

**Annual Report**

**INDIANA TELEPHONE RELAY  
ACCESS CORPORATION FOR THE  
HEARING AND SPEECH IMPAIRED**

**For the fiscal year ended September 30, 2021**

## InTRAC's 2021 Annual Report

The Indiana Telephone Relay Access Corporation for the Hearing and Speech Impaired ("InTRAC") continued to provide quality and efficient service in its twenty-ninth year of telephone relay services ("TRS") for hearing and speech-impaired callers.

**Description of Services.** Beginning October 1, 1992, InTRAC began providing TRS to Indiana citizens through Sprint, its relay provider. TRS allows an individual who has a hearing or speech impairment to communicate over the telephone with a hearing individual who uses a standard telephone. Sprint provides this service through the operation of a Network Call Distribution system with six TRS centers nationwide. Sprint currently provides relay service to 37 states, the Federal government, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, New Zealand, and the Virgin Islands. Individuals in Indiana with hearing or speech impairments can call these centers by using the three-digit number, 711. Persons with standard phones can also initiate calls to the centers.

At the centers, specially trained relay operators receive the incoming calls from either a standard phone user or a deaf, hard of hearing, or speech-impaired relay user. The operator then calls the desired number and connects the two telephone users. The operator reads aloud the text telephone message to the standard telephone caller and transmits that caller's oral responses back to the non-standard telephone user through the text telephone, computer, or video phone to view on their screen.

InTRAC offers a variety of relay services to meet the special needs in the deaf, hard of hearing, or speech-impaired community. Those relay services include:

- **TTY** – If a person is deaf and does not voice, he or she may use a text telephone.
- **VCO** – If a person is hard of hearing but is able to voice, he or she may use Voice Carry Over service. Both standard callers and VCO users must take turns in speaking.
- **Captioned Telephone** – If a person is hard of hearing but is able to voice, he or she may use this Enhanced VCO. Users no longer take turns but speak in a more natural fashion. One side of the conversation appears on the phone's screen.
- **Captioned Telephone on the internet (WebCapTel)** – If a person is hard of hearing and able to voice, he or she can use a standard telephone and a computer screen for Enhanced VCO on the internet.
- **HCO** – If a person can hear, but is not able to voice, he or she may use Hearing Carry Over.
- **Speech to Speech** – If a person can hear but has difficulties with unclear speech, he or she may use this service.
- **Spanish to Spanish** – If a person is deaf and needs the conversation understood in Spanish, this option is available.
- **Voice User** – If a person uses a standard phone and wishes to speak with others who use special equipment to communicate, he or she can connect to Relay Indiana.

- **Video Relay Service (VRS)** – If a person is deaf and using American Sign Language, the interpreter/operator will appear on a screen of the computer, video phone, or smartphone and will place the call in the same way as a standard relay call.
- **Internet Relay (IP)** – If a person is deaf or hard of hearing, he or she may use a computer or smartphone to see what is typed by the operator (while the standard phone user speaks) and can type so the relay operator can voice back to the standard phone user.

Currently, IP Relay, VRS, and WebCapTel are funded at the federal level. If InTRAC were to pay for IP Relay and VRS calls terminating within Indiana at the current rate, the costs would more than double the costs currently funded by InTRAC. This continues to be discussed at the FCC.

The VRS provides the deaf community an opportunity to use their primary form of communication – sign language. VRS users must have high-speed internet connectivity and either a webcam or a videophone. VRS users go online to any of the five video relay providers and see a live interpreter at the relay center on their screen. VRS users then sign their conversations to the interpreter who voices the call for them. The standard phone users' responses are then signed back to the deaf user. This is real-time communication and a much more natural form of conversation. Access to VRS or Internet Relay may also be obtained via an App on any smartphone.

The WebCapTel service is popular with the hard of hearing. WebCapTel allows users to log onto an internet website and connect to an operator. The operator then calls the user on a standard telephone. Now the users can use their voice over the standard telephone but use their computer screen to view the text.

The operators who staff the TRS centers are well trained. To be employed, each must pass an examination that covers spelling, typing, dictation, TRS procedures, certain aspects of American Sign Language, deaf culture, ethics, etiquette, and a confidentiality statement.

InTRAC's TRS centers process several types of calls including: local calls, intrastate long distance calls, interstate long distance, and international calls that originate in Indiana. Callers to the centers can choose the carrier they wish to process their long-distance calls to the same extent standard phone users may choose their long distance carriers.

