



NEWS & INFORMATION

350 Maple Street • Des Moines, Iowa 50319 • 515.281.5979

John Norris, Chairman

Curt Stamp, Board member

Krista Tanner, Board member

July 11, 2007

For Immediate Release

08-07

Contact: Rob Hillesland 515.281.3551

Email: rob.hillesland@iub.state.ia.us

Web site: www.state.ia.us/iub

Iowa Expands Income Limits for Telephone Equipment Program Benefits

More Iowans are able to seek eligibility for a specialized telephone equipment discount from the Iowa Equipment Distribution Program, administered by the Iowa Utilities Board (IUB), because of a rule effective July 11, 2007.

This rule change increases the annual income limit for program eligibility from \$57,000 to \$70,000 for a family of four. This includes a corresponding increase or decrease of \$8,000 for each family member above or below four.

Qualified persons can receive a voucher that will pay for up to 95 percent of the cost of specialized telephone equipment through Telecommunications Access Iowa (TAI), which is the name of the telephone Equipment Distribution Program in Iowa. To be eligible, a person must be hard-of-hearing, deaf, speech-impaired, or deaf/blind. In addition, the applicant must:

- ✓ Be an individual (not a business).
- ✓ Live in Iowa.
- ✓ Have telephone service in their home.
- ✓ Have their need for specialized telephone equipment verified by an appropriate professional (i.e., licensed physician, audiologist, speech pathologist, etc.).
- ✓ Be at least five years old or (if not) demonstrate the ability to use the equipment.
- ✓ Earn less than the annual income limit, depending upon size of the household. This is based on Iowa median income.

Applicants may choose from a TAI list of approved equipment, including TTYs (text telephones/teletypewriters), amplified phones, captioned telephones* (*CapTel*TM), loud ringers and flashing ringers, and limited computer software (that allows a person to use their computer as a TTY). Persons must wait five years to re-apply for new equipment, unless they can demonstrate special circumstances that may allow them to receive new equipment sooner.

Also effective July 11, 2007, voucher values and a new equipment category list have been updated. Equipment descriptions are also included with the application forms to aid persons in choosing a phone appropriate for their needs. Application forms are available on the TAI website, www.relayiowa.com/tai, or by contacting Telecommunications Access Iowa at:

Telecommunications Access Iowa
6925 Hickman Road
Des Moines, IA 50322
800-606-5099 Voice (Toll-Free), 515-282-5099 Voice
515-282-5130 TTY
515-237-3917 FAX
TELEIOWA@aol.com

*CapTel is a technology that allows individuals with hearing loss to view word-for-word captions of their telephone conversations. This device is designed for individuals who have good speech but do not hear well over the phone. CapTel is a trademark and service mark of Ultratec, Inc.

###