

AUXILIARY AIDS PLAN FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES  
AND LIMITED-ENGLISH PROFICIENCY PLAN

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## **NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**



### **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

No person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability will be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to unlawful discrimination under any program or activity receiving or benefiting from federal financial assistance and administered by the Department.

### **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY**

South County Mental Health Center (SCMHC) assures each applicant and employee Equal Employment Opportunity without regard to age, race, color, sex, religion, national origin, political opinions or affiliations, marital status, or disability, except when such requirement constitutes a bona-fide occupational qualification necessary to perform the tasks associated with the position. Equal Employment opportunity is attained using both objective and subjective merit principles and applies to recruitment, examination, appointment, training, promotion, demotion, compensation, retention, discipline, separation, and other employment practices within the Center.

Any applicant or employee who believes that he or she has been discriminated against may file a complaint with the Florida Commission on Human Relations or the Department's Office of Civil Rights, within 365 days of the alleged discriminatory act. All complaints shall be treated in accordance with the procedures set forth by law or in Chapter 60Y-5, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.).

### **NON-RETALIATION POLICY**

No person shall be retaliated against, harassed, intimidated, threatened, coerced or discriminated against for making a charge, testifying, assisting or participating in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing; or for opposing alleged unlawful discriminatory practices prohibited by state and federal laws.

1. **Purpose.** To provide for the implementation of South County Mental Health Center, Inc. policy and procedures for the provision of auxiliary aids ensuring accessibility to all programs, benefits, and services to persons with disabilities and foreign-language interpreters for persons with Limited-English Proficiency (LEP).
2. **Scope.** The provisions described in this procedure apply to all South County Mental Health Center programs who provide direct services to clients and/or potential clients.
3. **Policy.** South County Mental Health Center, Inc. will provide at no cost to the client or companion appropriate auxiliary aids, including Certified American Sign Language interpreters, to persons with disabilities and qualified foreign-language interpreters to persons with Limited-English Proficiency where necessary to afford such persons an equal opportunity to participate in or benefit from South County Mental Health Center, Inc. programs and services. Auxiliary aids include, but are not limited to Braille and taped materials, certified interpreters, readers, assistive listening devices and systems, television decoders, visual fire alarms using strobe lights, captioned films and other assistive devices.
  - a. All clients and companions are entitled to an equal opportunity to use and benefit from the programs and services of South County Mental Health Center, Inc.
    - This includes reasonable accommodations to ensure that programs and services are equally accessible to and equally effective for otherwise qualified persons with disabilities who have hearing, vision or mobility impairments.
    - South County Mental Health Center, Inc. will take reasonable steps to provide services and information in appropriate languages, other than English, to ensure that Limited-English Proficient persons are effectively informed and can effectively participate in and benefit from its programs, services and activities.
  - b. Auxiliary aids or language interpreters will be available for use by clients and companions with impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills in each phase of the service delivery process (e.g., telephone inquires, requests, intake interviews, service delivery, counseling, complaints, testing, treatment, and training, etc.). Services will be provided at no cost to the client or companion. A companion is defined as any person who is deaf or hard-of-hearing and is one of the following:
    - A person whom the client indicates should communicate with DCF Contracted Service Provider personnel about the client, such as a person who participates in any treatment decision, a person who plays a role in communicating the client's needs, condition, history or symptoms of SCF Contracted Service Provider personnel or a person who helps the client act on the information, advice or instructions provided by DCF Contracted Service Provider personnel;
    - A person legally authorized to make healthcare or legal decisions on behalf of the client;
    - Such other person with whom the DCF Contracted Service Provider personnel would ordinarily and regularly communicate about the client.
4. **References.**
  - a. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 United States Code (USC) 2000d et seq; 45 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 80.

- b. Section 504, Title V of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, 230 USC 1681 et seq; 45 CFR, Part 80, 84 and 28 CFR Part 41 of the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987.
- c. Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.
- d. The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981, as amended, 42 USC 9849 and Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, Public law 100-259.
- e. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Title I and II as amended.
- f. Civil Rights, Methods of Administration; Equal Opportunity in Service Delivery.
- g. American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Accommodation Procedures for Applicants/Employees/General Public.
- h. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Civil Rights, Policy Guidance – Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination As It Affects Persons with Limited-English Proficiency.
- i. Section 110.201(3), Florida Statutes, requires each agency to comply with all federal regulations necessary to receive federal funds.