No special charge is imposed on those who use the TRS centers. Neither the party originating nor the party receiving a call processed by the centers pay a surcharge for calls originating and terminating within the same toll-free, local calling area – even though the call must pass through the TRS centers located throughout the country. Similarly, those who use the centers to make long distance calls are charged rates no greater than the rates paid for functionally equivalent voice communication services.

Because InTRAC's relay services are processed through a Network Call Distribution system, and have the ability to automatically process calls through several TRS centers, it is unlikely that service will ever be disrupted by a cable cut, adverse weather or other event. Each center provides TRS to Indiana callers seven days a week, 52 weeks a year, and each is equipped with state-of-the-art telecommunications equipment and software. Each center can receive

messages from text telephones that use Baudat and ASCII codes and can automatically identify the types of incoming signals.

**Developments During the Year.** During InTRAC's 2021 fiscal year, the following activities occurred.

**Equipment Loaner Program.** InTRAC initiated an equipment loaner program in 1997 for hearing and speech impaired persons unable to afford a TTY. Since that time, we have lent more than 10,386 pieces of equipment. InTRAC repairs and replaces the units as necessary. As technology improves, InTRAC is committed to providing the most updated equipment to individuals who have a financial need in order that they too are able to utilize the relay service.

Currently, InTRAC lends a Superprint 4425 TTY; a multipurpose Uniphone 1140 for VCO/HCO/TTY users; CapTel units for Enhanced VCO captioning relay calls; and iPads or Android Tablets for consumers to communicate using their specific relay application. Citizens of Indiana earning below the median income can apply to receive equipment on loan from InTRAC.

**Service Volume.** In the twelve months ending September 30, 2021, InTRAC/Relay Indiana has processed 46,085 conversation minutes of TRS calls and 395,316 conversation minutes of CapTel calls. These minutes do not include relay calls for General Assistance. The number of minutes for TRS and CapTel calls have decreased over recent years. Traditional TRS use continues to decline as callers have migrated to VRS calls. And, many CapTel callers have migrated to internet captioned calls.

The chart below shows the number of minutes of use by InTRAC's TRS and CapTel centers and the comparison over the last three years. \*Billing changed from Session Minutes to Conversation Minutes explaining decrease in Minutes of Use.

<b>TRS Year of Operation</b>	<b>Inbound Calls</b>	<b>Outbound Calls</b>	<b>Minutes of Use</b>
2019	16,972	16,933	157,666
2020	16,023	15,754	*61,621
2021	12,703	12,678	46,085
<b>CapTel Year Of Operation</b>	<b>Data Calls</b>	<b>Voice Calls</b>	<b>Minutes of Use</b>
2019	142,134	47,920	610,843
2020	120,862	34,478	*469,828
2021	98,721	27,209	395,316

**Complaint Filing.** On July 1, 2021, InTRAC filed its Annual Report of Complaints with the FCC. Users of InTRAC's relay centers have been extremely pleased with the overall quality of the service. The 339,007 calls processed including general assistance, during June 2020– May 2021 resulted in three complaints from relay callers.

**Service levels.** The FCC has established quite stringent operational, technical and functional standards for telecommunications relay services. For example, 85% of the calls

received in the relay center must be answered in ten seconds or less daily, identified as 85/10 daily. During 2020 and the pandemic, the FCC signed a waiver to change that to 85/120 monthly. That waiver remains in effect. InTRAC's numbers exceeded the FCC performance standard of 85/10 at 95% and the 85/120 requirement was 99.93%. The average answer time for all calls was 2.3 seconds. A second important FCC requirement for relay service providers is that the grade of service must be a minimum of PO1. This means that if one hundred people simultaneously call the relay center during the busiest period of the day, only one call would be blocked due to the lack of available telephone equipment. InTRAC's results have continuously exceeded this requirement.

**Promotional Activities.** An important part of InTRAC's mission is to ensure that Indiana citizens are aware of the relay services that InTRAC provides. Toward that end, InTRAC, engaged in numerous promotional activities. Due to the pandemic, the events were still at a lower level than in years past.

In the 2020 - 2021 fiscal year, InTRAC held over 60 Virtual Events. InTRAC contacted over 7900 people at 42 in-person events throughout the state at conferences, trade shows, Expos, town hall meetings, and other informational meetings in 18 cities. Additionally, Indiana residents were informed about Relay Indiana services by radio, television, internet and print advertisements.

