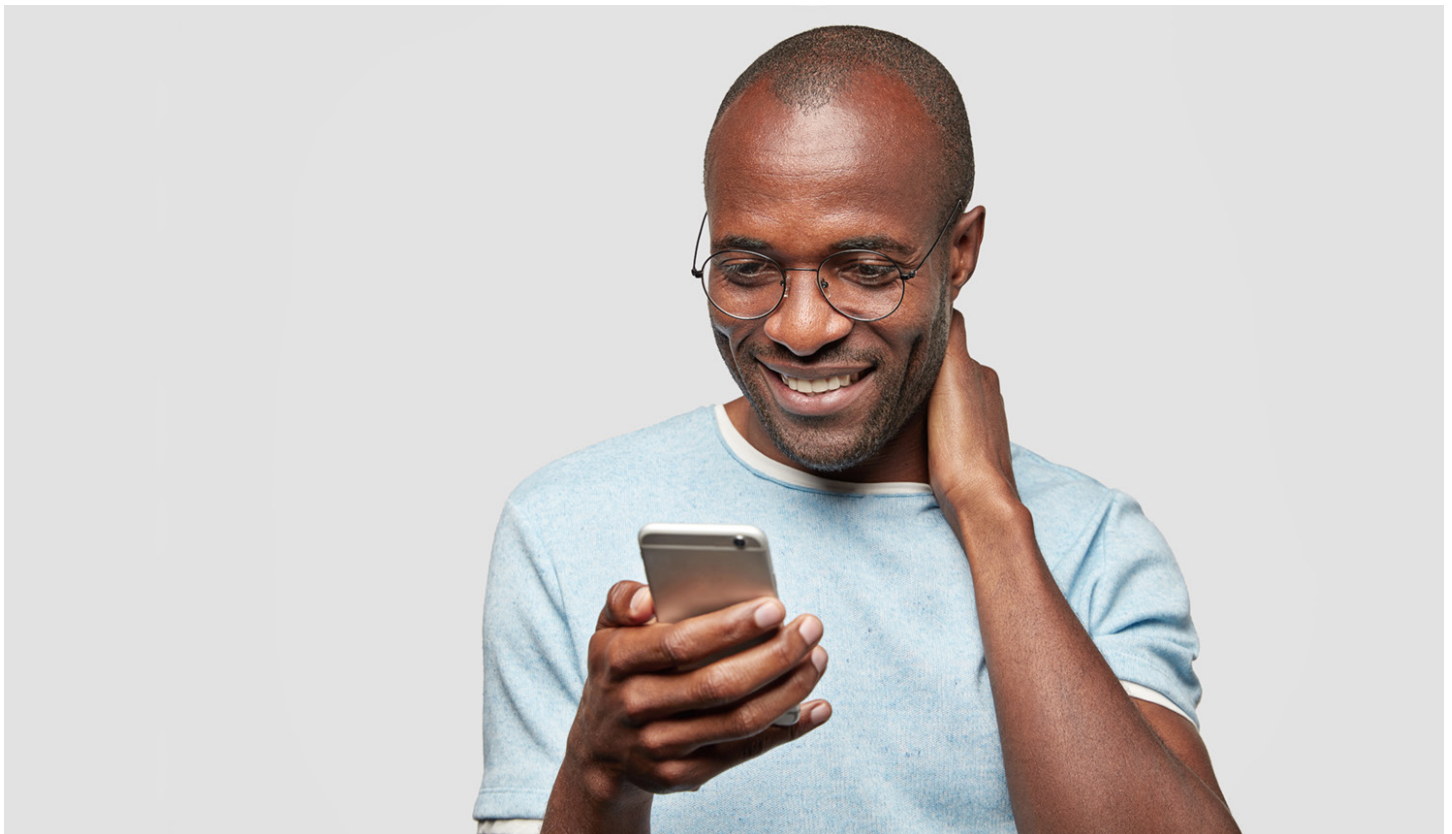




## Free captioned telephone service for those with hearing loss

### Get free technology services to stay connected

Friday, March 19, 2021



Veterans and others with hearing loss can receive free assistive technology for captioned telephone service from participating providers on their home phones, mobile phones and other communication apps. Real-time transcriptions of communication are a vital service for those who rely on their phones to stay connected with family and friends, and to communicate with health care professionals and emergency responders.

Veterans of all ages can benefit from captioned telephone service, as they are disproportionately affected by hearing loss. Hearing loss is not just due to degeneration from aging; Veterans are 30% more likely than non-Veterans to have a hearing impairment.

#### **What is Captioned Telephone Service?**

Captioned telephone service enables people with hearing loss to speak during a phone call and then read the other person's response in real time as transcriptions appear directly on their telephone or an app. This service is known as Internet Protocol Captioned Telephone Service (IP CTS), and it uses a combination of automatic speech recognition (ASR) technology and skilled transcribers, or ASR technology.

## ASR is the same technology that systems like Alexa and Siri use to translate voice commands.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that captioned telephone service be “functionally equivalent” to communication technology used by individuals without hearing loss. This service is overseen by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

[CLICK HERE to learn more about how captioned telephone service works.](#)

### Who is Eligible for Captioned Telephone Service and What does it Cost?

This technology service is free to service members and Veterans, including their loved ones and anyone with hearing loss.

Vietnam Veteran and captioned telephone user Ronald Drach says this service is “invaluable” and “life-changing.”

Vietnam Veteran Robert Richardson agrees, saying, “This technology, above all others, has had a major impact on my quality of life. I'd say it's a lifesaver. I use it to communicate with my children, and I use it to communicate with my friends and my doctors and other healthcare providers. I use it to stay engaged in my community. I may be retired from work, but not from life.”

[CLICK HERE to listen to stories of those who have benefited from hearing assistance technologies.](#)

### How to Get Free Captioned Telephone Service

Several providers offer captioned telephone service. When registering for this service with providers, the FCC requires individuals to self-certify that they have hearing loss necessitating telephone captioning. Some providers may require professional certification from a physician, audiologist or other hearing-health professional.

[CLICK HERE for a list of captioned telephone service providers.](#)

The Clear2Connect Coalition, comprised of disability advocacy and Veterans Service Organizations, advocates on behalf of the deaf and hard of hearing communities to have access to quality, accurate communication technology.

For more information on how to access free captioned telephone service, to learn about Clear2Connect Coalition's advocacy efforts, and to sign up for their updates, visit the Clear2Connect Coalition website or email them at: [info@clear2connect.org](mailto:info@clear2connect.org).



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