**5. Accountability.**

- a. All SCMHC programs will be responsible for implementing the agency's authorized state-wide Auxiliary Aids and Limited-English Proficiency Plan. Local resources and procedures shall be appended to the state-wide plan. Programmatic and local procedures shall provide the necessary tools to staff for the provision of assistive devices, certified sign language interpreters or readers and physical modifications to ensure the accessibility of programs and services to clients or potential clients with sensory (hearing and sight), speaking or mobility impairments as well as foreign-language interpreters to clients or potential clients with Limited-English Proficiency.
- b. The Chief Quality Officer (CQO) is the designated Title VI, Title II ADA and Section 504 Coordinator for SCMHC. The CQO is responsible for the coordination, development and implementation of SCMHC procedures ensuring the nondiscriminatory delivery of equally effective and equally accessible quality services. All SCMHC employees are responsible for ensuring equal accessibility and equally beneficial services to all clients and potential clients of SCMHC.

**6. Dissemination.** Copies of SCMHC plans are kept by the CQO and Human Resources. Copies are distributed upon request to individuals or organizations serving persons with disabilities or Limited-English Proficiency. A copy of the plan will be located on SharePoint, SCMHC's communication site.

**7. Revisions.** The Auxiliary Aids Plan and Limited-English Proficiency Plan will be updated as needed, but at least annually, with a copy of all changes submitted to the program managers.

**8. Ensuring Accessibility.** The following procedures are to be followed by employees to ensure accessibility of programs and services to clients or potential clients with disabilities or Limited-English Proficiency.

- a. Assess client needs by consulting with the client or potential client concerning his or her preferred communication mode, and if applicable with assigned caseworkers, counselors, parents, family members, guardians or other representatives. This will be determined during the Intake Assessment.
  - For clients who are deaf or hard of hearing, staff are required to determine, prior to providing services, the method of communication that

the client feels most comfortable with, and record this information in the client's file. A communication plan will be completed if there are communication needs and will be reviewed quarterly. This will be reflected in each client's Intake Registration and/or Assessment.

- For clients who are Limited-English Proficient (LEP), staff shall identify at first contact, the preferred language including dialect of each client, and record this information in the client's file in the Intake Registration in Tier.
- b. The communication options for deaf and hard of hearing persons may include but not be limited to the Florida Relay Service, TDDs (Telecommunication Devices for the Deaf), FAX (Telephone Facsimile Transmittal), phone amplifiers, certified sign language interpreters, flash cards, lip-reading, written notes, supplementary hearing devices, charts, signs or a combination of these, as appropriate.
- c. SCMHC or contract provider's official (or designate) with budget approval over the unit or facility has the responsibility for approving the request and obtaining the appropriate auxiliary aid or interpreter.
- d. Auxiliary aids or interpreters will be provided within 2 hours of request or as otherwise required. Delaying services is not always practical or appropriate; therefore, provisions will be made when advance notice for an auxiliary aid or interpreter is needed and subsequent referrals will be notified in advance of client's needs.
- e. The use of auxiliary aids, certified sign-language interpreters, translators, or foreign-language interpreters will be at no cost to the client, companion or applicant for services. If an auxiliary aid or an interpreter is required and services must be purchased, payment will be made from the appropriate program operating budget.
  - Language services include, as a first preference, the availability of qualified bilingual staff that can communicate directly with clients in their preferred language.
  - When bilingual staff is not available, the next preference is face-to-face interpretation provided by a qualified contract or volunteer language interpreter.
  - Telephone interpreter services should be used as a supplemental system when an interpreter is not available, or when services are needed for an unusual or infrequently encountered language.
  - Sign language interpreters must be certified through the registration for the Interpretation of the Deaf.
- f. Minor children should never be used as interpreters or be allowed to interpret for a parent.
- g. The use of assistive devices (vibratory alarms) will be incorporated with relevant services (tactile communication) for persons with multiple disabilities such as deafness and blindness.
- h. If the individual declines the use of the free foreign language or sign language interpreter, or other auxiliary aids, the client's files must be noted and the declination documented.
- i. Family members will only be used for sign language interpretation upon written authorization of the client.

Each program will make sure non-English written materials, such as program forms, brochures, etc., are available to operational staff.

