please do not engage the CA in conversation; rather, speak directly to the person you are calling. The CA reads aloud everything typed and types everything heard, including background noises and side comments. The CA may also indicate sounds heard on the call not conveyed through the conversation, such as laughing, crying and yawning.





# Making the Most of Your Relay Experience (Continued)

## The Use of GA and SK:

GA (Go Ahead) is used in relay calls to determine whose turn it is to respond. When you hear Go Ahead or see GA, it is your turn to respond. SK (Stop Keying) is used in relay calls to indicate that the conversation is over and it is time to hang up.

## Unlimited Calling

You may make as many consecutive calls as you wish. If you want to make another call, simply inform the CA and provide the phone number.

## Spanish Relay

All relay calling options are available in Spanish. Bilingual CAs are available to process Spanish-to-Spanish relay calls. Relay calls can be translated from Spanish to English and vice versa, if you and the individual you are calling are both in California. More information about Spanish services can be found at [hamiltonrelay.com/espanol](https://hamiltonrelay.com/espanol).

## Customer Profile

You may establish calling preferences that are automatically displayed for the CA, saving time and making relay calls smoother and easier.

To create your Customer Profile online, visit [ca-relay.com](https://ca-relay.com) and select Customer Profile to complete and submit your form. You may also contact California Relay Service Customer Care at 877-632-9095 (English) or 877-419-8440 (Spanish).

## CALLING OPTIONS



## TTY (TeleTypewriter/Text Phone)

TTY (TeleTypewriter/Text Phone) is the most common way callers connect to Relay—allowing those who are deaf or hard of hearing to type their messages and read the other person's responses.

### Making a TTY Call

- Using your TTY, dial 711 or the toll-free number for California, 800-735-2929.
- The Communication Assistant (CA) will answer by identifying the Relay and giving his/her CA number and gender. The CA will then type NUMBER TO CALL PLS QQ GA.
- Provide the area code and telephone number you are calling and any other instructions.
- Once the call is connected, the CA will ask the person you are calling if he/she is familiar with relay calling. If the person is not, the CA will explain how the service works before the conversation begins.
- The CA will type everything said by the other party, word for word, along with any background noises.
- When you see GA, it is your turn to respond. Type GA when you are ready for a response. The conversation will proceed in this manner until the call is complete.
- To end the call, type GA to SK or type Goodbye.

## VCO (Voice Carry Over)

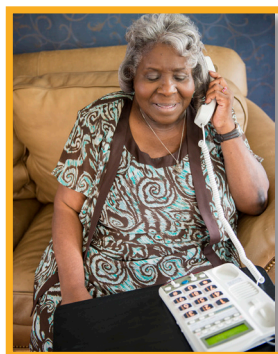
Voice Carry Over (VCO) is used by individuals who have hearing loss and use their voice on the phone. VCO users speak directly to the person they are calling and, with a TTY or VCO phone, read what is being said by the other party.

### Making a VCO Call with a TTY

- Using your TTY, dial 711 or the toll-free number for California, 800-735-2929.
- After the Communication Assistant (CA) answers and identifies Relay, type: VCO PLS GA.
- Wait for the CA to type VCO ON GA, indicating that Voice Carry Over is activated.
- Pick up the handset or select “speaker” for hands-free speaking and speak to the CA, providing the number of the person you are calling and any other instructions. Say GA or Go Ahead and immediately put the handset back onto the TTY.
- The CA will ask the person you are calling if he/she is familiar with Voice Carry Over. If the person is not, the CA will explain how VCO works before beginning the conversation.
- The CA types the response of the other person for you to read on your TTY screen. When you see GA, it is your turn to respond by picking up the handset and speaking to the other person.
- When you are ready for the other person to respond, say GA and place the handset back on the TTY. This continues until the call is complete.
- To end the call, say GA to SK or say Goodbye.

### Making a Call with a VCO Phone

- Connect to Relay by dialing 711 or the toll-free number for California, 800-735-2929.
- When the CA answers, press the RLY MSG button that sends a recorded VCO prompt.
- After the CA answers with VCO ON GA, give the number you want to call and then say GA.
- If necessary, the CA will explain how VCO works to the person you are calling.
- When you are ready to begin the conversation, speak directly to the person you are calling and say GA when you are ready for a response. The CA types the response of the other person for you to read on your screen, and when you see GA, it is your turn to respond. Turn-taking continues like this until the call is complete.
- To end the call, say GA to SK or say Goodbye.



