

Instructions for Using Hearing Carry Over (HCO) Relay

HCO relay allows a person who can hear but who has very limited or no speech capability to make and receive phone calls. Using HCO relay and a specially designed telephone with a text display, an HCO user can listen directly to the voice of the other person on the call and type their response to a communication assistant (CA), who voices those responses to the other party.

To use HCO relay you must have a TTY (text telephone).

The term “GA” or “go ahead” is important for HCO relay calls for turn taking purposes. “GA” insures that the HCO user and the standard phone user do not respond at the same time and miss each other’s communication. When you hear “GA”, you will know that it is your turn to speak. The same is true for the CA and standard phone user, who will not respond until you type “GA.”

HCO User Placing a Call Through Relay

1. Place your telephone handset on the TTY and dial **7-1-1** or the toll free number: **1-800-627-3529**.
2. Minnesota Relay will answer and will give the CA identification number and gender. Type: “HCO PLS GA.”
Note: If you have completed a Customer Preference form indicating your answer type as HCO, the relay will recognize your phone number as an HCO user and you will not need to type “HCO PLS GA.”
3. After the CA types: “HCO ON GA”, type to the CA the phone number of the person you wish to call, followed by “GA”; then pick up the handset.
4. Wait for the CA to say, “One moment for your call to begin” to the person you are calling.
5. Place the handset in the TTY and type to the other person. When you are ready for the other person to respond, type “GA” and pick up the handset to listen to the other person.
6. When you hear the other person say “Go Ahead”, place the handset on the TTY and type your response to them. The CA will read your response to the other person.
7. Your conversation will continue in this manner until you are finished with your call.

HCO User Receiving a Call Through Relay

When people want to reach you by phone, they can call you through Minnesota Relay by dialing 7-1-1 or the toll free number: **1-800-627-3529**.

If you *have* completed a Customer Preference form and indicated your answer type as HCO:

1. Place your telephone handset on the TTY and type your greeting, followed by “GA.”
2. The CA will announce that this is a relay call by typing “MN RELAY CA XXXX WITH A CALL.”
3. Pick up the handset. Your caller will speak directly to you.
4. When you hear the caller say “Go Ahead”, place the handset on the TTY and type your response. When you are finished with your response, type “GA” and pick up the handset.
5. The CA will read your response to the other person.
6. Your conversation will continue in this manner until you are finished with your call.

If you have not completed a Customer Preference form and your caller requests HCO:

1. Place your telephone handset on the TTY and type your greeting, followed by “GA.”
2. CA will type “MN RELAY CA XXXX WITH A CALL. YOUR CALLER HAS REQUESTED HCO GA.”
3. Pick up the handset. Your caller will speak directly to you.
4. When you hear the caller say “Go Ahead”, place the handset on the TTY and type your response. When you are finished, type “GA” and pick up the handset.
5. The CA will read your response to the other person.
6. Your conversation will continue in this manner until you are finished with your call.

If you have not completed a Customer Preference form and your caller does not request HCO:

1. Place your telephone handset on the TTY and type your greeting, followed by “GA.”
2. CA will type “MN RELAY CA XXXX WITH A CALL GA.”
3. Type “HCO PLS GA.”
4. The CA will then connect HCO and type “HCO ON GA.”
5. Pick up the handset. Your caller will speak directly to you. (There may be a few minutes of silence while the CA asks the caller if they are familiar with HCO relay.)
6. When you hear the caller say “Go Ahead”, place the handset on the TTY and type your response. When you are finished, type “GA” and pick up the handset.
7. The CA will read your response to the other person.
8. Your conversation will continue in this manner until you are finished with your call.

9-1-1 Emergency Calls

When making emergency calls, dial 9-1-1 directly without using Minnesota Relay. All 9-1-1 centers are equipped to handle TTY calls. Minnesota Relay can process emergency calls, but doing so may result in a delay in getting your call through.

Information Regarding Long Distance Calls

The long distance carrier you have chosen for your home service is NOT automatically applied to Minnesota Relay calls. To make sure your long distance Relay calls are carried and billed through your existing long distance service or calling plan, it is recommended that you submit a *Minnesota Relay Customer Preference form*. You may also inform the CA of your preferred carrier of choice prior to placing a long distance relay call.

If no carrier is indicated, long distance Minnesota Relay calls will be carried and billed by Sprint.

Importance of Completing a Customer Preference Form

A Customer Preference form allows you to customize your Relay call. By completing and submitting a *Minnesota Relay Customer Preference form* the Relay is able to store your call preferences in their database. This will allow your Relay calls to be set up quickly, and ensures that your preferred carrier is used for long distance calls.

Call 1-800-657-3775 to request a *Minnesota Relay Customer Preference form*, or download the form at www.mnrelay.org.

Tips for HCO Relay Users

- Do not start typing until you see “HCO ON GA” on your TTY display or until you hear the CA state that “Hearing Carry Over has been activated.”
- Give the CA as much information as possible about your call prior to the CA dialing. For example, if you know you are calling an automated phone system that requires you to select from a number of options, let the CA know which options you want prior to the call.
- Once the call is connected, everyone on the call will be able to hear each other.
- Type “GA” when you are finished typing and are ready for a response.
- There are no restrictions on the length of your calls or the number of calls you make.
- Take all the time you need to complete your call. Do not be concerned if you feel that you do not type fast enough.
- When you are receiving a Relay call and have not completed a *Minnesota Relay Customer Preference form*, the CA will wait for you to indicate that you wish to make an HCO call. You can do so by typing “HCO PLS GA” on your TTY.
- Each time you place an HCO call, the CA will ask the called party if they have ever received an HCO relay call. If the person has not, the CA will explain relay before the call begins.

Filing a Complement or Complaint

If you would like to file a complement or complaint regarding Minnesota Relay, please call 1-800-657-3775 (voice/TTY). You will need to provide the date and time of the Relay call, the CA’s identification number and the nature of your complement or complaint.

You may also file a relay complaint with the Federal Communications Commission by calling toll-free at 1-888-225-5322 (voice) / 1-888-835-5322 (TTY), or file on line at <http://esupport.fcc.gov/complaints.htm>.

**For information on other services offered through Minnesota Relay
or to schedule a free presentation, please contact:**

**Minnesota Relay Consumer Relations Office:
1-800-657-3775 (voice/TTY)
E-mail: mn.relay@state.mn.us
Visit our Web site: www.mnrelay.org**