



## Georgia Public Service Commission

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**For immediate release**

**News Release**

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### **PSC Approves CapTel® Service Starting January 2008**

**ATLANTA**, August 21, 2007 – The Georgia Public Service Commission today approved a plan to implement captioned telephone (CapTel®) service beginning in 2008. This service allows individuals with hearing loss to view word-for-word captions of their telephone conversations. The Commission will contract with Hamilton Telecommunications, Georgia's current relay service provider, which manages CapTel® service in 12 other states.

Under the plan, no fixed or per minute charges will apply on local calls to users of the service; instead, the service will be funded through the Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) Fund, which is also used for Relay Service, reading services for the blind and the distribution of hearing aids and specialized telecommunications equipment. Under Georgia law, the TRS Fund is supported by a monthly surcharge of \$.05 on all residential and business telephone lines in the state.

Similar to a traditional telephone, a CapTel® phone allows hard of hearing callers to talk and listen to individuals using a traditional phone. While listening to the voice of the other party, the CapTel® phone also allows the user to read word-for-word captions of the other party's conversation on the CapTel® phone's built-in screen. Captions are provided by special voice-recognition technology, converting speech into text that appears almost simultaneously with the spoken word.

Phones capable of displaying captions are available through the Georgia Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program administered by the Commission. The Georgia Council for the Hearing Impaired is under contract with the Commission to provide financially and medically qualified applicants with specialized telecommunications equipment, training and repair services.

For information on captioned telephone service, go to <http://www.captionedtelephone.com> or <http://www.hamiltonrelay.com/traditional/captel/index.htm>.

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