**RELAY USER TALKS  
DIRECTLY TO THE  
OTHER PARTY**



**OTHER PARTY  
RESPONDS**



**CA TYPES  
RESPONSE--  
RELAY USER  
READS SCREEN**

# CALLING OPTIONS

## Receiving a Call as a VCO User

People calling you can dial 711 or 800-735-2922. If you have not established a Customer Profile, you can answer incoming calls in one of the following two ways.

### Answering Voice First

- Answer the call and say VCO PLEASE GA. Immediately connect your TTY or VCO device.
- The CA will send his/her CA number and gender, followed by VCO ON GA. You may then speak directly to the caller using GA to take turns.

### Answering TTY or VCO Phone First

- If you are using a VCO phone, press the RLY MSG button that sends a recorded VCO prompt.
- If you are using a TTY, connect your TTY and type VCO PLS GA.
- The CA will send his/her CA number and gender, followed by VCO ON GA. You may then speak directly to the caller using GA to take turns.

### Tips for VCO Users

- When connecting with the CA, do not press any other keys. Doing so will send TTY tones to the CA and may cause confusion about which call method you want to use (TTY or VCO).
- While the other party is speaking, the CA will not be able to hear you until the GA is given and it's your turn to speak.

### Two-Line VCO

This enhanced relay feature allows for a more natural conversation by getting rid of the use of Go Ahead. The CA does not identify Relay and is present only to type what's said by the other party. Two-Line VCO requires the use of two telephone lines, one of which must have three-way conferencing capabilities.

## HCO (Hearing Carry Over)

HCO (Hearing Carry Over) is especially helpful for people who can hear, but who sometimes have difficulty speaking over the phone. HCO users listen directly to the person called and, through a TTY with a standard phone or using an HCO phone, type their responses to the other party.

### Making an HCO Call

- Using your TTY or HCO phone, dial 711 or the toll-free number for California, 800-735-2929.
- When the Communication Assistant (CA) answers, type HCO PLS GA.
- Wait for the CA to both type and say HCO ON GA, which indicates that Hearing Carry Over is activated.
- Type the telephone number for the person you wish to call and provide any other instructions, followed by GA.
- When the call is connected, everyone will be able to hear each other. Listen for the voice of the person you are calling.
- The CA will ask the person you are calling if he/she is familiar with Hearing Carry Over. If the person is not, the CA will explain how HCO works before continuing.
- When you hear the person say Go Ahead, type your response. The CA will read your response aloud to the other person. Turn-taking continues like this until the call is complete.
- To end the call, type GA to SK or type Goodbye.



# CALLING OPTIONS

## Receiving a Call as an HCO User

- People calling you may dial 711 or the toll-free number for California, 800-735-2922.
- If a Customer Profile has been established, the calls you receive will automatically connect in HCO mode.
- If a Customer Profile has not been established, answer incoming calls by connecting your TTY to a standard phone or using an HCO phone and typing HCO PLS GA. The CA will then activate Hearing Carry Over and both type and say HCO ON GA.

## Two-Line HCO

This enhanced relay feature allows for a more natural conversation by getting rid of the use of Go Ahead. The CA does not identify Relay and is present only to read aloud what's typed by the HCO user. Two-Line HCO requires the use of two telephone lines, one of which must have three-way conferencing capabilities.



## DBS (Deaf-Blind Service)

DBS (Deaf-Blind Service) allows people who are deaf-blind to place and receive telephone calls using specialized telecommunications equipment such as TeleBraille. DBS users type their messages and read the other person's responses, typed by the Communication Assistant (CA), on a braille display.

### Making a DBS Call

- Using your specialized equipment, dial 711 or the toll-free number for California, 800-735-2929.
- The CA will answer by identifying Relay and typing NUMBER TO CALL PLS QQ GA.
- Provide the area code and telephone number you wish to call, as well as any other instructions.
- Once the call is connected, the CA will type everything said by the other party word for word, along with any background noises.
- When you read GA, it is your turn to respond. Type your message and add GA when you are ready for a response. The conversation will proceed like this until the call is complete.
- When you have completed your side of the conversation, type GA to SK to close your call.

