

## CHAPTER 477C

### DUAL PARTY RELAY SERVICE

Referred to in [§546.7](#)

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#### **477C.1 Dual party relay service — purpose.**

The general assembly finds that the provision of a statewide dual party relay service will further the public interest and protect the health, safety, and welfare of the people of Iowa through an increase in the usefulness and availability of the telephone system. Many persons who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, or have speech disorders are not able to utilize the telephone system without this type of service. Therefore, it is the purpose of [this chapter](#) to enable the orderly development, operation, promotion, and funding of a statewide dual party relay service.

[91 Acts, ch 194, §1](#); [93 Acts, ch 75, §6](#); [96 Acts, ch 1129, §96](#); [2020 Acts, ch 1102, §28](#)

#### **477C.2 Definitions.**

As used in [this chapter](#), unless the context otherwise requires:

1. “*Board*” means the utilities board within the department of commerce created in [section 474.1](#).
2. “*Communication disorder*” means the inability to use the telephone for communication without a telecommunications device for the deaf and hard of hearing.
3. “*Council*” means the dual party relay council established in [section 477C.5](#).
4. “*Dual party relay service*” or “*relay service*” means a communication service which provides persons with communication disorders access to the telephone system functionally equivalent to the access available to persons without communication disorders.
5. “*Telecommunications device for the deaf and hard of hearing*” means any specialized or supplemental telephone equipment used by persons with communication disorders to provide access to the telephone system.

[91 Acts, ch 194, §2](#); [2020 Acts, ch 1102, §29](#)

#### **477C.3 Dual party relay service.**

With the advice of the council, the board shall plan, establish, administer, and promote a statewide program to provide dual party relay service as follows:

1. The board may enter into the necessary contracts and arrangements with private entities to provide for the delivery of relay service.
2. The relay service, to the extent reasonably possible, shall allow persons with communication disorders to use the telephone system in a manner and at a rate equivalent to persons without communication disorders.
3. The relay service may be provided on a stand-alone basis within the state, with other states, or with telephone utilities providing relay service in other states.
4. The board may employ additional personnel, pursuant to [section 476.10](#), to plan, establish, administer, and promote the relay service.

[91 Acts, ch 194, §3](#); [2020 Acts, ch 1102, §30](#)

Referred to in [§8F2, 477C.6](#)

#### **477C.4 Telecommunications devices for the deaf and hard of hearing.**

With the advice of the council, the board may plan, establish, administer, and promote a program to secure, finance, and distribute telecommunications devices for the deaf and hard of hearing. The board may establish eligibility criteria for persons to receive telecommunications devices for the deaf and hard of hearing, including but not limited

to requiring certification that the recipient cannot use the telephone for communication without a telecommunications device for the deaf and hard of hearing.

[91 Acts, ch 194, §4](#); [2020 Acts, ch 1102, §31](#)

Referred to in [§8F2, 477C.6](#)

#### **477C.5 Dual party relay council.**

1. A dual party relay council is established, consisting of eleven members appointed by the board. The council shall advise the board on all matters concerning relay service and equipment distribution programs.

2. The council shall consist of:

- a. Six consumers who have communication disorders.
- b. Two representatives from telephone companies.
- c. One representative from the office of deaf services of the department of human rights.
- d. One representative from the office of the consumer advocate of the department of justice.

e. One member of the board or a designee of the board.

3. Council members who are not state or local government officers or employees shall be reimbursed for their necessary and actual expenses incurred in performance of their duties and shall receive a per diem of fifty dollars when the council is meeting, payable from moneys available to the board pursuant to [section 477C.7](#).

[91 Acts, ch 194, §5](#); [94 Acts, ch 1023, §57](#); [2020 Acts, ch 1102, §32](#)

Referred to in [§477C.2](#)

#### **477C.6 Budget.**

The board shall review and approve the proposed annual budget of the relay service program authorized in [section 477C.3](#) and the equipment distribution program authorized in [section 477C.4](#).

[91 Acts, ch 194, §6](#)

#### **477C.7 Funding.**

1. The board shall impose an assessment to fund the programs described in [this chapter](#) upon all wireless carriers and wire-line local exchange carriers providing telecommunications service in the state in the amount of three cents per month for each telecommunications service phone number provided in this state.

2. The entities subject to assessment shall remit the assessed amounts, as determined by the board, to a special fund, as defined under [section 8.2, subsection 9](#). The moneys in the fund are appropriated solely to plan, establish, administer, and promote the relay service and equipment distribution programs.

3. The entities subject to assessment shall provide the information requested by the board necessary for implementation of the assessment.

4. Wire-line local exchange carriers shall not recover from intrastate access charges any portion of such assessment imposed under [this section](#).

[91 Acts, ch 194, §7](#); [92 Acts, ch 1163, §99](#); [2005 Acts, ch 17, §1](#); [2018 Acts, ch 1160, §23](#); [2021 Acts, ch 75, §7](#)

Referred to in [§476.95, 477C.5](#)