



## The Access Board

U.S. Architectural and Transportation  
Barriers Compliance Board

# Using a TTY\*

For more information, additional copies,  
or copies in alternative formats, call the  
Access Board at:

202/272-5449 TTY  
202/272-5434 Voice  
800/USA-ABLE (V/TTY)

\* This device is also referred to as a Telecommunications  
Device for the Deaf (TDD) or a Text Telephone.

## TTY INSTRUCTION SHEET

This pamphlet describes how to handle TTY calls and gives a list of TTY abbreviations and syntax often used by persons with speech and hearing impairments.

If your TTY phone is also used for voice calls, be sure the person who answers your phone by voice knows how to recognize and answer a TTY call. Usually a TTY call can be identified by a voice announcer saying, "this is a TTY call," or a high-pitched, electronic, beeping sound. However, some TTYs do not have voice announcers or make the beeping sound or the person calling may forget to tap the space bar to produce it. Therefore, if you hear no voice, assume it is a TTY call.

TTYs should be placed near a telephone so there is minimal delay in answering TTY calls. Further, this phone should be accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities, including those who use wheelchairs.

### RECEIVING AND CONCLUDING A TTY CALL

- 1) Place the phone receiver in the receiver cradle of your TTY adapter. (For correct receiver placement, note picture, notch, or the word "cord.") Turn your TTY on.
- 2) The person who answers the call is the first to type. Type your agency name and your name. Then type "GA."
- 3) "GA" means go ahead and type. This is the signal for the other person to begin typing. "HD" means hold. This is the signal that the person typing must stop for a minute, but he/she will be back. In fact, do not leave the phone unless you first type "HD." "SK" means stop keying. This is how you show that the conversation is ended and that you will hang up. It is polite to type good-bye, thank you for calling, or some other closing remark before you type "SK."

Some sample opening and closing messages are:

Hello, Access Board, this is Jane Smith, may I help u? GA

Dept. of Justice, Ms. Smith here. May I help u? GA

Good AM, this is Ms. Smith at the Dept. of Agriculture. GA

Thank u for calling, bye to SK or GA

Have a good day. GA to SK

Because of the amount of time it takes to send and receive messages, it's important to remember that short words and sentences are desired by both parties (see list of common TTY terminology on back page).

## **PLEASE NOTE**

With TTY calls you will not be able to interrupt when the other person is typing.

Sometimes you may get a garbled message in all numbers or mixed numbers and letters. You should strike the space bar and see if the message clears up. If not, when the person stops typing, you should say, "Message all garbled, please repeat." If the garbled messages continue, this may mean that one of the TTYs is not working properly or that you have a bad connection. In this case you should say something like, "Let's hang up and you call me back or I'll call you back."

## **MAKING A TTY CALL**

- 1) Again, place the phone receiver securely in the TTY receiver cradle and turn on your TTY. Make sure you have a dial tone by checking for a steady light on the TTY status indicator.
- 2) Dial the number and watch the status indicator light to see if the dialed number is ringing. The ring will make a long slow flash or two short flashes with a pause in between. If the line is busy, you will see short, continuous flashes on your indicator light. When the phone is answered, you will see an irregular light signal as the phone is picked up and placed in the cradle. If you are calling a combination TTY and voice number, and do not have a voice announcer on your TTY, you should tap the space bar several times to help the person on the other end identify this as a TTY call.

## **PLEASE NOTE**

If your call is not answered via TTY after 10 to 15 seconds, you should again tap the space bar to let the person know that it is a TTY call. If you still receive no answer, this could mean one of several things. You may have dialed an incorrect number, or your call did not go through. A signal on your monitor light that someone is speaking may mean you have reached a recorded message.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

If you make a mistake in spelling, you can either type "xxx" and then retype the correct spelling or use the Back Space key to delete the misspelled word(s).

To type numbers on some TTYs, you may have to use the Shift key. Consult your TTY manual for specific operating instructions.

The message of some TTY callers may appear to be in nonstandard English. Please do not mistake this as a lack of intelligence on the part of the caller. Instead, it may be due to differences between hearing and deaf cultures or the use of TTY terminology. Extend the same patience and courtesy to TTY callers as you do to all others.

**COMMON TDD TERMINOLOGY**

Afternoon/Evening	PM	Operator	OPR
Although	THO	Pause (thinking)	HMMM
Are	R	Please	PLS
Because	CUZ	Question	Q
Center	CTR	See you later	CUL
Could	CUD	Should	SHUD
Go ahead (your turn to type)	GA	Stop keying (end of conversation)	SK
Hold	HD	To show appreciation	SMILE
Meeting	MTG	Tomorrow	TMR
Morning	AM	Would	WUD
Number	NBR	You	U
Oh, I see	OIC	Your	UR <small>10003 TM</small>