

FTRI: Connecting Floridians with Hearing or Speech Loss with Free Phones

Florida Telecommunications Relay, Inc. (FTRI) is grateful to many local and statewide disability association partners and clients for supporting the FTRI program since 1991. This support means more people are aware of the free specialized phones available to Florida residents. You have been a great part of our success for the past 22 years.

In 1991, the Florida legislature passed the Telecommunications Access System Act (TASA) to make basic telecommunications accessible and affordable for hard of hearing, deaf, speech impaired, and deaf/blind persons.

Florida Telecommunications Relay, Inc. (FTRI), is a statewide non-profit organization that was created to administer TASA and provide specialized telecommunications equipment *at no cost* to qualified Florida residents. This program is funded through a monthly 11 cent surcharge on all telephone landlines.

The equipment available through the program includes:

- Telephones that amplify incoming sound
- Devices that alert you when the phone rings
- Captioned telephones
- Telecommunication Devices for the Deaf (TDD/TTY)
- Braille TTY communicator for the Deaf/Blind individuals
- Telephones that amplify outgoing speech
- More specialized equipment, for example:
 - Teli-Talk phone for laryngectomees
 - RC200 phone with remote control speakerphone with voice activated answering and a wireless remote. Ideal for those with limited mobility.

To receive a telephone or specialized equipment, applicants must be a permanent Florida resident, age 3 or older, and be certified as hard of hearing, deaf, deaf/blind, or speech impaired. To request FTRI applications, contact at outreach@ftri.org or 800-222-3448. Copies can be also downloaded from the FTRI website at www.ftri.org. Regional distribution centers throughout the state distribute the amplified phones and other equipment. Locations can be found through a zip code search on www.ftri.org/locations.

In addition to the no cost specialized equipment distribution program, Florida offers a relay service made possible by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) which mandates all states to provide a state telecommunications relay service (TRS). By dialing 7-1-1, standard telephone users can initiate calls to TTY (text telephone) users among others who may use the relay service. By law, all calls are kept confidential. Specialized relay services are also available for Spanish speaking residents. The Florida Relay Service is available 24 hours a day, seven days.

AT&T is the relay service provider for Florida. AT&T has over 25 years of experience providing relay service in states throughout the country. If you are a relay customer, completing a Relay Customer Profile/Relay Customer Profile e-form enables AT&T to speed up your call. To create or edit your Relay Customer Profile, click on <https://www.relaycall.com/Profile>. If you need help completing this e-form, please contact AT&T's National Customer Care Center at 800-682-8786 (TTY) or 800-682-8706 (Voice) or 888-288-2184 (Fax). All information you provide will be kept confidential.

FTRI is a statewide nonprofit 501(c)3 organization that administers the specialized telecommunications equipment distribution program for Floridians with a hearing loss or speech disabled. For more information, please call 1-800-222-3448 or visit our website, www.ftri.org.