

Voice Carry Over (VCO) Relay

For people who have hearing loss and prefer to use their voice on the phone.



What is Voice Carry Over (VCO) relay?

VCO relay is an option for people who can speak clearly, but have hearing loss significant enough to prevent them from hearing and understanding conversations over the telephone. Using VCO relay and a specially designed telephone with a text display, a VCO user can speak directly to the other person on the call. A communication assistant (CA) types what is spoken by the other person for the VCO user to read.

To use VCO relay you must have either a TTY (text telephone) or a specially designed VCO phone.

Who can benefit from VCO relay?

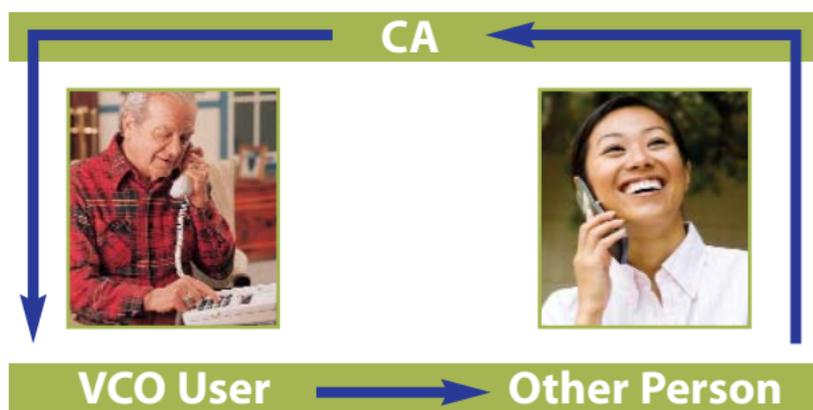
- People who are deaf or hard of hearing but have understandable speech
- Late deafened adults

How does VCO relay work?

The caller dials the VCO relay toll-free number. The VCO user speaks directly to the other person on the call. A specially trained CA facilitates the conversation by typing the other person's spoken words to the VCO user. The text of the other person's conversation appears on the VCO user's specialized telephone equipment. No typing is required by the VCO user.

What is two-line VCO?

For two-line VCO you must have two telephone lines with separate telephone numbers. Two-line VCO allows you to use one telephone line for speaking directly to the other person, while the second line is used to receive the CA's typed response from the other person. This enhanced feature provides a more natural flow of conversation without the pauses of single-line VCO calls.



How can I obtain specialized VCO telephone equipment?

If you meet certain eligibility requirements, you may qualify to receive a TTY or VCO phone at no cost through Minnesota's Telephone Equipment Distribution (TED) Program. The TED Program loans telecommunications equipment to people who are hard of hearing, deaf, deaf/blind, speech disabled or physically disabled.

To contact the TED Program, call 1-800-657-3663 (voice) or 1-888-206-6555 (TTY), or visit their web site at www.tedprogram.org.

What else should I know about VCO relay?

- VCO relay is a free service (Local calls are free, and long distance calls will be billed by the long distance carrier of your choice).
- All conversations are strictly confidential.
- VCO relay is available 24 hours per day, 365 days per year.
- There are no limits on the length or number of calls placed.



Contact the Minnesota Relay Consumer Relations Office:

- **To learn more about VCO relay**
- **For information on other services offered through Minnesota Relay**
- **To request a VCO relay instruction sheet**
- **To schedule a free presentation**

1-800-657-3775

E-mail: mn.relay@state.mn.us

www.mnrelay.org

The Telecommunications Access Minnesota (TAM) program within the Department of Commerce is the state administrative office responsible for ensuring equal access to the telecommunications network for Minnesotans who are deaf, deaf/blind, hard of hearing, speech disabled or physically disabled.

Minnesota Relay and the TED Program are funded by a telephone surcharge.



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