

The Florida LINK

The Newsletter of
Florida Telecommunications Relay, Inc.
Equipment Distribution Program

Winter 2011

Mission: To provide residents with access to the telecommunications network. And, to ensure residents receive quality and timely service.

I Hear You Loud and Clear

FTRI is pleased to report the tremendous response to our fall newspaper campaign. The statewide ads were individualized with local contact information and featured FTRI's newest and most popular phone — the cordless Clarity W425 Pro. Now even more Floridians can enjoy clear conversations while talking on the telephone. Watch for the ads in your local paper in the coming months. And remember, if you know of someone who could benefit from an FTRI phone, please direct them to www.ftri.org/locations or 1-888-222-3448.

“THANK YOU.

**You've changed
my life.”**

Throughout the year FTRI clients share their gratitude for their new phone. Read more of these stories on page 3.



Never miss a
word with a
FREE
amplified
phone




If you are a Florida resident with a certified hearing loss, a new telephone can help make conversations easier. The phone is offered at no cost through the nonprofit Florida Telecommunications Relay, Inc. The Clarity W425 Pro Cordless amplifies incoming sounds up to 45 decibels, almost four times louder than a standard phone. It is hearing aid compatible, with large backlit numbers and a bright visual ringer. Ask about the Clarity W425 Pro or our other specialized phones for yourself or a family member. Florida is speaking up for clearer communication.

For more information in your area:

Florida Telecommunications Relay, Inc.
1820 East Park Ave, Suite 101
Tallahassee, Florida 32301
800-222-3448 (V)
888-447-5620 (TTY)
850-656-6099 (FAX)

8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Monday– Friday

www.ftri.org/tlh

 Florida
Telecommunications
Relay, Inc.

About The Florida Link

The Florida Link is FTRI's newsletter—your source for news and information on your telephone equipment and the Florida Relay Service. This newsletter is posted to the website, www.ftri.org. Should you need equipment, please call FTRI Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

FTRI Customer Service: 1-800-222-3448 (Voice) or 1-888-447-5620 (TTY)

 **Florida
Telecommunications
FTRI Relay, Inc.**

1820 E. Park Ave., Suite 101
Tallahassee, FL 32301



Common Questions about FTRI Amplified Phones

Do you have a question about your FTRI phone? Below are answers to some of the most common questions FTRI receives from clients. If you don't find the answer you need, please contact your nearest [Regional Distribution Center](#) and they'll be glad to assist you.

Q: I think my phone is broken - what should I do?

A: If you are having difficulty with your telephone, do not try to repair it. If your phone model has an AC adapter and batteries, try the following steps. First disconnect the equipment from all power sources and remove all batteries. Then, plug in the electrical (AC) adapter and reinstall the backup batteries. If the phone still won't work, please return the equipment to the regional distribution center (RDC) in your area for an exchange. Any equipment determined to be broken due to normal wear and tear, or manufacturer defect, with no obvious abuse, will be exchanged. Please return all accessories, booklets and the original box.

Q: I'm moving out of Florida - where do I return my phone?

A: If you are moving out of the state or if you simply want to return your equipment for any reason, bring your phone to the nearest RDC or call FTRI and we will arrange UPS pick up of your phone. Include box and all paperwork.

Q: What if my phone is stolen?

A: Contact the RDC in your area if your phone is lost, stolen or damaged as result of fire, smoke, or water. Bring documentation of the incident, e.g., police report, or other incident records when you go to your nearest RDC.

Q: How can I get a second phone?

The FTRI program allows for one phone per customer. If you need additional telephones you can purchase them directly by contacting any of the phone manufacturers listed under [Links](#) on the FTRI website. Some Regional Distribution Centers also sell similar phones. Contact your nearest center to find out.



Good News for the New Year

Throughout the year FTRI sends Quality Assurance survey cards to follow up with new clients on the service they received when issued a phone. Last year our client satisfaction rating was 97%. FTRI would like to say "Great job!" to all RDC staff and "Thank you" to all clients who took the time to respond to our survey. Below are examples of the comments received:

"Wonderful phone, I love it. I tell everyone to go and get one."

"Good service and personal attention."

"The instrument is an excellent piece of equipment. I am grateful that it was made available to me."

"This phone has given me communication again with the outside world. Thank you."

"Finally I can hear on the phone. Thank you."

"I finally am comfortable using a phone. This is an excellent service. Thanks!"

"Staff was very nice - telephone is great! I'm very pleased with everything."

"It works flawlessly and no hearing aids are necessary when using it. Thank you again for this wonderful treasure. It has been a real life saver for me."

FTRI regularly receives unsolicited thank you letters from clients who wish to share their appreciation for the program. FTRI is proud to know we have made an impact on so many lives.