9. **Provision of Interpreters in Timely Manner.** Staff shall provide interpreters for deaf or hard-of-hearing customers and companions in a timely manner in accordance to the following standards:
- a. Non-Scheduled Interpreter Requests. For any emergency situation that is not a scheduled appointment, staff shall make an interpreter available as soon as possible, but in no case later than two (2) hours from the time the client, companion or staff requests an interpreter, whichever is earlier. If the situation is not an emergency, staff shall offer to schedule an appointment (and provide an interpreter where necessary for effective communication) as convenient to the client or companion, but at least by the next business day.
  - b. Scheduled Interpreter Requests. For scheduled events, staff shall make a certified interpreter available at the time of the scheduled appointment. If an interpreter fails to appear for the scheduled appointment, staff shall take whatever additional actions are necessary to make a certified interpreter available to the deaf or hard-of-hearing client or companion as soon as possible, but in no case later than two (2) hours after the scheduled appointment.
10. **Other Means of Communication.** Staff shall continue to try to communicate with the deaf or hard of hearing client or companion insofar as the client or companion seeks to communicate, between the time an interpreter is requested and the time an interpreter arrives.
- a. Language services include, as a first preference, the availability of qualified bilingual staff that can communicate directly with clients or companions in their preferred language.
  - b. When bilingual staff are not available, the next preference is face-to-face interpretation provided by a contract or volunteer language interpreter.
  - c. Telephone interpreter services should be used as a supplemental system when an interpreter is not available, or when services are needed for an unusual or infrequently encountered language.
  - d. Sign language interpreters must be certified.
  - e. Minor children should never be used as an interpreter or be allowed to interpret for a parent.
  - f. The use of assistive devices (vibratory alarms) will be incorporated with relevant services (tactile communication) for persons with multiple disabilities such as deafness and blindness.
  - g. If the individual declines the use of the free foreign language or sign language interpreter, or other auxiliary aids, the client's file must be noted, utilizing the Declination of Free interpreter Service form (Appendix C).
11. **Identifying Language Trends.** To ensure meaningful access to all SCMHC programs and services, each program will identify language trends by:
- a. Identifying the non-English languages that are likely to be encountered in its programs and estimating the numbers of LEP persons eligible for services that are likely to be affected by its program. This can be done by reviewing census data, client utilization data, and community organizations. The estimate should be used as a guide for employee recruitment.
    - Informing clients of the purpose for collecting data on race, ethnicity and language
    - Emphasizing that such data is confidential and will not be used for discriminatory purposes

- A client does not have to provide the information if he or she chooses not to provide such information, unless required by law
- b. Identifying the points of contact in the program or activity where language assistance is likely to be needed.
- c. Identifying resources needed, location and availability of these resources.
- d. Reporting the identified language needs to the CQO and Human Resources.

**12. Meetings/Conferences/Facilities Accessibility.** The following are procedures and minimum requirements for ensuring accessibility of meetings, conferences and seminars to persons with sensory, speech or mobility impairments or Limited-English Proficiency.

- a. Facilities used for meetings, conferences and seminars will be reviewed for accessibility by the unit sponsoring the activity in coordination with the designated Section 504/Title II ADA Coordinator.
- b. When meetings, conferences and seminars are scheduled, information will be included in the advertisements, conference registration materials or meeting notices that sensory impaired or Limited-English Proficient participants will be provided with necessary auxiliary aids or interpreters at no cost to themselves. The information will include the name of a contact person and a date by which the person must request such assistance. The registration process will include a method for determining the number and type of persons with disabilities or Limited-English Proficiency needing assistance as well as the type of personal assistance or accommodation requested.
- c. The following provisions are required if sensory, speech, mobility impaired or Limited-English Proficiency persons plan to attend the specific meeting, conference or seminar.
  - Certified interpreters for the deaf and hard of hearing and accessibility to Teletype (TDD) equipment. NOTE: When telephones are provided for use by participants or residents (clients, employees or the public), TDDs must be provided for participants or residents who are deaf.
  - Adequate lighting in meeting rooms so signing by interpreter can be readily seen.
  - Readers or cassette recordings to enable full participation by vision impaired persons.
  - Interpreters for Limited-English Proficient persons.
  - Agenda and other conference materials translated into usable form for visually impaired or Limited-English Proficient participants.
  - Parking spaces clearly marked with appropriate ramps and curb cuts will be provided for persons with disabilities.
  - Where parking is available on or adjacent to the site, one 96" wide space with a 60" access aisle shall be set aside for the car of each mobility-impaired participant requesting it in advance of the meeting. Two accessible parking spaces may share a common access aisle.
  - Where parking is not available on or adjacent to the site, valet parking or other alternative accommodations for mobility impaired participants will be provided.
  - Entrance ramps will be available and appropriate (26" wide or wider, level with adjacent surface and a manageable slope or incline of no more than one inch rise per foot, 1:12).



