

Speech-to-Speech (STS) Relay

For people with speech disabilities who have difficulty being understood on the telephone.



What is Speech-to-Speech (STS) relay?

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

Who can benefit from STS relay?

- People with cerebral palsy, Parkinson's disease, Huntington's disease, multiple sclerosis, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis or muscular dystrophy
- People with a laryngectomy, stroke complications, stuttered speech or other voice conditions affecting clarity of speech
- People who use a voice synthesizer or enhancer, sound board, or other augmentative communication device

How does STS relay work?

The caller dials the STS relay toll-free number. An STS CA facilitates the call by listening to the person with a speech disability and revoicing verbatim what he or she says to the other person. STS CAs are specially trained to understand a variety of different speech patterns, and process all calls with patience. The CA is not part of the call; their job is only to revoice what the caller says.

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

Specialized Telephone Equipment

If you meet certain eligibility requirements, you may receive specialized telephone equipment at no cost through Minnesota's Telephone Program. The Telephone Program loans telecommunications equipment to people who are speech disabled or physically disabled.

To contact the TED Program, please call 1-800-657-7329 or visit our web site at www.tedprogram.org.



What else should I know about Speech-to-Speech relay?

- You or the person you are calling may request that the CA remain in the background and only begin revoicing if requested by either party. This is helpful when calling friends, family or others that are familiar with your speech.
- STS relay is a free service (Local calls are free, and long distance calls will be billed by the long distance carrier of your choice).
- All conversations are strictly confidential.
- STS relay is available 24 hours per day, 365 days per year.
- There are no limits on the length or number of calls placed.

may qualify to receive specialized telephone equipment through the Equipment Distribution (TED) Program. The TED Program is available to people who are hard of hearing, deaf, deaf/blind,

1-800-3663 (voice) / 1-888-206-6555 (TTY), or visit their

Contact the Minnesota Relay Consumer Relations Office:

- **To learn more about STS relay**
- **For information on other services offered through Minnesota Relay**
- **To request an STS relay instruction sheet**
- **To schedule a free presentation or training**

1-800-657-3775

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.

