



CaptionCall – Advocate for People With Hearing Loss!

From day one, CaptionCall has been an advocate for people with hearing loss, enabling easy, no-cost access to captioned telephone service (CTS).

Before CaptionCall, there was only one major provider of CTS. When CaptionCall came on the scene in 2011 with a revolutionary new phone, and made it available for FREE to qualified individuals, it really rocked the industry. Many who could not afford CTS before could finally enjoy this service.

Historically, CapTel affiliated distributors have been strong proponents of charging the consumer or state agencies for their captioning phones. We believe this approach limits access to many who need it. CaptionCall has always endorsed giving qualified individuals access to the CaptionCall phone at no cost, ensuring that all who need the service can get it. Providing free phones to individuals with hearing loss is extremely expensive for CaptionCall, but enabling all eligible candidates to communicate by phone with the functional equivalency of a full-hearing person, regardless of their ability to pay, is the right thing to do. We will continue to be an advocate for the hearing impaired.

Sadly, in October 2013, the FCC issued regulations requiring CaptionCall to follow the pattern established by CapTel to charge for the phone. We had to start charging a minimum of \$75 for each phone. This was an effort by the FCC to slow the rapid growth of CaptionCall and the increased demand on the TRS fund. CapTel encouraged charging for the phone as the best indicator of legitimate use. The following is a quote from Hamilton CapTel's comments filed on 2/26/2013:

Hamilton believes there is no better indication that a user legitimately needs the service than a user's decision to pay his or her own money for the specialized equipment needed to use the service. As the Commission noted, "When a consumer is required to pay some amount of money for an IP CTS phone, that individual has the incentive to first consider whether he or she needs the service, i.e., to evaluate whether the benefit from the service is worth the cost of the specialized phone."

CaptionCall was the only CTS provider who filed a Stay Request in the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals, arguing the new FCC regulations violated the rights of people with hearing loss as guaranteed by the ADA. Our Stay Request was granted, and the courts have ruled in favor of CaptionCall. This allows CaptionCall and all IP CTS providers to continue offering the CaptionCall phone for free to qualified individuals with professional certification of hearing loss.

We will continue to stand as an advocate for the rights of people with hearing loss as granted by the ADA. Thank you for supporting our cause!