

# NEWSLETTER

## ALASKA RELAY

### TELECOMMUNICATIONS RELAY SERVICE

Volume 1, Number 2

Fall 2003

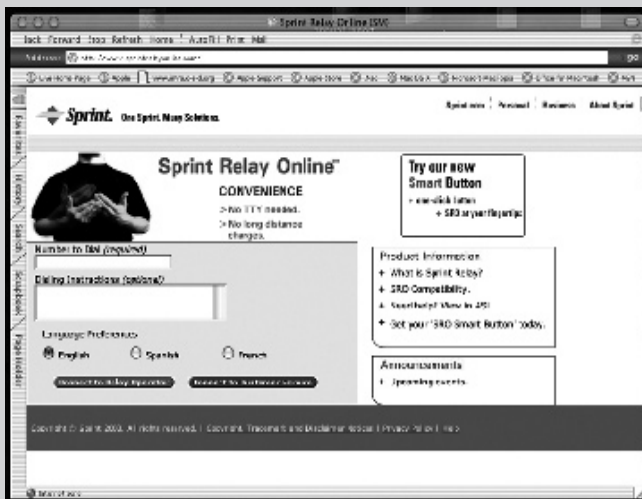
## Welcome to the CSD of Alaska /Alaska Relay Newsletter

Welcome to the second issue of the CSD of Alaska / Alaska Relay newsletter. CSD of Alaska / Alaska Relay will be publishing this newsletter quarterly for Alaska Relay users. The newsletter will provide news, information, resources, tools and tips for readers in relation to Alaska Telecom-

munication Relay Service (TRS). CSD (also known as Communication Service for the Deaf) was established in 1975, primarily to provide sign language interpreting services to deaf and hard of hearing citizens in South Dakota. Today, CSD employs over 2,000 individuals nationwide to provide social and human services, as well

as telecommunications relay services. CSD is a private, nonprofit agency dedicated to providing quality services; ensuring public accessibility; and increasing public awareness of issues affecting deaf, hard of hearing and individuals with speech disabilities. CSD of Alaska/Alaska Relay was established in 2002.

## Using Alaska Relay through the Internet



Sprint Relay is available on the Web at <http://www.sprintrelayonline.com> for users who have a computer, but don't have a high-speed Internet connection.



Alaska VRS is on the Web at <http://www.akvrs.com> for users who have a high-speed Internet connection and a web cam for video capability.



# How Do I Use Relay Service?

Relay service provides telephone accessibility to people who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech-disabled. Alaska Relay is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, with no restrictions on the number of calls placed or on their length. Alaska Relay provides state-of-the-art technology with a full range of features and highly trained, professional communication assistants (CAs) to ensure that users are able to communicate easily and effectively— every time they place a relay call. All calls are strictly confidential and no records of any conversations will be maintained.

## WHAT EQUIPMENT DO I NEED TO USE RELAY?

The most common telephone device used to make a relay call is a TTY (text telephone). There are other telephone devices available, depending on the type of relay service used. Alaska residents who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or speech-disabled are eligible to receive specialized telephone equipment and/or ring signaling devices through the Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program at CSD at minimal or no cost. For more information on how to obtain specialized telephone equipment in your area, call toll free (907) 562-2520 Voice or (866) 338-0035 TTY.

## FOR TTY USERS

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

## FOR VOICE USERS

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

## FOR VOICE CARRY OVER USERS

Voice Carry Over (VCO) allows hard of hearing users to speak directly to a hearing person. When the hearing person speaks to you, a CA will serve

as your “ears” and type everything said to you on a Two-Line VCO phone. Two-line VCO allows a customer with two telephone lines and/or a computer to use one line for speaking directly to a hearing person while the other line is used to receive the hearing person's typed responses at the same time. This feature provides a more natural flow of conversation without the pauses of single-line calls.

- **VCO to TTY.** The CA will only type what you say to the TTY user you are calling. Whatever the TTY user types will go directly to your TTY or VCO phone equipment for you to read. “GA” is needed for this type of call.
- **VCO to VCO.** The CA will serve as both parties' “ears,” typing what you say to your party and what is said to you. “GA” is needed for this type of call.
- **VCO to HCO.** The VCO user speaks directly to the HCO user. The HCO user's typed responses are sent directly to the VCO user.

## FOR HEARING CARRY OVER USERS

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

- **HCO to TTY.** HCO users can listen while the CA is reading/voicing the TTY user's typed message. The HCO user types his/her conversation directly to the TTY user.
- **HCO to HCO.** HCO users may contact other HCO users through Alaska Relay. The CA will voice to both parties what is typed on each user's TTY.

## FOR SPEECH-TO-SPEECH USERS

Specially trained relay agents serve as the speech-disabled user's voice and repeat his/her responses to the called party. CSD's unparalleled equipment and exceptional STS agent training ensure that speech-disabled users will be heard and understood. There may be instances where you will be asked to repeat your message to ensure that it is conveyed correctly. “GA” is needed for this type of call.

## INTERNATIONAL CALLS

Alaska Relay allows you to place and receive calls to and from anywhere in the world (using English or Spanish language only). Calls originating from a country outside of the U.S. may also access Alaska Relay via (605) 224-1837.

## SPANISH ACCESSIBILITY

TTY users can type in Spanish and the conversations will be relayed in Spanish to the called party. TTY users can also request Spanish to English or English to Spanish translation via relay. To make a Spanish Relay call, dial Alaska Relay and instruct the CA how you want your call translated.

