

## **Customers with Disabilities**

Otelco works with its customers who are hearing, vision, or speech impaired, or have mobility or cognitive impairments, or other disabilities, to ensure that their individual telecommunications needs are met. If you have a disability that may inhibit access to an Otelco service offering, please see the following information. If further assistance is needed, call your local Otelco office and speak with one of our customer service representatives so we can help design a telecommunications solution to fit your needs.

### **Telecommunications Relay Service**

Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) is a telephone service that allows persons with hearing or speech disabilities to place and receive telephone calls. TRS uses operators, called communications assistants (CAs), to facilitate telephone calls between people with hearing and speech disabilities and other individuals. A TRS call may be initiated by either a person with a hearing or speech disability, or a person without such disability. When a person with a hearing or speech disability initiates a TRS call, the person uses a teletypewriter (TTY) or other text input device to call the TRS relay center, and gives a CA the number of the party that he or she wants to call. The CA in turn places an outbound traditional voice call to that person. The CA then serves as a link for the call, relaying the text of the calling party in voice to the called party, and converting to text what the called party voices back to the calling party. The service is free by dialing either a toll free number or by simply dialing 7-1-1. The service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Federal and state laws require all call information and conversations to remain confidential.

### **Calling Features**

Otelco offers many calling features that could assist in daily tasks including call waiting, speed dialing, call forwarding, computer-provided directory assistance, call monitoring, caller identification, repeat dialing, call return, priority ringing, and selective call acceptance.

### **Lifeline Discount**

Qualifying subscribers will receive a credit on their monthly telephone bills which will continue as long as the recipient remains eligible for Alabama Lifeline benefits. Eligibility depend on participation in one of the following programs: Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Section 8 Federal Public Housing Assistance (FPHA), Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), National School Lunch Program's Free Lunch Program, or customer is at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines for a household of its size. (Qualifying Form Required)

### **Directory Assistance**

Otelco posts its local telephone directory on the company's website. The online directory is searchable and has a zoom feature which magnifies the listings to 200% for persons who are visually impaired. Also, visually impaired customers may qualify for free Local Directory Assistance (411). Exemptions do not apply to requests for National Directory Assistance. (Qualifying Form Required)

### **Types of Devices and Software Available**

There are a number of Telecommunications Devices and/or Software available for individuals with disabilities. The following is a list and description of some available devices.

**The above link should take you to a page that displays the following information.**

**Acronym description**

**B** – Blind

**CI** – Cognitively impaired

**D** – Deaf

**HH** – Hard of hearing

**LMI** - Lower Mobility Impaired

**SI** – Speech Impaired

**VI** – Visually impaired

**UI** - Upper Mobility impaired

**WS** – Weak Speech

**Amplified Phone**

**HH or D**

A telephone with volume controls to adjust for loudness for persons hard of hearing. Phone can be cordless. Some models amplify from 30 dB to 50 dB.

**Amplified Cell Phone**

**HH or D**

A wireless phone with volume controls to adjust for loudness for persons hard of hearing.

**Big Button Telephone**

**VI or B or UI or CI**

A telephone with large dialing numbers, backlit numbers, braille numbers, or slots for picture inserts dialing.

**Bluetooth Cell Phone**

**HH or D**

A wireless phone with Bluetooth capability.

**Bluetooth Compatible Phone Device**

**HH or D**

A device that enables a user's hearing aid to work with a Bluetooth device.

**Bluetooth Hub**

**HH or D**

A device that enables a landline phone to work with a Bluetooth device.

**Braille Telecommunications Device**

**HH or D or SI and VI or B**

Same as TTY, but can convert the text typed and received into braille.

**Captioned Telephone\***

**HH or D**

A phone that allows the user to listen on a handset and then read the other person's response on a display.

**Cordless Phone**

**VI or B or LMI**

A phone without a cord so that the user is not restricted to a single location.

**Hands-Free Activated Phone**

**VI or UI**

A device that allows the user to dial pre-programmed numbers and answer calls using a remote or soft touch or air switch.

**Hearing Carry Over\*****SI**

A phone that allows the user to type on a keyboard and then hear the other person's response on a handset.

**Lapel Microphone****WS and UI or WS and VI**

A device used with Hands-Free Activated Phone to increase the loudness of user's voice.

**Outgoing Voice Amplification Telephone****WS**

A phone with volume control capabilities to increase the loudness of the user's voice.

**Ring Signaler****HH or D**

A device that alerts the user of an incoming call with a light that flashes as the phone rings.

**Speakerphone****HH or VI or B or UI or CI**

A phone with a speaker built into the base.

**Tactile Ring Signaler****HH or D**

A device that vibrates when the phone rings.

**Talks Back Number Dialed Telephone****VI or B or UI**

A telephone that vocalizes the numbers dialed.

**TTY\*****HH or D or SI**

A device with a keyboard and display screen which can be used for text communication over a telephone line when one or more parties have hearing or speech difficulties.

**Two-Way Paging Device\*****HH or D or SI**

A text messaging device with a standard keyboard that can send and receive wireless messages.

**Voice Carry Over\*****HH or D**

A telephone that allows someone with a hearing disability to speak directly to a telephone user and then read a response on a display.

**Voice Dialer****VI or B or UI**

A device that allows the user to dial a pre-programmed number by a voice command.

**\* May require caller to place calls through a relay service.**