- **Outreach Personnel** – InTRAC employs a member of the Deaf community to travel throughout the state to communicate the role of InTRAC, the telecommunications providers, Federal Communications Commission rules and orders, and the relay service as well as support the expanding office operations. He then provides feedback to InTRAC about concerns of the Deaf and hard of hearing community regarding Relay Indiana or the Equipment Distribution Program.
- **Contracted Outreach.** – InTRAC continues to contract with a Hard of Hearing individual to provide community outreach for the CapTel units and the captioning service through relay. As the outreach has increased, so has the distribution of CapTel units. This person is providing presentations to a variety of clubs, churches, nursing homes, disability expos, and hospitals to reach the hard of hearing community. As more organizations learn about our CapTel presentations, we are being contacted and invited to attend many more events.
- **TRS & CapTel Outreach** – Events were held in the following Indiana communities in 2020-2021: Avon, Bloomington, Evansville, Fishers, Fort Wayne, Frankfort, Greenwood, Henryville, Huntington, Indianapolis, Janesville, Merrillville, Mooresville, New Albany, New Harmony, Noblesville, Plainfield, Waveland.
- **Major Promotional TRS Events** – Some of the larger events held were the Indiana Association of the Deaf State Conference, three (3) marketing events at the Indianapolis Indians baseball games at Victory Field, Shalom fundraising golf event, and a panel discussion at Indiana University.
- **Major Promotional CapTel Events** + Some of the larger events were Hear Indiana's Annual Conference, which was held virtually; Huntington County Council on Aging Health Fair; and the Indiana Lions State Convention.

- **Television Advertisements.** InTRAC continued to advertise with WISH-TV on PetPalsTV and GreatDayTV shows airing each weekend. These shows star and are produced by, a local celebrity who is a former Indianapolis TV Anchor - Patty Spittler, who is a user of the CapTel phone and promotes the phone wherever she appears, as well as in InTRAC ads on WISH-TV
- **Print Advertisements.** InTRAC is currently advertising in the *SeniorLife* newspaper which reaches more than 130,000 readers monthly within central and northern Indiana. Also we reach central Indiana with ads in the *Indy Bi-Weekly Post*, and the Bluffton area with ads in the *News-Banner/Echo Ossian Journal/Sunriser News*.
- **Radio Advertisements.** InTRAC continued to advertise on Network Indiana/WIBC which covers 65 radio stations within Indiana. The ads explain how the captioned telephone can help users increase their self-esteem and regain their independence. The ads vary from actual interviews with CapTel users and a promotion by a local celebrity about using the phone in the business world.
- **Internet Advertisements.** InTRAC places promotional ads when a person searches for key words such as "deaf telephones" "hard of hearing telephones" "phone amplifiers" etc. These searches will link to InTRAC's website and a video for captioned telephones.

**Annual Meeting.** On December 20, 2021, InTRAC held its annual meeting. To maintain continuity in its leadership, InTRAC's directors are elected to staggered three-year terms. Pepper Mulherin, AT&T was elected to continue as President of the Board of Directors.

**Board of Directors.** Members of the Board as of fiscal year end September 2021 are as follows: Pepper Mulherin, AT&T, Board President; Sharon McKay, NITCO, Board Treasurer; Robert Stewart, Frontier Communications, Board Secretary; Joanie Paxson, Citizens Telephone Corp.; Ted Hankey, Century Link; Alan Terrell, Rochester Telephone; and Rhonda Marcum, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, State of Indiana.

**Test of Surcharge Collected and Remitted by Members.** InTRAC engaged its accounting firm, Kehlenbrink, Lawrence & Pauckner, to perform tests of the books and records of local exchange carriers and cellular providers that are members of InTRAC to determine whether the members are properly collecting and remitting the surcharge that funds InTRAC's operations. Our accountants confirmed that all surcharges were properly collected and remitted.

**Audit of Sprint Billings.** InTRAC provides TRS under a contract with Sprint Services. InTRAC pays Sprint based upon the number of minutes of relay service provided. Under the contract, InTRAC has the right to audit and test Sprint's books and records to ensure that InTRAC is billed properly. InTRAC's accounting firm of Kehlenbrink, Lawrence & Pauckner confirmed that InTRAC payments were correct as billed by Sprint.

**Financial Statements.** Financial statements prepared by the independent accounting firm of VonLehman & Company, Inc. meeting the requirements of Ind. Code § 8-1-2.8-21(6)(D) are attached.