

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2007

SENATE BILL 834
RATIFIED BILL

AN ACT TO CLARIFY THE DIVISION OF SERVICES FOR THE DEAF AND
HARD OF HEARING COMMUNICATION SERVICES PROGRAM AND TO
UPDATE THE LANGUAGE IN THE STATUTE TO CONFORM TO THE
TERMINOLOGY USED IN THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 143B-216.34 reads as rewritten:

"§ 143B-216.34. **Division of Services for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing –
~~communication services~~temporary loan program established.**

(a) There is established a ~~communications services~~ an assistive equipment loan program for the deaf, hard of hearing, and speech impaired to be developed, administered, and implemented by the Division of Services for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing. The assistive equipment loan program supplements the telecommunications equipment distribution program established pursuant to G.S. 62-157.

(b) The Division shall develop rules ~~to implement a schedule for the purchase and distribution of the telecommunications devices and for the distribution of the communications and alerting equipment necessary to implement the communications services program~~ and shall determine performance standards. The Division shall establish by rule performance standards for TDDs, ring signaling devices, and volume control handsets. The Division shall select equipment to be purchased for distribution to qualifying recipients. The equipment discussed in this section shall be subleased-leased at no cost to qualifying recipients for a period of time not exceeding five years up to and not exceeding two years. Nothing herein shall be construed to prevent the renewal of any lease previously executed with a qualified recipient. In addition, the Division shall provide consultative services and training to those individuals and organizations utilizing communications and alerting equipment pursuant to this section.

(c) The central communications office of each county sheriff's department shall purchase and continually operate at least one ~~TDD~~ telecommunications device that is functionally equivalent in providing equal access to services for individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind, and speech impaired.

The central communications office of each police department and firefighting agency in municipalities with a population of 25,000 to 250,000 shall purchase and continually operate at least one ~~TDD~~ such device.

The central communications office of each police department and firefighting agency in municipalities with a population exceeding 250,000 persons shall purchase and continually operate at least two ~~TDDs~~ such devices.

~~At least one hospital in each county shall purchase and continually operate at least one TDD.~~

~~Each 911 emergency number system and each agency receiving automatically routed calls through a 911 emergency system shall purchase and continually operate at least one TDD.~~

(d) ~~Each public safety office, health care provider, and 911 emergency number system required to obtain a TDD pursuant to this section shall continually operate and staff such equipment on a 24-hour basis as follows:~~

- (1) ~~Offices and organizations required to purchase TDDs pursuant to this section may buy such equipment from the Division, or from private vendors who can supply devices identical to or compatible with those selected by the Division at a lower price than the Division offers.~~
- (2) ~~The purchase price imposed on such offices and organizations by the Division shall not exceed the actual per unit cost including shipping and storage charges."~~

Each public safety office, health care facility (including hospitals and urgent care facilities), and the 911 emergency number system is required to obtain a telecommunications device that is functionally equivalent in providing equal access to services for individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, and speech impaired pursuant to this section and shall continually operate and staff the equipment during hours of operation, including up to 24 hours."

SECTION 2. This act is effective when it becomes law.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 21st day of June, 2007.

Beverly E. Perdue
President of the Senate

Joe Hackney
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Michael F. Easley
Governor

Approved _____ .m. this _____ day of _____, 2007