- All meeting rooms will be all on one level or capable of being reached by elevators or ramps that can be independently traversed by a mobility-impaired participant.
  - Stages, platforms, etc., to be used by persons in wheelchairs will be accessible by ramps or lifts.
  - Seating arrangements for persons in wheelchairs will be adapted to integrate mobility-impaired persons rather than to isolate them on the group's perimeter.
  - One unobstructed entrance to each facility.
  - Doors operable by single effort.
  - Door handles no more than 48" from floor.
- d. Rest rooms accessible to mobility impaired.
- Level access for each sex on each floor.
  - Turnaround space 5' X 5'.
  - Door clearance of 32".
  - Grab rails provided.
  - Shelves, racks, dispensers, etc., not more than 48" for forward reach or 54" for side reach.
  - Rest room signs indicating accessibility.
- e. Wheelchair accessible telephones.
- f. Accessible drinking fountains with cup dispensers.
- g. Audible and visible fire alarms.

13. **Notification.** SCMHC Nondiscrimination Policy and Deaf and Hard of Hearing posters will be displayed in buildings' main entrances, lobby areas, waiting areas, and bulletin boards. The name, telephone number, and TDD number for the Title II ADA Coordinator will be listed on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing poster to assure accessible services to clients, companions, potential clients, or their representatives. Descriptive information on the availability of auxiliary aids and reasonable accommodations to persons requiring assisting devices or aids will be included in announcements related to meetings, seminars, workshops and conferences, as well as to services offered by SCMHC.

14. **Training.**

- a. New employee orientation includes completion of the DCF Service Delivery for the Deaf or Hard of Hearing modules and South County's Mental Health Center's web based training titled; Civil Rights, ADA, and Auxiliary Aids Compliance in the Workplace (Appendix D). This is completed the first day of employment and reviewed annually.
- b. All staff will be trained annually on how to assist sensory and mobility impaired or Limited-English Proficient clients in obtaining assisting devices and/or aids, or other reasonable accommodations. This training is mandatory and will be tracked. Training will include:
- Procedures for serving the deaf and hard of hearing, sight-impaired, mobility impaired and Limited-English Proficient clients, companions and potential clients.
  - Awareness of deafness or hearing loss; speech impairments; sight impairments and blindness; reading impairments and dyslexia; and mobility impairments.
  - Communication options available.

- How to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified clients, companions and potential clients, i.e., how to access or purchase auxiliary aids, interpreter services and physical modifications.
- Requirements for making meetings, conferences and services accessible.
- Awareness of the Auxiliary Aids and Limited-English Proficiency Plans, including how to access the Plans for reference.

**15. Documentation/Record Retention.**

- a. Records relating to the Auxiliary Aids and Limited-English Proficiency Plans, such as copies of materials used in training, will be documented and maintained for ten years by the Section 504/ADA Title II Coordinator.
- b. All finalized requests for accommodations with relevant documentation will be forwarded to the Section 504/Title II ADA Coordinator.

**16. Compliance Monitoring.**

- a. Monitoring will be accomplished through annual updates, surveys, compliance reviews, complaint investigations, and other related civil rights activities.
- b. Monitoring the provision of auxiliary aids to clients, potential clients or companions who are deaf or hard of hearing, including the use of certified interpreters in all phases of service delivery, shall be conducted annually.

**17. Translation of Written Materials.** Written material routinely provided in English to applicants, clients and the public are to be available in regularly encountered languages other than English. It is vital that documents be identified and translated into the non-English language of each regularly encountered Limited-English Proficient group eligible to be served or to be directly affected

**18. Competency of Interpreters and Translators.**

- a. Certification of foreign language interpreters is not required; however competency requires:
  - Demonstrated proficiency in both English and the other language
  - Fundamental knowledge in both languages including any specialized terms or concepts peculiar to the program or activity
  - Sensitivity to the person's culture
  - A demonstrated ability to convey information in both languages, accurately

It is the responsibility of program managers and supervisors to ensure the competency of foreign-language interpreters.

