

The Hamilton RELAY CONNECT R

SPRING 2017

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A Publication of Hamilton Relay, Inc.

STATE RELAY CUSTOMER CARE

California

877-632-9095 TTY/V

District of Columbia

866-560-1452 TTY/V

Georgia

866-694-5824 TTY/V

Idaho

800-368-6185 TTY/V

Iowa

888-516-4692 TTY/V

Kansas

866-735-2957 TTY/V

Kentucky

888-662-2406 TTY/V

Louisiana

888-699-6869 TTY/V

Maine

800-270-9709 TTY/V

Maryland

866-269-9006 TTY/V

Massachusetts

800-720-3479 V

800-720-3480 TTY

Michigan

844-578-6563 TTY/V

Montana

800-833-8503 TTY/V

Nevada

888-256-5647 TTY/V

New Mexico

877-463-0994 TTY/V

Pennsylvania

800-974-1253 TTY/V

Virginia

866-894-4116 V

866-246-9300 TTY

Washington

800-974-1548 TTY/V

Off to a Fresh and Fun Start

The Hamilton Relay Outreach Team got a head start on spring this year in Atlanta, Georgia where the team met for a mini summit. The meeting gave the Relay Outreach Team a chance to focus on planning the year ahead.

Throughout the summit, we covered many important topics that would allow the Outreach Team to better serve the communities to which they are providing outreach. Both the Deaf-Blind Culture Training and Deaf Culture Training sessions featured activities designed to help the team understand what it's like to live in a world where your ability to see, hear or communicate is much different from those around you.

Our team relishes the opportunity to get together, share expertise and pass along valuable tips. This year's mini summit was no different. The Outreach Team is now equipped with further knowledge to better serve each of our relay users. To learn how you can bring outreach services to your facility or area, visit your state's page at HamiltonRelay.com and contact your outreach coordinator.

Hamilton Relay is excited to welcome Lauren Cramer and Courtenay St. Germain to the Outreach Management Team. Former Rhode Island and Massachusetts Outreach Coordinator, Courtenay St. Germain, is now the Regional Outreach Manager and will share in that role with John Fechter, each overseeing specific areas. Lauren Cramer has been both an outreach coordinator and an account manager for Hamilton Relay and has recently accepted the role of Senior Relay Outreach and Marketing Manager. We're delighted our team is growing so that we can do more for our relay users and our states. Congratulations to John, Courtenay and Lauren on their new roles!



The group snapped a photo in Downtown Atlanta.

Something to Celebrate

May is Better Hearing and Speech Month, and it will be here before you know it! Better Hearing and Speech Month gives us a chance to raise awareness about the issues that affect individuals who have difficulty hearing or speaking, such as hearing loss, tinnitus, stuttering, slurred speech, etc. It's also the perfect time to acknowledge the wonderful things people all across the country are doing to improve the lives of individuals who experience hearing loss or difficulty speaking.

To celebrate Better Hearing and Speech Month, Hamilton Relay presents Recognition Awards to outstanding nominees who are hard of hearing, late-deafened or have difficulty speaking, and who demonstrate exceptional leadership, volunteerism and involvement in their communities. Hamilton Relay will honor the award recipients from each of the states where we provide contracted relay and/or captioned telephone service during the month of May. Look for them on the Hamilton Relay website and under the Awards tab of the Hamilton Relay Facebook page.

What can you do to participate in Better Hearing and Speech Month (BHSM)? Visit www.asha.org to find BHSM resources and order BHSM gear, or join the conversation on Twitter at #bhsm.



Mindful Communication

No matter who you are, communication likely plays a vital role in the quality of your life and relationships. If we want to connect with others in the best way possible, we need to pay close attention to what, where and how we say things. Observe the way you communicate with others—specifically individuals with hearing loss—and follow the tips we've gathered below for better communication. If you do, you might be surprised at how well your conversations go!



- Be patient, positive and relaxed.
- Get the person's attention before you speak.
- Face the person when you speak to them.
- Don't cover your mouth with your hand or other objects.
- Avoid speaking with gum, cigarettes, or food in your mouth.
- Speak clearly and at a moderate pace and volume.
- Avoid places with excess background noise.
- Choose places that are well lit and avoid backlighting.
- Use facial expressions and gestures.
- When you are not understood, rephrase what you said.
- Give cues when changing the subject.
- Ask the other person for suggestions to improve communication.
- Let the other person determine where he or she would like to stand or sit.
- Choose a circular seating arrangement for best possible communication.

