

CONNECTION

WINTER 2021



Telecommunications
Access of Maryland

PROGRAMS:



Maryland Relay

Dial 7-1-1

A service for Marylanders who have difficulty using a standard telephone.



**Maryland Accessible
Telecommunications**

Equipment Distribution Program

This program provides accessible telecommunications equipment for Maryland residents ages three and older who are Deaf, hard of hearing, DeafBlind, or are living with limited speech, mobility, or cognitive abilities.

MDrelay.org

**We're making headway
with Real-Time Text.**

Check out page 4 for more information.

**Two new members
have joined GABTR!**

See page 7 for details.



MAT Program Focus Groups are in Full Swing

On December 18, 2020, the MAT program hosted its first virtual focus group to allow members of the Hard of Hearing community the opportunity to test and provide feedback on a few new telecommunication technologies. The focus group was led by MAT Manager Kevin Steffy and MAT Evaluator Jane Hager with four new pieces of equipment.

- Pixel 4
- Quattro Pro 4.0
- XLC8-GLT
- Mobile Alerts

Seven individuals actively participated in the Hard of Hearing focus group—making the first ever virtual MAT focus group a success! The MAT program will be hosting several specialized focus groups this year, so be on the lookout on our social media pages for more information on how you can participate!

Are you following us on Facebook and Twitter?

If not, stay up to date with all things TAM, Maryland Relay, and MAT at [Facebook.com/MarylandRelay711](https://www.facebook.com/MarylandRelay711) and [Twitter.com/MDRelay711](https://www.twitter.com/MDRelay711)!

Welcome RTT Outreach Coordinator, Rebecca Miller

TAM is excited to welcome a new Real-Time Text (RTT) outreach coordinator, Rebecca Miller, to the team! As the RTT outreach coordinator, Rebecca will provide educational resources and guidance within the state of Maryland about RTT service, as well as the Maryland Assistive Telecommunications (MAT) equipment distribution program, through presentations, events, and networking opportunities.

Before joining TAM, Rebecca worked at American Business Solutions as a graphic designer and marketing manager, and she ran a photography business. She is also a former Maryland Captioned Telephone outreach coordinator for Hamilton Relay, so she is very familiar with Relay services and users.

In her past positions, Rebecca was responsible for outreach, marketing, and visual design work, but she has always had a special passion for outreach work and serving the community. "I am really looking forward to sharing the amazing technology that is RTT with the community," she shares. "I believe that RTT will make an enormous, positive impact on many lives, and I am excited to see folks discover the change it will make."

When she's not at work, Rebecca enjoys hiking, art, and exploring new places, as well as spending time with her two daughters, their golden retriever, cockapoo, and cat! Welcome to TAM, Rebecca! We can't wait to see all of the amazing things you accomplish.



I believe that RTT will make an enormous, positive impact on many lives, and I am excited to see folks discover the change it will make.

Rebecca Miller, RTT outreach coordinator



Want to get in touch with RTT outreach coordinator, Rebecca Miller? You can reach her at Rebecca.Miller2@Maryland.gov or via phone at 410 322 2737.

Get to Know MAT Specialist Latricia Lee

We are also thrilled to announce that we have brought on Latricia Lee to serve as the interim MAT specialist for the Maryland Accessible Telecommunications (MAT) program. In this role, Latricia will review and process all applications, facilitate the distribution of MAT equipment, support the formation and operation of a DeafBlind Communication Facilitator program, and lead training sessions and presentations in Maryland on the use of accessible telecommunications equipment and services.

Before assisting our team, Latricia worked for the Maryland Department of Disabilities as a quality assurance data specialist. As a past project manager, Latricia excels in creating lean and efficient policies and procedures, and she



It's amazing to see how telecommunications technology and services impact people's lives each day

Latricia Lee, MAT specialist

looks forward to bringing her specializations to her new role with the MAT program. "I am looking forward to learning how to work with members of the community who use ASL and telecommunications equipment and services to communicate," she says. "It's amazing to see how telecommunications technology and services impact people's lives each day."

