

**RCW 43.20A.720 Telecommunications devices and services for the hearing and speech impaired—Definitions.** Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the definitions in this section apply throughout this section and RCW 43.20A.725.

(1) "Hearing impaired" means those persons who are certified to be deaf, deaf-blind, or hard of hearing, and those persons who are certified to have a hearing disability limiting their access to telecommunications.

(2) "Speech impaired" means persons who are certified to be unable to speak or who are certified to have a speech impairment limiting their access to telecommunications.

(3) "Department" means the department of social and health services.

(4) "Office" means the office of deaf and hard of hearing within the state department of social and health services. [2001 c 210 § 1; 1992 c 144 § 2; 1990 c 89 § 2; 1987 c 304 § 2.]

**Legislative findings—1992 c 144:** "The legislature finds that the state of Washington has shown national leadership in providing telecommunications access for the hearing impaired and speech impaired communities. The legislature further finds that the federal Americans with Disabilities Act requires states to further enhance telecommunications access for disabled persons and that the state should be positioned to allow this service to be delivered with fairness, flexibility, and efficiency." [1992 c 144 § 1.]

**Severability—1992 c 144:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1992 c 144 § 6.]

**Legislative finding—1990 c 89:** "The legislature finds that provision of telecommunications devices and relay capability for hearing impaired persons is an effective and needed service which should be continued. The legislature further finds that the same devices and relay capability can serve and should be extended to serve speech impaired persons." [1990 c 89 § 1.]

**Legislative findings—1987 c 304:** "The legislature finds that it is more difficult for hearing impaired people to have access to the telecommunications system than hearing persons. It is imperative that hearing impaired people be able to reach government offices and health, human, and emergency services with the same ease as other taxpayers. Regulations to provide telecommunications devices for the deaf with a relay system will help ensure that the hearing impaired community has equal access to the public accommodations and telecommunications system in the state of Washington in accordance with chapter 49.60 RCW." [1987 c 304 § 1.]

**Relation to other telecommunications device systems—1987 c 304:** "Nothing in RCW 43.20A.725 and 43.20A.730 is inconsistent with any telecommunications device systems created by county legislative authorities under RCW 70.54.180. To the extent possible, the office, utilities and transportation commission, the TDD advisory committee, and any other persons or organizations implementing the provisions of RCW 43.20A.725 and 43.20A.730 will use the telecommunications devices

already in place and work with county governments in ensuring that no duplication of services occurs." [1987 c 304 § 5.]

**Short title—1987 c 304:** "This act shall be known as the "Clyde Randolph Ketchum Act"." [1987 c 304 § 6.]