Look for these tips, tricks and other inspiring quotes on our social media pages. They're perfect for sharing!



-  **Facebook:** [Facebook.com/HamiltonRelay](https://www.facebook.com/HamiltonRelay)
-  **LinkedIn:** [LinkedIn.com/company/Hamilton-Relay](https://www.linkedin.com/company/Hamilton-Relay)
-  **Twitter:** [@HamiltonRelay](https://twitter.com/HamiltonRelay)
-  **Instagram:** [@HamiltonRelay](https://www.instagram.com/HamiltonRelay)

Customer Care Corner: How to Leave a Voicemail

If you're a Voice Carry Over (VCO) user and need to leave the occasional voicemail, read the steps below to make your call experience go smoothly.

Here is the process our Communication Assistants (CAs) use when a VCO call encounters a voicemail recording or answering machine:

1. The CA asks the VCO user if they would like to leave a message by typing, "(ANS MACH WOULD YOU LIKE TO LEAVE A MSG Q) GA".
2. If the VCO user would like to leave a message, the CA must hang up and redial that number in order to leave a message since the voicemail or answering machine often times out before the VCO user can respond.
3. After the CA redials the number, the VCO user will receive the text, "(CA HERE WHEN I TYPE BEEP GA YOU MAY BEGIN SPEAKING YOUR MESSAGE)".
4. When the CA hears the beep of the voicemail, they will send "BEEP GA" to the VCO user.

As a VCO user, it's important to remember to wait until you read "BEEP GA" before voicing your message.

Before the call starts, you can give the CA instructions that will help make your call go more smoothly. For example, you could say, "If you get an answering machine, I don't need to know what the recording says, but I want to leave a message." In that case, the CA will type BEEP GA when it's time for you to voice your message. In this case, there would be no dial back and no waiting to get to the voicemail recording again.

To learn more about VCO calls and how they work, contact Customer Care or visit your state web page at HamiltonRelay.com and select "VCO".



Hamilton Works to Rebuild Relay Center in Albany

On January 2nd, severe storms went through the Albany, Georgia area, destroying many homes and businesses, including the Hamilton Relay center. Following those storms, we immediately began plans to rebuild. Construction on the new building is underway and expected to be completed in early spring. In the meantime, we have resumed operations from two temporary locations in Albany and continue our commitment to providing seamless call processing on every one of your calls.

"First and foremost, we are grateful that the employees working at the time the storm hit escaped with only a few minor injuries. We've received tremendous support from our employees and from the Albany community. Our thoughts continue to be with all of southwest Georgia and those who have been affected by the severe weather this winter."

— Dixie Ziegler, Vice President of Hamilton Relay



Relay Call Pointers

Many people have never experienced taking or making a relay call. Share this information with people you know so that they'll know what to expect—and what's expected of them—on a relay call. Being prepared will help put everyone's mind at ease and make connecting through relay a breeze!

- Relax. Relay calls are not much different than other calls. If you have questions, the Communication Assistant (CA) will be happy to tell you how relay works.
- Be patient. Relay calls are full of pauses so that the CA can relay what was said.
- Expect that you may hear a female CA speaking for a man or a male CA speaking for a woman.
- Speak directly to the relay user, not the CA. Avoid saying, "Tell her..." or "Tell him..."
- Speak slowly and clearly to give CAs enough time to type.
- Know that CAs may type background noises and other sounds outside your conversation.
- Say "Go ahead" when done speaking to let the other person know it's his or her turn to talk.

Adapted from an article published by Barnstable County Human Services.



Hamilton Relay Service
P.O. Box 285
Aurora, NE 68818

Address Service Requested



From Our Kitchen to Yours

Birds are chirping, trees are budding and flowers are blossoming. Spring is finally here! To celebrate, reach for recipes that have the fun, festive spirit of springtime, like Frazelle's Taco Salad that turns any time into party time.

Taco Salad



INGREDIENTS

- | | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| 1 1/2 lbs ground beef or turkey | 1 package cream cheese, softened |
| 1 package taco seasoning | 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese |
| 1 can refried beans | 2 cups shredded lettuce |
| 1 jar taco sauce (mild, medium or hot based upon your taste) | |

DIRECTIONS

1. Brown the meat in a skillet and drain any excess grease. Add refried beans and taco seasoning to meat. Remove from heat.
2. In a casserole dish, spread cream cheese on the bottom and add the taco sauce on top. Layer the meat on top and spread out. Top with shredded cheese and then lettuce.
3. Serve with nacho chips.