

CALIFORNIA RELAY SERVICE (CRS)

What is California Relay Service?

California Relay Service is a telecommunications relay service, which provides full telephone accessibility to people who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech disabled. Specially trained Communication Assistants (CAs) complete all calls and stay on-line to relay messages electronically over a text telephone (TT), so called TTY for “Teletype”, or verbally to hearing parties.

California Relay Service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, with no restrictions on the length or number of calls placed. There is no charge for using relay services within your local calling area. Long distance call rates are determined by the carrier of choice.

HISTORY

Signed into law on July 26, 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act is a wide-ranging legislation intended to make the American Society more accessible to people with disabilities.

As shown in the Americans with Disabilities Act – Title IV, it says telecommunications companies offering telephone service to the general public must have telephone relay service to individuals who use telecommunication devices for the deaf (TTYs) or similar devices.

HOW DO YOU USE CALIFORNIA RELAY SERVICE?

Sprint – California Relay Service

TTY Users 1-877-735-2929*
1-888-877-5378*

Voice Users 1-888-877-5379*

Spanish 1-888-877-5381*

*888 and 877 are all toll free numbers.

For Voice Users or hearing person

Standard telephone users can easily initiate calls to TTY users. The Communication Assistant (CA) types the hearing person's spoken words to the TTY user and reads back the typed replies. Simply use the following steps:

1. Dial the Sprint – California Relay Service Voice number, 1-888-877-5379
2. A Communications Assistant (CA) will be right with you to complete your call.
3. Give the CA the area code and telephone number you wish to call and any further instructions.
4. The CA will process your call, relaying exactly what the TTY user is typing. The CA will relay what you say back to the TTY user.
5. Talk to the CA as though you are speaking directly to the person you called. (Avoid saying "tell him" or "tell her")
6. So that the conversation flows smoothly, say "Go Ahead" each time you have finished speaking. This lets the CA know that you are ready for the TTY user's reply.
7. Confidentiality is the law. The CA is required to keep all conversations private.

Keep in mind that when relaying your call, the CAs will type everything you say and anything that is heard. CAs are trained and instructed in conveying the full content, context, and intent of the relay conversation they translate. Every effort is taken to maintain functional equivalence for both parties during a relay call. All secondary activities that would normally be known to a hearing person engaged in a telephone conversation (i.e. background noises, side conversations, other people coming on the line, etc.) are relayed to the extent possible. For example, the CA may type background noises that are heard such as "baby crying", "loud radio", "noisy", etc.

SPANISH RELAY SERVICE

QUESTION: What if I speak Spanish and want to call a TTY user whose primary language is Spanish?

ANSWER: Language should not be a barrier to using relay service. Relay Service provides a special group of bilingual Spanish Communications Assistants (CA) to perform all relay functions for Spanish TTY and Voice users.

For Spanish relay users

1. Dial the Sprint – Relay Service Spanish number, 1-888-877-5381
2. Follow steps 2-7 from “Voice Users or hearing persons.”

