



# NEWS & INFORMATION

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## CapTel Relay service can benefit many Iowans

Awareness is growing for captioned telephone, a popular new service from Relay Iowa. More traditional dual party relay services also continue to help people who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, and speech-impaired communicate effectively on the public telephone network.

The State of Iowa began offering CapTel™ Relay in 2007. This service provides captions for the telephone similar to the closed captioning provided on most television programs. It is ideal for many individuals who are hard-of-hearing and who have good speech, because captions appear almost simultaneously with the spoken word, which enables them to more clearly understand telephone conversations. The CapTel phone features adjustable levels of amplification. It is not a TTY (text telephone with a keyboard); rather it is a telephone designed to allow the user to have natural back and forth telephone conversations with the support of captions.

The Iowa Utilities Board (IUB) has overseen the provision of telephone relay service in Iowa since it commenced in 1992 as well as the related Equipment Distribution Program (EDP) since 1995. Hamilton Relay administers the Relay Iowa program through a contract with the IUB. Telecommunications Access Iowa (TAI) administers the EDP, which helps qualified individuals who are deaf, hearing and/or speech impaired to pay for specialized telephone equipment. A CapTel phone (as well as other equipment) is available at minimal cost to individuals who meet median-income guidelines and qualify for a voucher through the EDP. For more information on how to apply for a CapTel phone, or other types of specialized telephone equipment, contact Telecommunications Access Iowa at 1-800-606-5099 or (515) 282-5099 VOICE, (515) 282-5130 TTY, or [TELEIOWA@aol.com](mailto:TELEIOWA@aol.com).

For individuals who do not qualify for a voucher, a CapTel phone is available by direct purchase for a special price of \$99 (normal retail value is \$495). This offer is for a limited time and is supported by Hamilton Relay. To obtain this special price, an order form must be completed, which is available through the Relay Iowa Web site at [www.relayiowa.com/captel.html](http://www.relayiowa.com/captel.html). Scroll down the page for a link to the form. To receive an application through the mail, call Relay Iowa Customer Service at 1-888-516-4692 or (712) 653-2440 Voice/TTY. The \$99 offer is available only to those who are directly purchasing their first CapTel phone at the discount price.

To help people determine if a CapTel phone meets their communication needs, Relay Iowa and TAI have implemented a program that loans CapTel phones to libraries and assisted living facilities, enabling interested persons to use them on a trial basis. Information kits, which include a CapTel phone, are available for loan to be left at interested facilities in Iowa for about a month at a time. Libraries or assisted living facilities interested in this should contact Relay Iowa at [lori.sporrer@hamiltonrelay.com](mailto:lori.sporrer@hamiltonrelay.com) or by calling 1-888-516-4692 or (712) 653-2440, or contact TAI at [TELEIOWA@aol.com](mailto:TELEIOWA@aol.com) or by calling 1-800-606-5099.

To learn more about Relay Iowa, please visit the IUB Web site, [www.state.ia.us/iub](http://www.state.ia.us/iub), click on the Telecommunications link at the top of the Home Page, and search the Telephone Programs for Deaf, Hard of Hearing or Speech Impaired Iowans Web page listed there.

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