### Slow Typing

This feature allows the CA to type at a normal pace, while sending text to your device at a speed dictated by you. CAs have the ability to turn this feature on or off on a per-call basis, as instructed by you.



## STS (Speech-to-Speech)

STS (Speech-to-Speech) is especially useful for those who have difficulty speaking or being understood on the telephone. STS uses a specially-trained Communication Assistant (CA) who is familiar with the speech patterns of a wide variety of individuals who have a hard time being understood.

Special telephone equipment is not needed for STS calls since users may use their own voice or an Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) device.

### Making an STS Call

- Dial 711 or the toll-free STS number for California, 800-854-7784.
- Provide the CA the number you want to call, plus any additional instructions.
- The CA will ask the person you are calling if he/she is familiar with Speech-to-Speech. If the person is not, the CA will explain how STS works before beginning the conversation.
- Upon request, the CA will repeat your part of the conversation in short phrases. The CA will work closely with you to ensure the entire conversation is understood and will clarify anything that is not clear before repeating.
- To end your call, say GA to SK or just say Goodbye.



### Tips for STS Users

- Establish a Customer Profile to store helpful information for your calls. This will help the CA to process your calls better.
- Tell the CA as much as you can about your call prior to the CA dialing. For instance, if you are calling an automated system that requires you to select from a number of options, let the CA know which options you want before the call is placed.
- It is helpful if you pause while the CA repeats your part of the conversation.
- If instructed to do so, the CA will remain in the background. If you need the CA to assist at any time during the call, you must request the CA to do so. This is especially useful when calling those who are familiar with your speech.
- There is no time limit and you may make as many consecutive calls as you want. You should not be concerned with the length of the call.

### Visually Assisted Speech-to-Speech (VA STS)

This enhanced feature allows you to connect with the relay service using a webcam or videophone with Skype™, enabling the CA to see your mouth movements, facial expressions and gestures. For more information, call 800-855-7400.

### STS User Training Line

To learn more about placing and receiving STS or VA STS calls, call 877-632-9095 and ask to be connected with the STS User Training Line.

Skype™ is a trademark of Skype. California Relay Service is not affiliated, sponsored, authorized, or otherwise associated with the Skype group of companies.



## Captioned Telephone

Captioned Telephone (CapTel®) is a service that allows users to listen to their phone conversations while reading captions of what's said to them. Through the use of a uniquely designed CapTel phone, users speak directly to the other party and listen and read the other party's response. Captions appear on the bright, built-in display screen of the CapTel phone, just moments after the other party has spoken.

### How It Works

Captioned Telephone service works with the help of a CapTel phone, which functions like a traditional phone, with one main difference: it displays every word the other person says during the conversation.

Behind the scenes, advanced speech recognition software is used to generate captions of the call while a live communication assistant is available to ensure accuracy of the captions.

### This leading-age technology:

- Eliminates the struggle of using the phone due to difficulty hearing.
- Allows for natural conversations.
- Provides a truly interactive calling experience.



## How Does Captioned Telephone Work?

Captioned Telephone service works with the help of a CapTel phone, which functions like a traditional phone, with one main difference: it displays every word the other person says during the conversation.

Behind the scenes, advanced speech recognition software is used to generate captions of the call while a live communication assistant is available to ensure accuracy of the captions.



## Voice

Voice Relay allows standard phone users to communicate with individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or have difficulty speaking and who may use a TTY or other assistive telecommunications devices. A Communication Assistant (CA) facilitates the call by relaying messages between the individuals, according to their needs.

### Making a Call

- Dial 711 or the toll-free number for California, 800-735-2922.
- The CA will answer with his/her identification number and ask for the number you want to call.
- Provide the area code and telephone number you want to call, along with any additional instructions.
- All messages are relayed word for word. The person you are calling may also be made aware of any audible background noises or conversations occurring.
- The CA will facilitate the conversation through a turn-taking process. When it is your turn, speak directly and clearly to the person you are calling and say GA or Go Ahead when you are ready for a response. The other party will start his/her message and when you hear the words GA or Go Ahead, it is your turn to speak again.
- To end your call, say GA to SK or simply say Goodbye.

### Receiving a Relay Call

- When you pick up the phone, you will hear “This is the Relay Service. Someone who may be deaf, deaf-blind, hard of hearing or have difficulty speaking is on the line.”

