



California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA ADVISORY

Docket #: R.23-11-001

You're Invited: CPUC Public Forums on Enhancements to the Deaf and Disabled Telecommunications Program

SAN FRANCISCO, July 31, 2024 – The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) will hold eight remote and in-person Public Forums to consider revisions and updates to the [Deaf and Disabled Telecommunications Program](#) (DDTP). This is an opportunity for the public, including those participating and those eligible for DDTP, to communicate directly with the CPUC regarding the issues raised in the CPUC's DDTP proceeding.

When: The schedule and location information for the in-person and virtual Public Forums is as follows:

When	Format	Location
August 15, 2024 2 p.m. and 6 p.m.	In-person only	<i>Northern California</i> Roseville City Council Chambers 311 Vernon St. Roseville
September 4, 2024 2 p.m. and 6 p.m.	In-person only	<i>Southern California</i> Buena Park City Council Chambers 6650 Beach Blvd. Buena Park
September 11, 2024 2 p.m. and 6 p.m.	In-person only	<i>Central California</i> Clovis City Council Chambers 1033 5 th St. Clovis
September 17, 2024 2 p.m. and 6 p.m.	Virtual only	- Webcast: https://www.adminmonitor.com/ca/cpu c/

		-Phone: 800-857-1917 Passcode: 6032788#
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What: Public Forum to consider revisions and updates to the DDTP.

Where: In person locations:

- Roseville City Council Chambers 311 Vernon St., Roseville, CA 95678
- Buena Park City Council Chambers 6650 Beach Blvd., Buena Park, CA 90621
- Clovis City Council Chambers 1033 5th St., Clovis, CA 93612
- For virtual only:
 - English call-in number to comment publicly and/or listen: 800-857-1917, passcode 6032788#
 - [Website to watch the Public Forum](#) (must call in to make public comment)

How to Make Comment:

- **Call In:** Use the telephone number above to comment publicly during the Remote Public Forums.
 - Participants who wish to speak must press “star one,” unmute their phone, and record their name. This will alert the operator who will put the speakers into a queue and announce each speaker’s name one at a time when the speaker’s turn comes up. When it is time for public comment, the Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) will make an announcement through the telephone line for those who wish to speak.
- **Send Us Your Written Comments:** Submit your comments anytime, and read the comments of others, at: apps.cpuc.ca.gov/c/R2311001.

Accommodations:

- American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation will be available at all of the in-person Public Forums.
- For the remote Public Forums, ASL will be view only (one-way) via our [webcast stream](#); those who want to make a comment in ASL at the remote Public Forums should contact the CPUC’s Public Advisor’s Office at public.advisor@cpuc.ca.gov or call toll free at 866-849-8390 at least five business days in advance of the remote Public Forum.

- To make a request for other language or accommodation at any of the Public Forums events, please contact the CPUC’s Public Advisor’s Office at public.advisor@cpuc.ca.gov or call toll free 866-849-8390 at least five business days in advance of the Public Forums.

About the DDTP: The CPUC established the DDTP through a series of decisions issued in the 1970s and 1980s. Initially, the DDTP provided specialized telecommunications equipment to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. Over time, the program was expanded to include other disability groups facing functional difficulties using the phone. The provisions governing the DDTP are found in the [California Public Utilities Code Section 2881](#).

Key Services and Offerings of the DDTP:

- **Equipment Distribution Program**
 - Provides specialized telecommunications equipment at no cost to individuals with functional limitations related to hearing, vision, movement, manipulation, speech, and interpretation of information.
- **California Relay Service (CRS)**
 - Offers services to individuals with hearing or speaking limitations, providing access to specially trained communications assistants who can relay telephone conversations.
- **Augmentative and Assistive Communication (AAC) Program**
 - Funds Speech Generating Devices (SGD) as the provider of last resort and distributes iPads with applications that enable them to function as SGDs, helping individuals with severe speech impairments to communicate verbally.

Public Utilities Code Section 2881(k) mandates the CPUC to continually assess the DDTP and, if necessary, expand its scope to enhance access capabilities in line with evolving telecommunications policies. To fulfill this mandate, the CPUC’s Communications Division (CD) staff conducted a needs assessment to gather information on challenges faced by the deaf and disabled community. As a result, the CPUC initiated [Rulemaking 23-11-001](#). This Rulemaking process invites the public to review and comment on the [Needs Assessment Report](#) and provide input on modernizing the DDTP. Considering the evolving communications landscape, participants’ needs, and advancements in telecommunication technologies, this Rulemaking will evaluate potential updates to better serve the disability community.

Join Us

The CPUC welcomes attendance and comments at the Public Forums (formally called a Public Participation Hearing), as public comments help the CPUC reach an informed decision.

No official action will be taken on this matter at the Public Forum.

For more information, please see our [Public Forum webpage](#).

To receive electronic updates on CPUC proceedings, sign-up for the CPUC's free [subscription service](#).

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About the California Public Utilities Commission

The CPUC regulates services and utilities, protects consumers, safeguards the environment, and assures Californians access to safe and reliable utility infrastructure and services. Visit www.cpuc.ca.gov for more information.