

*Make your connection...*

# Vermont Relay

VERMONT TELECOMMUNICATIONS RELAY SERVICE

Winter 2015



## Vermont Relay: New Contract, New Services!

Sprint Relay has once again been selected as Vermont's TRS and CapTel provider for the 12th year. "We are thrilled to continue working with Sprint to provide relay services within the state of Vermont," said Sunni Eriksen, Vermont Contract Administrator. "I am confident that Sprint's relay services are of the highest quality, providing the best communication access to those in our state that need support in telecommunication."

Vermont Relay now offers new services, including a dedicated customer service line at (866) 931-9028 for Vermont users. This number provides quick and easy access to Sprint Relay customer service agents for questions, concerns or any support customers may need.

Sprint Relay also has introduced the availability of Spanish-to-English translation, which allows Spanish-speaking relay users to make calls using the toll-free number (877) 253-7244. Once connected, Spanish speakers can type and/or speak in Spanish, and the operator will translate the Spanish words into English.

There are several new options available for those who use Speech-to-Speech (STS). One option is video-assisted STS, which allows the operator and STS caller to interact with one another through a video connection. Through the incorporation of video, the operator can physically see the caller's mouth movements, facial expressions and gestures, and possibly cue cards or alpha cards. This enables the operator to better understand and re-voice for the caller, improving overall call quality.

Relay users in the nation often utilize 711 to connect to a relay agent in their states. The 711 service has been enhanced for ease of access by STS



and Spanish-speaking callers. For example, a Vermont Relay customer is now able to register a customer profile so that when she or he dials 711, the call is automatically routed to the correct agent for the customer's preferred call type and skills.

"At Sprint, we strive to deliver innovative new solutions that improve the quality of life for those who are deaf, with hearing loss, and with speech disabilities," said Mike Ellis, National Director for Sprint Relay. "We look forward to continuing our partnership with the state of Vermont and providing quality services to their residents as well as to all of our relay state customers."

For more information, visit the new Vermont Relay website at [www.vermontrelay.com](http://www.vermontrelay.com), or call (866) 931-9028. Vermont Relay representatives are also available for presentations or exhibitions on Vermont Relay's services and products.

[www.vermontrelay.com](http://www.vermontrelay.com)

## From the desk of... Account Manager

### Michelle Sangster Vicino



We hope this year is off to a great start for you! We have wonderful news: Sprint Relay has once again been selected to remain as the TRS and CapTel provider for Vermont, which makes this 12 years of serving the deaf, hard of hearing,

deaf-blind and speech disabled communities in Vermont.

As you will read on page three, the Vermont Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (VCDHH) in Brattleboro has closed its doors permanently. Although the Vermont Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program is currently suspending its services, there are other resources in place.

The Vermont Dept. of Public Service continues to invite feedback on Vermont Telecommunications Relay Service; to learn how you can submit your input, see the bottom of page three.

Be sure to check out our new, revamped website at [www.vermontrelay.com](http://www.vermontrelay.com)!

## About Vermont Relay

Vermont Relay is a free service for all Vermonters, connecting individuals who are deaf, deaf-blind, or hard of hearing, or have a speech disability, with users of standard telephones. Vermont Relay makes communication simple, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Using Vermont Relay is easy. Either the hearing or the deaf person dials 711 to reach a specially trained operator known as a communications assistant (CA). The CA acts as an impartial, two-way “relay,” reading typed messages to the hearing person while typing responses back to the deaf caller. To learn more, visit [www.vermontrelay.com](http://www.vermontrelay.com).

## New and Improved Vermont Relay Website



Along with a new year and a renewed contract, the Vermont Relay website has a new look! The Vermont Relay website has recently undergone a complete makeover. The website has a new layout, is easier to navigate, and provides a wealth of new and updated information.