In her free time, Latricia enjoys running—she's even participated in multiple 5k races—and

trying new things. "I believe that you should never stop learning and exploring," she shares. "There's always going to be someone who can teach you new things or offer a fresh perspective, so I'm a firm believer in taking advantage of those opportunities." We are excited to have a dedicated worker like Latricia on our team to help with the MAT program.



Need to connect with the MAT program? For assistance, call 800-552 7724 or 410 767 6960 (Voice/TTY) or 410-801-9628 (Video Phone).

Travis Dougherty Selected as Representative Member of FCC Disability Advisory Committee



Travis Dougherty, Maryland Relay manager, was recently appointed to serve as a representative member from the National Association for State Relay Administration (NASRA) on the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) Disability Advisory Committee (DAC).

Now in its fourth term, the DAC was established to advise the FCC on accessibility-related issues

that impact individuals with disabilities and that fall under the responsibility of the Commission.

As a representative from NASRA—a national association of individuals who administer and oversee Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS) for their state—Travis will serve a two-year term on the Committee and help to make positive change for those who live with disabilities, so they may have equal access to communication.

Congratulations, Travis! We know that you will be an excellent addition to the FCC's Disability Advisory Committee.



To learn more about the Federal Communications Commission's Disability Advisory Committee, visit [FCC.gov/Disability Advisory Committee](https://www.fcc.gov/Disability-Advisory-Committee).

Update on Real-Time Text

We are making exciting progress with Real-Time Text (RTT) technology and our communication with stakeholders.

Our new RTT outreach coordinator, Rebecca Miller, recently attended a Maryland 911 Board Meeting to learn about the importance of Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) and how RTT plays a role in this environment.

In addition, Maryland Relay manager Travis Dougherty is in the process of creating a presentation to be given to the National Association for State Relay Administration (NASRA) regarding the transition from Text Telephone (TTY) to RTT, RTT capability, and its significance for those who depend on Relay to communicate.

RTT has the ability to greatly impact and benefit those who depend on assistive technology to stay connected each and every day. Maryland Relay will continue to provide updates and beneficial information about RTT service as the transition from TTY to RTT comes to fruition.



Enjoy Stress-Free Conference Calls with Remote Conference Captioning's New Features

Imagine being on an important conference call and only catching every other word that is said. When you have difficulty hearing, it can be frustrating to not be able to follow along with the conversation, and possibly miss vital information that impacts your ability to do your job.

Last year, we announced that Remote Conference Captioning (RCC) is now available in Maryland, allowing users to read text of what all participants are saying during conference calls. Now, RCC also offers two new features that further ensure individuals with hearing loss don't miss important words during conference calls.

RCC users no longer need to depend on split screen viewing for captioning when accessing meetings via Zoom, Adobe Connect, or YouTube Live. With the latest embedded captioning update, integrated captions now appear directly

on the screen during the conference call. To utilize this feature, the RCC requester must schedule RCC services and select the platform to be used for their conference call from a dropdown list.

To ensure embedded captioning, all meeting hosts are encouraged to read the Hamilton Relay RCC directions prior to their conference call. The directions can be found on the RCC Scheduling Request Form under the "Event Information" section.

RCC users can now also print and save transcripts of their conference calls with the "Print Transcript" feature. The "Print Transcript" button is present throughout the call and can be found at the top of the user's screen. Be sure to select the "Print Transcript" option before the call has ended, as the feature becomes unavailable once the captionist leaves the call.

Request RCC for Your Next Conference Call—complete the RCC Scheduling Request Form at HamiltonRelay.com/Maryland/How-it-Works/RCC-Remote-Conference-Captioning.html



Community Connections with Maryland Relay

Even though this past year was challenging, it required us to get creative and think outside the box with our outreach services! Our outreach team was able to find new ways to connect with our community members, support their endeavors, and educate them about the vast array of solutions and services that Maryland Relay offers.

In October of 2020, Maryland Relay sponsored the 15th Anniversary Walk4Hearing, which was transformed into a virtual event and celebration. Walk4Hearing promotes hearing health, spreads awareness, and raises funds for both local and national organizations supporting individuals who are living with hearing loss. Maryland Relay is proud to be a sponsor of Walk4Hearing, as we work together to educate our community about hearing health and share a passion for providing valuable resources and assistive equipment to those who need it.