- The CA will give his/her identification number and ask if you have received a relay call before. If necessary, the CA will explain the process before connecting the call.
- The conversation will proceed in the same manner as when making a relay call; say Go Ahead or GA to indicate you are done speaking and say GA to SK to finish the conversation.

### Tips for Voice Relay Users

- Give the CA as much information as possible before the call begins, such as the name of the person you are calling, so that the CA may ask for him/her when the call is answered.
- You may request a male or female CA – and depending on availability, your request will be granted.
- Once connected, speak slower than usual and wait a few moments for a response, as there may be a slight delay.
- If you have a series of questions, it is good to ask them one at a time, allowing the person you are calling to answer each question individually. This will reduce any confusion or misunderstandings.
- There is no time limit on calls, and you may make as many consecutive calls as you like.



## RCC (Remote Conference Captioning)

Remote Conference Captioning (RCC) offers real-time captioning through the use of Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) service, allowing individuals who have difficulty hearing what's being said over the phone during conference calls to read text of what all participants are saying. This service provides a clear understanding of what's said and allows the individual with hearing loss to participate in conference calls in a more effective manner.

### How RCC Works

- The RCC user will receive a link in order to view text. A computer or mobile device along with an internet connection is required.
- The captioner will need access to the audio portion of the call through either an audio conference line or other method.
- Once the call is connected, the captioner listens to the conversation and produces real-time streaming text, which is sent over the internet. The text shows up just seconds after someone has spoken.
- At any time, the RCC user can scroll up to review text.
- The RCC user will receive a raw unedited transcript from the captioner within one full business day.

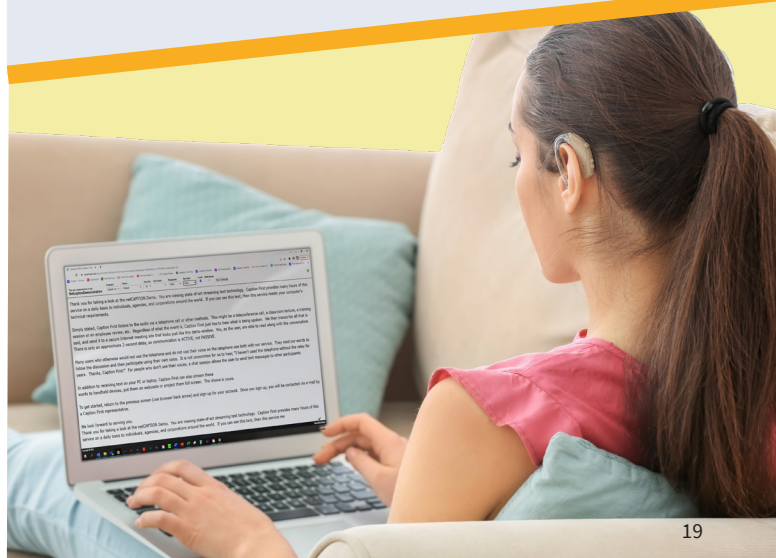
### Technical requirements To Use RCC

- Audio conference line or virtual connection access for the captioner so they may listen to the audio portion of the call.
- A computer, tablet or smartphone with access to the internet.

There is no software to download in order to use RCC. Access to RCC services will be available via the link provided.

You must be a resident of California to use the service. Request RCC services by completing the RCC Scheduling Request Form at [ca-relay.com](http://ca-relay.com). After submitting the form, you can expect an email confirmation within one business day indicating that your request was received.

**RCC service is available from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. PST Monday through Friday.**





# Customer Care

If you have questions or concerns, call 877-632-9095 (English) or 877-419-8440 (Spanish), email [california@hamiltonrelay.com](mailto:california@hamiltonrelay.com), or visit us in person at a California Connect site. Locations can be found at [CAconnect.org](http://CAconnect.org).

California CapTel Customer Service numbers are 888-402-4018 (English) or 877-330-0156 (Spanish).

# Equipment Distribution Program

Interested in finding equipment that can help you or a loved one communicate with ease? Call 800-806-1191 or visit [CAconnect.org](http://CAconnect.org) to learn more about our equipment distribution program.



# CALIFORNIA RELAY

## California Relay Service Direct Access

TTY, VCO, HCO	800-735-2929
Voice	800-735-2922
Spanish	800-855-3000
STS	800-854-7784
VASTS	800-855-7400

Please call 911 in an emergency!