- b. SCMHC's employees will only be utilized to interpret for the deaf and hard of hearing by American Sign Language (ASL) if they are certified through the Registration for the Interpretation for the Deaf.
- c. An assessment of an individual's interpreting skills is required to determine their level of competency prior to their interpreting for clients with hearing impairments. Four levels of competency have been identified: apprentice, provisional, provisional +36 credit hours, and proficient. To achieve a level, the interpreter must meet established criteria. Each level has a specific duration period and requirements for maintaining the level.
- d. All current employees desiring to interpret for the deaf and hard of hearing clients will have two (2) years to achieve the credentials required for the apprentice level of interpreting.

- e. Interpreter Standards developed by the Florida Department of Education and modified for SCMHC use are incorporated by reference into this procedure and are attached as Appendix A to this procedure.
- f. It is the responsibility of managers, supervisors, and staff to familiarize themselves with and follow standards of etiquette when communicating with clients with physical or sensory disabilities and/or Limited-English Proficiency. See Appendix A.

#### **19. Denied Auxiliary Requests**

Documentation, with supporting justification, must be made if any request for an auxiliary aid was not honored. SCMHC's Chief Executive Officer and Chief Quality Officer, are the only people that can deny auxiliary aid requests made by a client or companion. If a staff person is not familiar with the auxiliary aid request, they will contact the SPOC for information as well as ask their supervisor for any information that they may need to secure this aid, but reiterate that the cost of any auxiliary aid is the responsibility of the agency and not the clients or their companions.

#### **20. Referrals**

If clients or companions are referred to other agencies, SCMHC must ensure that the receiving agency is notified of the client or companion's preferred method of communication and any auxiliary aid or service needs. In order to accommodate this, SCMHC will ensure that the referral is desired by the client and that she or he signs a Release of Information Form.

#### **21. Client Feedback Form**

SCMHC will distribute Client/Companion Feedback Forms to clients or companions that are deaf or hard of hearing quarterly and provide assistance in completing the forms if requested by the client or companion. The original Client/Companion Feedback Form shall be mailed to DCF, Office of Civil Rights, 1317 Winewood Boulevard, Building 1, Room 110, Tallahassee, FL 32399-0700. When a client is given a Client/Companion Feedback Form, a copy of the form will not be kept in the client's file, but will be documented in the client's medical record.

#### **22. Complaints/Grievances**

SCMHC supports and protects the fundamental human, civil, constitutional and statutory rights of all clients. Upon admission, clients are given a clients rights and responsibilities statement that is signed by the client and staff (Appendix E). The Client Rights monitoring process includes a grievance procedure (Appendix F). Any client, legal guardian or advocate of a client may also voice a concern, question or complaint through the CEO's hotline by calling 561-637-2127.

<u>Location</u>	<u>Civil Rights</u>	<u>Contact Information</u>	<u>Mailing Address</u>
South County Mental Health Center, Inc.	Karyn Green, SCMHC ADA 504 Civil Rights Officer	P: 561-637-1001 C: 561-662-9529 F: 561-637-1410	16158 S. Military Trail Delray Beach, FL 33484
DCF Southeast Region	Shenna Fluriach, DCF ADA 504 Civil Rights Officer	P: 561-227-6723 TDD: 561-650-6823	Human Resources/ Southeast Region Office of Civil Rights 111 S. Sapodilla Ave Room 309-F West Palm Beach, FL 33401

**RESOURCES FOR HEARING AND VISUAL IMPAIRMENT AND  
LIMITED-ENGLISH PROFICIENCY**

**PALM BEACH COUNTY**

Nationwide Interpreter Resource  
P.O. Box 272142  
Boca Raton, FL 33427  
561-362-0594  
(Sign Language)

7-1-1 Florida Relay  
1-800-955-8770 Voice  
1-800-955-8771 TDD/TTY

CART  
Tanya Ward - English, CRR, CCP, CBC  
Florida Realtime/Caption Crew  
5571 SW 94<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33328  
954-684-1259

Deaf Service Center of Palm Beach County  
3111 S. Dixie Highway #237  
West Palm Beach, FL 33405  
561-802-3353 Voice  
561-802-3351 TDD  
561-290-1044 Videophone