Also, in October, Maryland Relay sponsored the 2020 Maryland Community Action Partnership Conference, and our outreach coordinator Tarita Turner was able to participate in the virtual activities. The online human services conference offered attendees the opportunity to collaborate with other community members in order to respond to the COVID-19 crisis and develop innovative strategies to create a better, more inclusive future for Maryland.

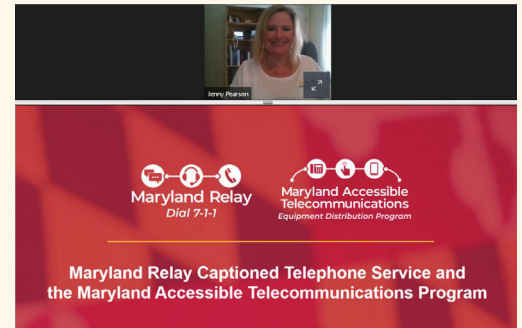
At the start of November, The Beacon Newspaper launched its first ever 50+ Virtual Expo—featuring an interactive website that offered free access to health and wellness resources, exercise and cooking classes, expert speakers, entertainment, and more from November 1, 2020 until January 31, 2021. Maryland Relay was proud to sponsor and support such a positive, educational, and fun experience for Maryland’s senior community.

Lastly, our outreach coordinator Jenny Pearson had the opportunity to participate in the Winter Grace Senior Ministries Fall 2020 Virtual 50+ Resource Fair. Jenny was able to share some of Maryland Relay’s empowering calling solutions for seniors—such as Captioned Telephone Service—and introduce the Maryland Accessible Telecommunications program to interested participants.



Expand Your Knowledge with Maryland Relay Outreach Webinars

Maryland Relay outreach coordinators, Jenny Pearson and Tarita Turner, are available to host personalized webinars for your business, group, or organization. If you would like to learn more about Maryland Relay and the programs and services we offer, please contact Jenny at Jennifer.Pearson@Maryland.gov or Tarita at Tarita.Turner@Maryland.gov for more information.



Keep an eye out for more of our statewide webinar opportunities on our Facebook page at [Facebook.com/MarylandRelay711](https://www.facebook.com/MarylandRelay711).



GABTR Adds New Board Members

The Governor's Advisory Board for Telecommunications Relay (GABTR) provides Maryland Relay with vital feedback and insight on the issues that affect Relay users, including quality and trends in Relay services, technology, and community outreach.

Recently, the Board added two new members, Michelle Morales and Glenn Lockhart, to represent and serve Maryland's Hard of Hearing community.

Want to get to know the newest GABTR members? Be on the lookout for their bios in the next edition of the Telecommunications Access of Maryland Connection newsletter and on [Facebook.com/MarylandRelay711](https://www.facebook.com/MarylandRelay711).

We're Searching for New Relay Stories for a New Year – Tell Us Yours!

As we welcome 2021 at Telecommunications Access of Maryland (TAM), we have a New Year's resolution that we hope you'll help us achieve. We want to learn more about YOU—whether you are a Maryland Relay user, a MAT recipient, or have a loved one who uses our services. If your life has been positively impacted by Maryland Relay or the MAT program, we want to know!

We are looking for individuals who are willing to share their personal stories about how our programs have helped to change their lives. We look forward to learning more about you!

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If you would like to share your story, please contact Donna Broadway-Callaman at DonnaT.Broadway-Callaman@Maryland.gov



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Larry Hogan
Governor

Boyd K. Rutherford
Lt. Governor



 [Facebook.com/MarylandRelay711](https://www.facebook.com/MarylandRelay711)

 [Twitter.com/MDRelay711](https://twitter.com/MDRelay711)



Nominations are Open for the 2021 Better Hearing and Speech Month Recognition Award

In honor of National Better Hearing and Speech Month, Hamilton Relay—service provider for Maryland Relay—offers the chance for community members to nominate leaders who are hard of hearing, late deafened, or have difficulty speaking, as a way to recognize their dedication and service to better the State of Maryland.

Do you know an individual in your community who embodies the characteristics of a true leader? Nominate them today for the Better Hearing and Speech Month Recognition Award!

To nominate someone you know, visit
HamiltonRelay.com/BHSM