



PUBLIC NOTICE

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**NOTICE OF CERTIFICATION OF SNAP TELECOMMUNICATIONS, INC.
AS A PROVIDER OF VIDEO RELAY SERVICE (VRS) ELIGIBLE FOR COMPENSATION
FROM THE INTERSTATE TELECOMMUNICATIONS RELAY SERVICE (TRS) FUND**

CG DOCKET NO. 03-123

By the Commission:

On January 25, 2006, Snap Telecommunications, Inc. (Snap) filed an application for certification¹ as a VRS provider eligible for compensation from the Interstate TRS Fund (Fund)² pursuant to the recently adopted provider certification rules.³ Snap's application is granted, subject to the conditions noted below.

On December 12, 2005, the Commission released an order adopting new rules permitting carriers desiring to offer VRS and receive payment from the Fund to seek certification as a provider eligible for compensation from the Fund.⁴ The rules require entities seeking such certification to submit documentation to the Commission setting forth, in narrative form:

(i) a description of the forms of TRS to be provided (*i.e.*, VRS and/or IP Relay); (ii) a description of how the provider will meet all non-waived mandatory minimum standards

¹ Snap Telecommunications, Inc., *VRS Certification Application of Snap Telecommunications, Inc.*, CG Docket No. 03-123 (Jan. 25, 2006) (*Snap Application*).

² "Telecommunications Relay Service" (TRS), created by Title IV of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), enables an individual with a hearing or speech disability to communicate by telephone or other device through the telephone system with a person without such a disability. *See* 47 U.S.C. § 225(a)(3) (defining TRS); 47 C.F.R. § 64.601(14). Video Relay Service is an Internet-based form of TRS that, rather than using text, allows people with hearing or speech disabilities who use sign language to communicate with voice telephone users through video equipment. The video link allows the CA to view and interpret the party's signed conversation and relay the conversation back and forth with a voice caller. *See* 47 C.F.R. § 64.601(12). The Interstate TRS Fund compensates eligible providers of VRS and other forms of VRS for their costs of providing TRS. *See* 47 C.F.R. § 64.604(c)(5)(iii).

³ *See Telecommunications Relay Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities*, CG Docket No. 03-123, Report and Order and Order on Reconsideration, FCC 05-203 (Dec. 12, 2005) (*2005 VRS Provider Order*); 47 C.F.R. § 64.605(a)(2). The rules also apply to providers seeking to offer Internet Protocol (IP) Relay. Prior to the *2005 VRS Provider Order*, an entity desiring to offer TRS and receive compensation from the Fund had to meet one of the three eligibility standards set forth in 47 C.F.R. § 64.604(c)(5)(iii)(F).

⁴ *2005 VRS Provider Order, supra*.

applicable to each form of TRS offered; (iii) a description of the provider's procedures for ensuring compliance with all applicable TRS rules; (iv) a description of the provider's complaint procedures; (v) a narrative describing any areas in which the provider's service will differ from the applicable mandatory minimum standards; (vi) a narrative establishing that services that differ from the mandatory minimum standards do not violate applicable mandatory minimum standards; (vii) demonstration of status as a common carrier; and (viii) a statement that the provider will file annual compliance reports demonstrating continued compliance with these rules.[⁵]

The rules further provide that after review of the submitted documentation, the Commission shall certify that the VRS provider is eligible for compensation from the Fund if the Commission determines that the certification documentation:

- (i) establishes that the provision of VRS ... will meet or exceed all non-waived operational, technical, and functional minimum standards contained in § 64.604;
- (ii) establishes that the VRS ... provider makes available adequate procedures and remedies for ensuring compliance with the requirements of this section and the mandatory minimum standards contained in § 64.604, including that it makes available for TRS users informational materials on complaint procedures sufficient for users to know the proper procedures for filing complaints; and
- (iii) where the TRS service differs from the mandatory minimum standards contained in § 64.604, the VRS ... provider establishes that its service does not violate applicable mandatory minimum standards.[⁶]

We have reviewed Snap's application pursuant to these rules. We conclude that Snap has demonstrated that its provision of VRS service will meet or exceed all operational, technical, and functional TRS standards set forth in the Commission's rules, 47 C.F.R. § 64.604; that it makes available adequate procedures and remedies for ensuring compliance with applicable Commission rules; and that to the extent Snap's service differs from the mandatory minimum standards, the service does not violate the rules.⁷

We also note, however, that Snap indicates that it plans to offer service only via a particular Internet protocol that, without translation, is not interoperable with videophone devices employed by other VRS providers.⁸ We note that the Commission has adopted a declaratory ruling requiring the interoperability of VRS equipment and service.⁹ We condition this grant of certification upon compliance with that order.¹⁰

⁵ 47 C.F.R. § 64.605(a)(2).

⁶ 47 C.F.R. § 64.605(b)(2).

⁷ See, e.g., *Snap Application* at 14 (noting that Snap will offer picture caller ID).

⁸ See generally *Snap Application* at 6 (noting the H.323 and SIP Internet standards); Snap *ex parte* letter, CG Docket No. 03-123 (filed March 31, 2006); Snap *ex parte* letter, CG Docket No. 03-123 (filed March 22, 2006).

⁹ See *Telecommunications Relay Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities*, CG Docket No. 03-123, Declaratory Ruling and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, FCC 06-57 (adopted May 3, 2006)(addressing California Coalition of Agencies Serving the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CCASDHH), *Petition for Declaratory Ruling on Interoperability*, CC Docket No. 98-67, CG Docket No. 03-123 (filed Feb. 15, 2005)).

¹⁰ See also 47 C.F.R. § 64.605(e)(2) (Commission may require certified providers to submit documentation demonstrating compliance with the mandatory minimum standards). Further, Snap must file an annual report with

This certification, as conditioned herein, shall remain in effect for a period of five years from the release date of this PN.¹¹ Within ninety days prior to the expiration of this certification, Snap may apply for renewal of its VRS service certification by filing documentation in accordance with the Commission's rules.¹²

A copy of Snap's application is available for public inspection and copying during regular business hours at the FCC Reference Information Center, Portals II, 445 12th Street, SW., Suite CY-A257, Washington, D.C. 20554, (202) 418-0270. The full text of this *Public Notice* is similarly available for public inspection or copying. These documents may also be purchased from the Commission's duplicating contractor, Best Copy and Printing, Inc. (BCPI), Portals II, 445 12th Street, SW., Room CY-B402, Washington, D.C. 20554. Customers may contact BCPI at their web site: www.bcpweb.com or by calling 1-800-378-3160. A copy of Snap's application may also be found by searching on the Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) at <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/ecfs> (insert CG Docket No. 03-123 into the Proceeding block).

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For further information, please contact Gregory Hlibok, Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau, Disability Rights Office, at (866) 410-5787 x16757 (voice), (202) 418-0431 (TTY), or e-mail at Gregory.Hlibok@fcc.gov.

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the Commission evidencing that they are in compliance with Section 64.604. 47 C.F.R. § 64.605(g). The first such report shall be due one year after the release date of this *Public Notice*, and subsequent reports shall be due each year thereafter.

¹¹ See 47 C.F.R. § 64.605(e)(2).

¹² See *id.*