

Delaware Department of Labor, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Delaware Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Delaware's Captioned Telephone (CapTel) Program

Procedures

Legislative Authority

Senate Bill No. 248:

Section 1, (c)(1) The Delaware Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DelODHH) of the Department of Labor is hereby directed to administer the program to provide access to public telecommunication services by residents of Delaware who have deafness, hearing loss or speech disabilities using devices for analog communications. The Office shall develop, accept, process, and approve applications for such services. This shall be graduated so that not more than 10 new users are approved per month on a first come, first served basis.

(c)(3) The Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing is authorized to promulgate procedures, regulations, rules, and criteria necessary to implement and administer this statewide program.

Procedures for CapTel Services.

1. An individual is eligible to receive CapTel service in Delaware if he/she:
 - a. is a resident of the State of Delaware;
 - b. has a hearing loss and intelligible speech;
 - c. has submitted a completed application for CapTel services with required certifications.
2. An individual whose hearing loss or speech disability prevents them from using CapTel services is eligible to use TTY relay, a companion analog telecommunication service and may contact DelODHH for information about obtaining service.
3. To access CapTel services, an eligible individual shall submit an application to the Delaware Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing on an approved form, providing the information requested thereon.
4. The Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing shall make applications widely available for individuals interested in receiving CapTel services. Customers may call the Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing, or go online, to obtain information and an application for CapTel services.

5. The application shall contain or accompany a certification by doctor, audiologist, or vocational rehabilitation counselor including a signature, stating that the individual has a hearing loss that inhibits hearing on the phone, speech that is intelligible on the phone, and can benefit from CapTel services.
6. An application shall be considered complete and valid when submitted to the Delaware Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing with the appropriate information and certifications. Applications may be sent by US mail, scanned and returned by e-mail, or FAX. Signatures and certifications must be evident on the form and documentation.
7. Upon receipt of a completed and valid application for CapTel services, an individual shall be placed upon a list of recipients to receive CapTel services in the order that the application was received, on a first come first serve basis.
8. A determination by the Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing that an individual is not eligible for CapTel services may be reviewed by the Director of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation or his or her designee, upon a request from an applicant, within 30 days of notice of ineligibility. The determination of the Director or his or her designee, which shall be made within 30 days of request, shall be final.
9. Beginning with the first month that CapTel services are activated in the State of Delaware, the Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing shall approve the sale of analog CapTel equipment to up to 10 individuals per month.
10. The Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing shall determine each month the number of new customers that can be supported by the CapTel program, and shall submit a like number of eligible recipients, up to ten per month, in the order placed on the list.
11. The Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing shall provide information to individuals who are eligible for CapTel services on where to access information and assistance installing Captioned telephone devices, and to access CapTel services.
12. An individual, who has been determined eligible, certified, and who is a recipient of CapTel services, may be required, on an annual basis, to re-submit certification to the Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing that they continue to be eligible for CapTel services.
13. Individuals providing CapTel services through contracted vendors of the Department of Technology and Information to serve as intermediaries in the captioned telephone process shall follow the applicable rules and code of ethics.
14. The CapTel service provider must comply with standards for operators established by the FCC, including privacy of all relayed communications. Each captionist at the Captioning Service follows a strict code of confidentiality. In addition and unique to the CapTel Service, the captionist at the Captioning Service only hears the voice of the other party. They are not

able to hear the CapTel user's voice during the captioned call. The captionist hears the voice of the other party so that they can re-voice what the other party is saying into a computer that has voice recognition software. This special technology then transcribes the captionist's voice to text so that the text can be transmitted to the display of the CapTel phone. The captionist is never spoken to nor heard during the call.

15. The Delaware Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing may alter or amend these procedures, from time to time, as required, in order to make CapTel services as widely available as possible, to individuals who are or may be eligible for such services.