Dear Friends at FTRI,

I do appreciate my "special" telephone; it is so good to hear all my quiet voiced friends so well! At the moment I am finding it much more helpful than my new hearing aid, as that picks up so much noise that I don't want to hear. I have some numbers in the "memory boxes" and it's a pleasure not to have to dial all those numbers! Everything is working perfectly and it really is a joy to have.

*Yours very gratefully,
M.A.*

Dear Sir or Madam,

Many thanks for the wonderful telephone you have sent me. I can see and hear well with this equipment. I especially appreciate the distinctive ring; I never confuse it with the phone ringing on the TV. Keep up the good work!

*Sincerely,
R.C.*

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my gratitude for my new XL50 Telephone and Ringer! It is great to be able to see the numbers light up and I can actually hear well! As you know, it's difficult in this economy to buy the "extra" needs and I have needed this for at least a year now. All arrived intact and I extend my wholehearted thanks! PS- I'll be 86 years young in December!

*Blessings, Sincerely,
A.K.*

FTRI,

Many thanks for the XL40 amplified telephone. This is the best gift that I could receive. It is truly a pleasure to use.

*Sincerely,
C.W.*



Message from the Executive Director



During fiscal year 2009/2010 FTRI had a productive year with both the Equipment Distribution Program (EDP) and Outreach program. Here are a few highlights:

- 18,185 new clients were served throughout the state.
- 41,188 different services were provided to individuals.
- 38,680 pieces of specialized telecommunications equipment were distributed.
- 1,190 outreach activities were performed by FTRI and the Regional Distribution Centers (RDC) throughout Florida.
- Processed 20,001 customer service calls.
- Processed more than 140,222 EDP forms.
- We continued our extensive educating, training and support efforts through workshops and daily interactions with RDCs.
- We continued to collaborate with other organizations and/or state agencies for outreach activities.
- We continued to place a high priority on protecting the integrity of client information by making security enhancements to our processing system.
- We operated within budget requirements.
- We received high marks from the external auditors for the financial records and internal controls FTRI has in place.

Our goal is to provide special telephones and services to the nearly 3 million Floridians with a hearing loss or a speech disability – at no cost. If you already have a specialized telephone from FTRI, please share your experience with someone such as a family member, friend, co-worker or even your next-door neighbor so they too can experience an improved quality of life.

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We'll Come to YOU



If your business, club or organization would like a presentation about our program, please contact outreach@ftri.org or call 888-292-1950, ex. 238. Presentations are customized to your needs and range from a program overview to a full demonstration of our equipment and a distribution of our phones. Training on equipment is also included.

Please share this information with your friends and co-workers. We've made presentations to a wide range of groups including:

- Businesses
- Private communities
- Church groups
- Schools
- Civic clubs
- Assisted Living Facilities

Florida Relay Service PSA Campaign



... discover communication freedom

In January 2011, FTRI launched a television PSA campaign for the Florida Relay service. Through the Public Announcement Partnership Program with the Florida Cable Telecommunications Association, the :30 spot will air three times for each spot purchased. The Relay message will reach a wide and diverse audience of millions of cable viewers on more than 250 cable systems and 55 cable channels in nine district regions.

Are you on Facebook?

If you are on Facebook, we invite you to “like” our page and stay connected to FTRI. We update our page regularly with events, activities and interesting photos and videos. Please tell all your friends to do the same. Click [here](#) to link to our page, and then click “Like” at the top of the page.



Did You Know?

The Importance of Keeping Your TTY

The TTY or text telephone was developed to allow people who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf/ blind or speech disabled to communicate using the telephone.

During the 1980s and 1990s, the TTY was the predominant method of telephone communication for people with hearing loss until wireless devices, video phones (VRS) and personal computers (IP relay) became mainstream.

While some people have returned their TTY to FTRI, did you know there are two very important reasons to keep it?

9-1-1: In times of emergency the TTY remains one of the best methods for individuals with hearing loss to contact 9-1-1. Emergency officials can readily locate a TTY caller and respond quickly.

No electricity? No problem! Keep in mind, too, that the TTY is powered by a rechargeable battery and does not require electricity to operate. Florida has frequent power outages due to storms and lightning strikes. TTY users can rest assured their equipment will operate even if there is no power and the telephone lines are intact.

If you have any questions about your TTY, please contact FTRI at 888-447-5620 (TTY) or 1-800-222-3448 (V).

FTRI Regional Distribution Centers

Below is a list of the statewide distribution centers. This list is also available online at www.ftri.org/locations. For added convenience, the website features a new “search by zip code” option.