The website provides:

- Contact information
- Product descriptions
- Application for assistive equipment
- Downloadable flyers and newsletters
- Online survey
- Forms to submit complaints, commendations or feedback to the Account Manager
- Information on presentations and workshops, including a request form

The website also provides an overview of each service, including:

- 711
- Speech-to-Speech
- Voice Carry-Over
- Captioned Telephone (CapTel)
- Spanish Relay

**Visit the Vermont Relay website at  
[www.vermontrelay.com](http://www.vermontrelay.com)!**

## VCDHH Closes Doors Permanently

On Sept. 12, 2014, Vermont Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (VCDHH) in Brattleboro closed its doors permanently. VCDHH managed the Vermont Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program, (VTEDP), as well as 16 other programs including the Austine School for the Deaf. The sudden loss of this century-old institution that provided essential services to Vermonters who are deaf, hard of hearing, and/or have other disabilities has created confusion at many levels. When the Austine School permanently closed in June 2014, all of the statewide programs immediately began looking for new homes and most have continued services with only a short interruption.

VTEDP hopes to resume services soon. The state of Vermont will temporarily manage the program in Montpelier. Jorika Stockwell, who managed VTEDP for ten years under VCDHH, has formed her own business called Novus, LLC, and will assist the state in managing VTEDP. Her goal is to provide telecommunications equipment to Vermonters who have disabilities and need access to long-distance communications.

Jorika Stockwell is also continuing outreach efforts with Vermont Relay across the state. She is also available to speak for events or with small groups about Vermont Relay, and provide training.

VTEDP is accepting applications, which will be



*Jorika Stockwell works the Vermont Relay booth at the Vermont Maturity 50+ Expo in Burlington.*

processed as soon as the program is open again. All repair requests for existing VTEDP customers should be submitted using the same contact information as listed below, and [www.vtedp.org](http://www.vtedp.org) is still operating.

If you wish to contact VTEDP for an application or questions, please call the Dept. of Public Service consumer hotline at (800) 622-4496. The mailing address is:

VTEDP c/o DPS  
112 State St. 3rd Floor  
Montpelier, VT 05620-2601

## DPS invites feedback on VTRS

Your feedback is wanted!

The Vermont Department of Public Service (DPS) would like to hear from you. DPS wants to know how well Vermont Telecommunications Relay Service (VTRS) is working, for deaf, hard of hearing and speech-disabled Vermonters, as well as the hearing community. They'd like to hear about your experiences using VTRS, what you like, what you don't like, and how the service could be improved. If you have called someone using the relay service and been hung up on, DPS wants to know about it. If you're having problems with your CapTel phone or service, please also share that. Positive comments about VTRS are also welcomed.

To give your feedback, contact the DPS Consumer Affairs & Public Information Division:  
(800) 734-8390 TTY  
(800) 622-4496 Voice  
[consumer@state.vt.us](mailto:consumer@state.vt.us)

Or visit [www.vermontrelay.com](http://www.vermontrelay.com) and click on the survey link at the top of the page.

# Vermont Relay

## Vermont Relay

711  
(800) 253-0191 **TTY**  
(800) 253-0195 **Voice**  
(800) 253-8260 **VCO**  
(800) 243-2823 **CapTel**  
(800) 253-0191 **HCO**  
(877) 253-0446 **STS**

## Contact Customer Service

(800) 676-3777 TTY/Voice

## Contact Vermont Relay

michelle.vicino@sprint.com  
(860) 899-1097 VP  
(860) 986-7234 Voice

## Visit our website!

[www.vermontrelay.com](http://www.vermontrelay.com)

# Get the Vermont Relay Newsletter!

Sign up to receive the FREE Vermont Relay Newsletter!  
Please fill out the form below or e-mail the information.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## Return this form to:

**Michelle Vicino**  
**34 Jerome Ave**  
**Suite 220**  
**Bloomfield, CT 06002**

Or email [michelle.vicino@sprint.com](mailto:michelle.vicino@sprint.com)



## Vermont Telecommunications Relay

34 Jerome Avenue, Suite 220  
Bloomfield, CT 06002  
[www.vermontrelay.com](http://www.vermontrelay.com)

