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## Telecommunication Updates

**OLYMPIA** – Washington State Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing has conducted some activities relating to telecommunication services provided to deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind and speech-disabled people. “ODHH continues to be a national leader in the provision of telecommunication services and we’ve extended the relay contract, obtained relay administrator certification and awarded an outreach contract that will enable us to improve our services for the future,” said Eric Raff, ODHH Director.

### **ODHH Extends TRS contract for another 2 years**

The Department of Social and Health Services’ Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing have exercised a contract option to extend its three-year contract with Sprint for two additional years to provide Telecommunication Relay Services (TRS) in Washington State. Sprint has been providing Washington Relay Services since 1998 and the contract was slated to expire on June 30 of this year. The extension of the Sprint contract runs through June 30, 2015.

Washington Relay is a free [Relay Service](#) that allows hearing, deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind and speech-disabled callers who use text-telephone (TTY), captioned telephone, telebraille and Speech to Speech (STS) features of the WA Relay services to communicate with the hearing party through specially trained ‘Communication Assistants.’

Washington Relay Services are available 24 hours a day and 365 days a year. There are no restrictions on the number or length of calls. The service is confidential, and conversation records are not maintained. Sprint also provides outreach services to increase awareness to the general public, businesses and Native American tribes about relay services.

### **FCC Certifies DSHS-ODHH TRS Services for another 5 years**

The Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing is pleased to announce that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has released a public notice on July 8, 2013, in regard to the Certification of State Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) Programs, which include Washington State. This certification will be in effect for a five-year period, beginning July 26, 2013, and ending July 25, 2018.

For more information in regards to state certifications, please go to the following web link:  
[http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily\\_Releases/Daily\\_Business/2013/db0710/DA-13-1530A1.pdf](http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2013/db0710/DA-13-1530A1.pdf)

### **DBSC Awarded WA State NDBEDP Outreach Contract**

The Deaf-Blind Service Center (DBSC) in Seattle was recently awarded the Washington State National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Project (NDBEDP) Outreach Contract to provide information to Washington deaf-blind residents about the NDBEDP. The NDBEDP is a federally funded program geared to provide communication access for deaf-blind individuals who qualify. To date, 30 clients have applied. ODHH is looking forward to working with the Deaf-Blind Service Center and the provision of NDBEDP outreach services and to encourage more deaf-blind individuals who qualify to apply.

For more information about the NDBEDP program and to download an application, please go to the following Web link: <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/hrsa/odhh/NDBEDP.shtml>. DBSC may be contacted about the NDBEDP by email at [info@seattledbcs.org](mailto:info@seattledbcs.org), 206-323-9178 TTY, 206-455-7932 VP or visit DBSC at 1620 – 18<sup>th</sup> Ave., Suite 200, Seattle, WA 98122.

ODHH provides other services such as the Telecommunications Equipment Distribution (TED), Social and Health Services (SHS), Assistive Communication Technology (ACT), Sign Language Interpreter Management (SLIM), and Information, Referral and Advocacy (IRA) to better serve Washington residents who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or speech-disabled. If you have questions regarding these services, please contact ODHH at 800-422-7930 V/TTY, 360-339-7382 VP or email at [odhh@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:odhh@dshs.wa.gov) or visit our website <http://odhh.dshs.wa.gov>.

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