AGENCY	VOICE NUMBER	TTY NUMBER
CRYSTAL RIVER	(352) 795-5000 (V)	(352) 795-7243 (TTY)
DAYTONA BEACH		
<i>Dunn Avenue</i>	(386) 944-7806 (V)	(386) 257-3600 (TTY)
<i>Palmetto Ave</i>	(386) 255-1812 (V)	(386) 252-6222 (TTY)
FORT LAUDERDALE		
<i>W. Cypress Creek Road</i>	(954) 601-1930 (V)	(954) 601-1938 (TTY)
<i>N. State Road 7</i>	(954) 722-6400 (V)	(954) 735-0963 (TTY)
FORT MYERS	(239) 461-0334 (V)	(239) 461-0438 (TTY)
GAINESVILLE	(352) 378-7474 (V)	(352) 372-3443 (TTY)
JACKSONVILLE	(904) 399-8484 (V)	(904) 398-6322 (TTY)
LAKELAND	(863) 686-3189 (V/TTY)	(863) 686-3189 (V/TTY)
LEESBURG	(352) 323-0757 (V)	(352) 323-9106 (TTY)
MIAMI		
<i>Biscayne Blvd</i>	(305) 751-8025 (V)	(305) 751-8891 (TTY)
<i>SW 72nd Street</i>	(305) 271-7343 (V)	
PANAMA CITY	(850) 769-6890 (V)	
PENSACOLA	(850) 595-5566 (V)	
PORT RICHEY	(727) 853-1010 (V)	(727) 853-1014 (TTY)
PORT ST. LUCIE	(772) 334-2233 (V)	
PUNTA GORDA	(941) 743-8347 (V/TTY)	(941) 743-8347 (V/TTY)
ROCKLEDGE	(321) 632-9114 (V)	(321) 632-9134 (TTY)
SARASOTA	(941) 366-0260 (V)	(941) 758-2539 (TTY)
SEMINOLE	(727) 399-9983 (V)	
TALLAHASSEE		
<i>Mahan</i>	(850) 488-0055 (V)	
<i>Park Avenue</i>	(800) 222-3448 (V)	(888) 447-5620 (TTY)
WEST PALM BEACH	(561) 802-3353 (V)	(561) 802-3351 (TTY)
WINTER PARK	(407) 623-1070 (V)	(407) 623-1185 (TTY)

Telecommunication Connection



Toll-free Access Numbers

Dial 711

to use the Relay anywhere or continue using

1-800-955-8770 (Voice)

1-800-955-8771 (TTY)

1-877-955-8260 (VCO)

1-877-955-5334 (STS)

1-800-955-1339 (ASCII)

1-877-955-8773 (Spanish)

1-877-955-8707 (French Creole) 8–2 a.m. daily

Relay Customer Service

1-800-676-3777 (English)

1-800-676-4290 (Spanish)

Florida Public Service Commission (FPSC)

The FPSC regulates Florida's utilities and is responsible for overseeing TASA. If you have a problem or question, you can call or write the FPSC for assistance.

TO CALL THE FPSC, dial 1-800-342-3552 (Voice) menu only. TTY users must call through Florida Relay using the same number. Once the menu starts, ask the relay operator (OPR) to press the number 2. Then wait for a person to answer your call to start your conversation.

IF WRITING, mail to
FPSC
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.
Tallahassee, FL 32399
Fax: 1-800-511-0809
FPSC home page: <http://www.psc.state.fl.us>
Or you can email the FPSC at contact@psc.state.fl.us

Upcoming Events

FTRI will be attending these upcoming events. If you would like to speak with an FTRI representative face-to-face, please visit us at any of the following functions.

AMBASSADORS FOR AGING DAY

March 15th, 2011

Florida Capitol Building – Tallahassee, FL

FLASHA 2011 ANNUAL CONVENTION

May 26-29th, 2011

Marco Island Marriott Resort & Spa, Marco Island, FL

FAMILY CAFÉ CONFERENCE

June 3-5th, 2011

Disney's Coronado Springs Resort, Orlando, FL

2011 FLORIDA COUNCIL ON AGING

August 22-24th, 2011

TradeWinds Hotel, St. Petersburg Beach, FL

FLORIDA ACADEMY OF AUDIOLOGISTS ANNUAL CONVENTION

August 25-27, 2011

Sheraton Sand Key Resort, Clearwater, FL

James Forstall Named Chair of TEDPA

Telecommunications Equipment
Distribution Program Association

TEDPA

FTRI Executive Director James Forstall begins his two-year term this month as chairman of the Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program Association (TEDPA). This is the national association for the state equipment programs similar to FTRI. Throughout the year and at the annual meeting, TEDPA members exchange valuable information about state and federal regulatory issues, new equipment and technologies, and best practices for administering and marketing their programs. Mr. Forstall was instrumental in establishing TEDPA nearly 15 years ago. As one of the oldest and largest equipment distribution programs in the country, FTRI is viewed as a model for other state programs.

If you would like information about equipment distribution programs in other states, check the TEDPA website at www.tedpa.org.