Advocacy Center for Person's with Disabilities  
1-800-342-0826 Voice  
1-800-346-4127 TDD

Division of Blind Services  
2000 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd  
Suite 300  
West Palm Beach, FL 33409  
561-681-2548 Voice  
866-225-0794 Toll Free

FL Council of the Blind  
1-800-267-4448

Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches  
1710 Tiffany Drive East  
West Palm Beach, FL 33407  
561-845-8022

Language Line Solutions  
1-800-752-6096 – Option 4

# Florida Relay 711

## discover/er communication freedom

### How the Relay Works

#### Text Telephone (TTY)



The user types messages and reads replies on the display screen and/or paper printout.



The Operator (OPR) voices typewritten messages to the hearing person and types replies to the TTY user.

#### Voice Carry-Over (VCO)



A VCO user speaks directly to a hearing person and reads replies on the VCO screen.



The OPR types the response to the VCO user.

#### Two-Line VCO



A person with two phone lines and a computer can use one line for speaking and the other line for receiving typed messages.



The OPR accommodates VCO user by typing responses from the standard telephone user.

#### Hearing Carry-Over (HCO)



Speech-impaired users listen to the person they called and then type their messages using the HCO telephone.



The OPR voices the typed messages to the standard telephone user.

#### Speech to speech (STS)



Speech-impaired users speak through the OPR.



An OPR familiar with speech patterns voices the message to the person being called.

For outreach presentations or printed materials, call FTRI at 1-888-292-1950, ext. 232.

#### Remember, it's YOUR call!

Florida Relay is the communications link for people who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Deaf/Blind, or Speech Impaired. Through Florida Relay, people who use specialized telephones can communicate with people who use standard telephones and vice versa.

#### Relay Access Numbers

Dial 711 to use the relay anywhere or continue using

- 1-800-955-8770 (Voice)
- 1-800-955-8771 (TTY)
- 1-877-955-8260 (VCO)\*
- 1-877-955-5334 (STS)\*
- 1-800-955-1339 (ASCII)
- 1-877-955-8773 (Spanish)
- 1-877-955-8707 (French Creole) 8 a.m. to 2 a.m. daily

\*Recommend direct-dial.

Relay Customer Service  
1-800-676-3777 (English)  
1-800-676-4290 (Spanish)



#### Remember

- 711—Relay Service
- 411—Directory Assistance
- 911—Local Emergency Assistance



#### User Friendly Features

- Toll-free access calling.
- Available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
- No restrictions on the number or length of calls.
- No charge for local calls.



Do you know someone who can use Florida Relay? Share this with them.

Florida Telecommunications FTRI Relay, Inc.

Equipment Distribution Program  
Customer Service  
1-800-222-3448 (Voice)  
1-888-447-5820 (TTY)  
Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.-5:00  
[www.ftri.org](http://www.ftri.org)

## ABOUT FLORIDA RELAY 711

Florida Relay is the communications link for people who are Deaf, Hard-of-hearing, Deaf/Blind, or Speech Impaired. Through the Florida Relay, people who use specialized telephone equipment can communicate with people who use standard telephone equipment.

To call Florida Relay, dial 7-1-1, or use the toll free numbers

- 1-800-955-8771 (TTY)
- 1-800-955-8770 (Voice)
- 1-800-955-3771 (ASCII)
- 1-877-955-8260 (VCO-Direct)
- 1-800-955-5334 (STS)
- 1-877-955-8773 (Spanish)
- 1-877-955-8707 (French Cr)

### **Types of Florida Relay Calls**

Thousands of Floridians depend upon Florida Relay every day to make both personal and business phone calls. Here are examples of how the specialized telephone equipment and services work.

#### **Voice (for a hearing caller)**

Standard telephone users can easily initiate calls to TTY users. The relay operator types the hearing person's spoken words to the TTY user and reads back the typed replies.

1. Dial 7-1-1 for the Florida Relay Service.
2. You will hear, "Florida Relay Operator (number), May I have the number you are calling please?"
3. Give the Relay operator the area code and telephone number you wish to call and any further instructions.
4. The Relay operator will process your call, relaying exactly what the TTY user is typing. The Relay operator will relay what you say back to the TTY user.
5. When you finish the conversation and are ready to hang up, do not forget to say "SK" which stands for "stop keying" (which alerts both the Relay Operator and the other party that you are ready to end the conversation) then hang up.



