





# Virginia Relay



Providing Accessible Telecommunications Since 1991

#### Eric Alvillar • Virginia Outreach Coordinator

#### **About Virginia Relay**

- Virginia Relay is provided by Hamilton Relay under contract with the Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Hamilton Relay is a division of Hamilton Telecommunications based in Aurora, Nebraska
  - Providing relay since 1991
  - Committed to customers, choice, responsiveness and service





- Allows individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or have difficulty speaking to communicate over the phone.
- History
  - ADA 1990
  - FCC Mandate 1993
- Use of specialized equipment
- Available 24/7



#### **Traditional Relay Services**

- TTY
- Voice Carry Over
- Hearing Carry Over
- Speech-to-Speech
- Deaf-Blind Services
- Spanish
- Captioned Telephone (CapTel®)





#### Who Can Benefit from STS?

- Individuals who have significant difficulty speaking or being understood
- Individuals who use AAC devices
- Individuals wanting to contact someone who has difficulty speaking and being understood



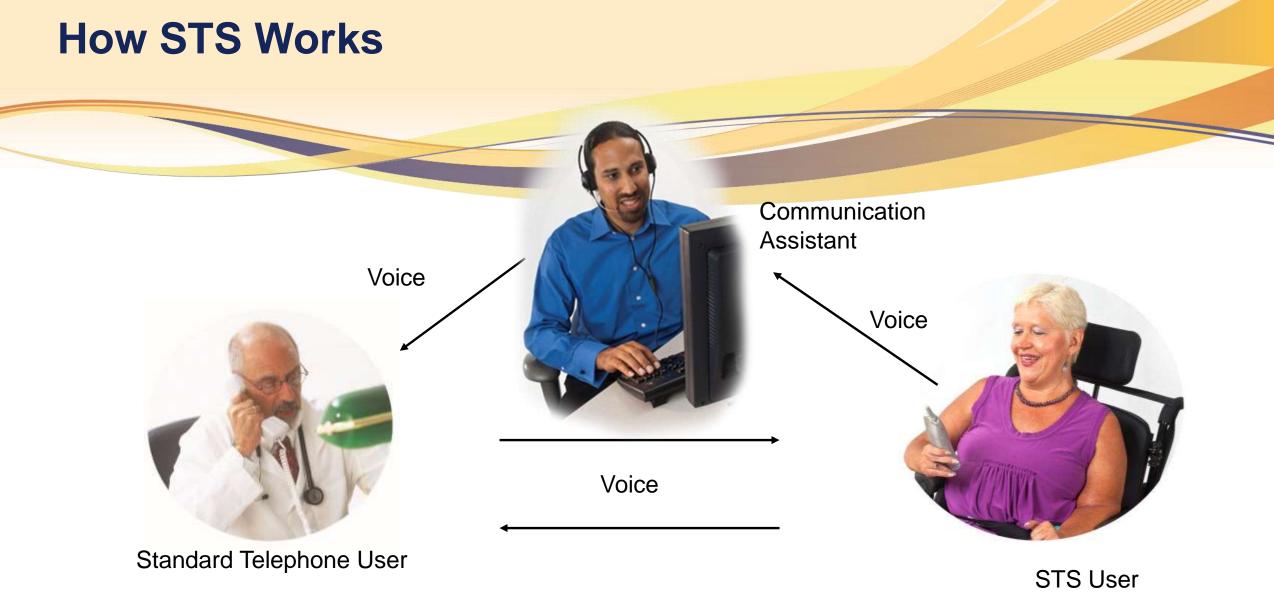


# **Communication Assistant (CA)**

- Facilitates calls according to FCC and state regulations
- Follows individual user preferences
- Does not engage in personal conversation, even when prompted
- Keeps all information confidential









# How It Works: Making the Call

- Dial 711 or the toll-free STS number for Virginia: 866-221-6784
- Call will be answered by a CA
- Provide the phone number to dial and any other special instructions
- The CA will place the call and initiate the conversation





#### How It Works: During the Call

- The CA will repeat what is said by the person who has difficulty speaking
- Repeat always
- Repeat when not understood
- Stay in background until requested
- The CA will prevent interruptions, reminding all parties to patiently wait their turn while each person is speaking



# **Tips For Using STS**

- Consumers may request a male or female CA as long as one is available, the request will be honored
- It can be helpful to give the CA as much information as possible about the call before dialing
- If an answering machine is reached, the CA will gather the customer's full message, and then redial to leave the message

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# **Tips For Using STS**

- STS users can choose whether their voice is heard by the person on the other side of the call or they may request that the CA mute their voice
- It is helpful if the STS user pauses while the CA repeats what has been said
- There is no time limit to calls and there is no limit to the amount of consecutive calls made



# Hearing Carry Over (HCO)

- For those who can hear and either regularly or occasionally are unable to speak over the phone
- Specialized telephone equipment
- HCO user listens directly to the other party
- HCO user types their responses
- CA voices what the HCO user types



#### **Customer Profile**

- Setting up a profile allows users to customize their preferences for placing and receiving relay calls
  - Connection Mode
  - Special services used on every relay call
  - Preferred long distance company
  - Speed dial numbers
  - Greetings and messages
  - AAC device information



#### **Virginia Relay Outreach**

- Presentation
- Equipment Demonstrations
- Relay Friendly Business Program
- 911 Dispatch Training
- Customer Care







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Virginia Relay You Are Always Connected