## EMERGENCY

In case of emergency, TTY users should call the TTY-equipped 9-1-1 center or emergency services center in their community. All customers should verify the emergency phone numbers for TTY calls in their areas. Calls placed directly and immediately to the local TTY emergency number can save valuable time in urgent situations.

## DIRECTORY ASSISTANCE

Alaska Relay will relay directory assistance (DA) calls between TTY users and the local exchange carrier (LEC) DA operator. Once the caller makes the request, the CA will contact the appropriate LEC DA operator. After obtaining the number, the caller may choose to place the call through Alaska Relay or dial it directly.

## COMPUTER (ASCII) CALL PROCESSING

Computer users can also access Alaska Relay directly. Set your communications software to the following protocols, at speeds ranging from 300 to 2400 baud: 8 bits • No Parity • 1 Stop Bit • Half Duplex, Chat or Local Echo ON. When calling at a rate of 300 baud or below, follow the above settings, using Half Duplex. (Note: It may be helpful to set your “time out” to 100 seconds.)

## ADDITIONAL FEATURES

- **Answering Machine Retrieval.** To request answering machine retrieval, type “AMR GA.” The CA will type, “PLS PLACE YOUR HANDSET NEXT TO YOUR ANS MACHINE AND TURN ON GA.” To place a relay call, dial 7-1-1 or (800) 770-8973 TTY
- (800) 770-8255 Voice
- (800) 770-3919 ASCII
- (866) 355-6198 Speech-to-Speech
- (866) 355-6199 Spanish
- (800) 770-6108 Direct VCO

- **Voicemail Retrieval.** To request voicemail retrieval, type the phone number you wish to call with your password or special instructions and the “GA.”
- **Branding.** VCO, HCO, TTY, ASCII, deaf-blind TTY, deaf-blind ASCII and Voice users may request permanent branding through Alaska Relay. With branding, the CA automatically uses your preferred answer type when processing your call. Branding is not available for PBX numbers.

## BILLING PREFERENCE

There is no charge for using Alaska Relay within your local calling area. Long distance call rates are determined by the carrier of choice. (Sprint long distance calls are billed at a reduced rate.) Alaska Relay gives you a number of billing options when you place intrastate, interstate or international calls. Please notify the CA of your preferred billing option, including direct, collect, third party, Sprint FONCards<sup>SM</sup>, local exchange carrier (LEC) calling card, other long distance calling card and prepaid phone card.

## TTY PUBLIC PAYPHONES

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) issued an order outlining an interim plan for access to public payphone service through relay services. The order states that:

- all local calls from TTY payphones are free of charge.
  - toll calls can be billed through calling cards and prepaid cards.
- TTY users who wish to use a coin TTY payphone can use Alaska Relay to assist in connecting calls. There are several ways to bill non-local calls: collect, third party, calling card or prepaid card.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Relay Customer Service: (800) 770-6770 Voice/TTY. Customer service is available to assist with TTY calls or to receive customer suggestions, comments and complaints. When calling about a specific incident, please remember to provide the CA's identification number, date and time of call. Or, for assistance during a relay call, callers may ask to speak to the CA's supervisor. For Alaska Relay brochures, outreach materials, presentations or any other relay information., contact the Alaska Account Manager at (907) 562-2520 Voice, (907) 338-0035 TTY or (866) 338-0035 Toll Free TTY.



Postage

CSD of Alaska/Alaska Relay  
3820 Lake Otis Parkway, Suite 105  
Anchorage, Alaska 99508



## CSD of Alaska/Alaska Relay

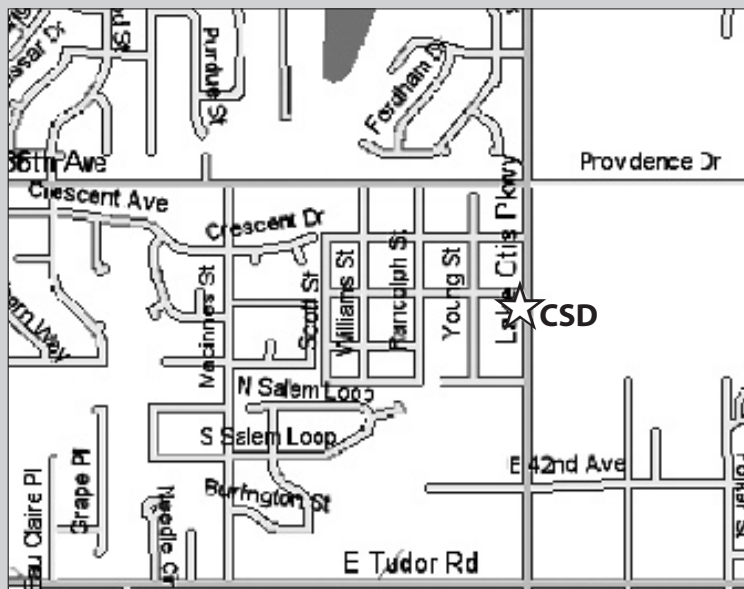
**3820 Lake Otis Parkway, Suite 105,  
Anchorage, Alaska 99508**

Voice (907)562-2520,

TTY (907)338-0035,

Toll Free TTY (866)338-0035,

Fax (907)563-8453



### For more information, contact:

Darrell Campbell

CSD Account Manager–Alaska TRS

E-mail: [dcampbell@c-s-d.org](mailto:dcampbell@c-s-d.org)

### Websites:

[www.c-s-d.org](http://www.c-s-d.org)

[www.akvrs.com](http://www.akvrs.com)

[www.alaskarelay.com](http://www.alaskarelay.com)

[www.sprintrelayonline.com](http://www.sprintrelayonline.com)