#### **TIPS FOR HEARING CALLERS:**

- Be sure to talk **directly** to your caller.
- **Avoid** saying "tell him" or "tell her".
- **Say** "GA" or "Go Ahead" at the end of your response.
- **Say** "Signing Off" before you hang up.



## Text Telephone (TTY)

A person who is deaf, hard-of-hearing, deaf-blind, or speech-disabled uses a TTY to type his/her conversation to a relay operator, who then reads the typed conversation to a hearing person. The relay operator relays the hearing person's spoken words by typing them back to the TTY user.

1. Dial 7-1-1 for the Florida Relay Service.
2. The Relay operator will answer with "FI Relay OPR 8234" (for Relay operator identification), "F" or "M" (for Relay operator gender) and "GA." ("GA" denotes "go ahead.")
3. Type in the area code and telephone number you wish to call and then type "GA."
4. The Relay operator will dial the number and relay the conversation to and from your TTY. Type in "GA" at the end of each message.
5. When you are finished with the conversation, type "SK" for "Stop Keying" then hang up.



## Voice Carry-Over (VCO)

Voice Carry-Over is an ideal service that enables a hard-of-hearing or deaf user to use his/her voice to speak directly to hearing person. When the hearing person speaks to back, the Relay operator serves as the "ears" and types everything that is said on a TTY or text display.

1. Dial the Florida Relay Service VCO number 1-800-955-8771.
2. The Florida Relay operator will answer "FL OPR 8234M (For relay operator identification) "F" or "M" (for Relay operator gender) GA".
3. Voice the area code and telephone number of the party you want to call.
4. The Relay operator will type the message "Voice Now" to you as your cue to start speaking. You speak directly to the hearing person. the Relay operator will not repeat what you say, but only type to you what the hearing person says. You both need to say "GA" at the end of your response.





## Hearing Carry-Over (HCO)

Hearing Carry-Over (HCO) allows speech-disabled users with hearing, to listen to the person they are calling. The HCO user then types his/her conversation for the Relay operator to read to the standard telephone user.

1. Dial Florida Relay 7-1-1
2. The Florida Relay operator will answer "FL OPR 8234M (For relay operator identification) "F" or "M" (for Relay operator gender) GA".
3. Type the area code and telephone number of the party you want to call and then type "HCO Please GA".
4. The Relay operator will make the connections and voice the typed conversation to the called party.



## Speech-to-speech (STS)

Speech-to-Speech (STS) allows speech-disabled persons to voice their conversations. A specially trained Florida Relay Operator will listen and repeat the speech-disabled user's dialogue to the called party. No special telephone equipment is needed to use this service. A STS call can be made from any standard telephone.

- Dial Florida Relay STS number 1-877-955-5334.
- You will hear "Florida Relay Speech-to-Speech operator (number). May I have the number you are calling please?"
- Voice the area code and telephone number of the party you want to call.
- The Relay operator will say "Voice Now" to you as your cue to speak directly to your party. The Relay operator will then re-voice what you have said if the called party does not understand you. there maybe instances where you will be asked to repeat your message to ensure that it is conveyed correctly.
- Remember to say "Go Ahead" when you are ready for the other person to respond.



## CapTel™

The CapTel™ phone is ideal for a hard-of-hearing individual to use his/her own voice to speak directly to hearing person. When the hearing person speaks back, the CapTel™ user can read the response on a text display. CapTel™ allows users to place a call in the same way they would when using a traditional phone – by dialing the number directly. The CapTel™ phone automatically connects to the Captioning Relay Service when the number is dialed. When the person answers, you hear everything that he/she says, just like a traditional phone call.

To make a CapTel™ call:

- Get a special CapTel™ phone at no-cost from FTRI.
- When dialing out, simply dial the number of the person you want to call.
- Your CapTel™ phone will automatically connect to both the captioning service and the party you wish to reach.
- A captionist transcribes everything the party says to you into written text (captions) using the very latest in voice-recognition technology.

To receive a call using CapTel™:

- The voice user calling you should first dial 1-877-243-2823 (toll free).
- Once connected, the voice user then enters your area code and phone number followed by the # symbol.
- Whether it's an incoming or outgoing call, everything the voice user says to you is transcribed into captions that display in an easy-to-read window on your CapTel™ phone.

