

# Heroes With Hearing Loss®



## Veterans Service Officer FAQ

### What is the Heroes With Hearing Loss (HWHL) program?

The mission of the Heroes With Hearing Loss program is to raise awareness and begin conversations about shared hearing loss experiences among veterans, their families and friends. It is specifically designed to provide insightful solutions and successful lifestyle-focused results. This is accomplished by introducing veterans to resources, products, services and hearing loss management techniques that best meet their individual needs.

Heroes With Hearing Loss is provided by Hamilton® CapTel® – a service that allows individuals who experience difficulty hearing on the phone to listen while reading captions of their conversations. Hamilton CapTel offers a captioned telephone at no cost\* to eligible veterans (and their spouses) with hearing loss.

Hamilton CapTel launched the Heroes With Hearing Loss program in response to the epidemic of hearing loss injuries among veterans returning from operations in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as the increase in hearing loss issues faced by our aging veteran population from World War II, Korea, and Vietnam eras.

### How exactly does the HWHL program help veterans?

In short, the HWHL program puts veterans in touch with other veterans and veterans' advocates to share real-life solutions toward overcoming the daily challenges of hearing loss. Heroes With Hearing Loss works to locate and compile a variety of resources, techniques, and

technology-based solutions (such as a captioned telephone) to share with veterans via national and local events, online presence, and media avenues.

### How can VSOs help?

Struggling to effectively communicate over the phone with family and friends can make anyone feel frustrated, isolated, and out of touch. This can be particularly challenging for veterans who experience hearing loss alongside other physical or mental scars, as a result of their service to our country.

**As a Veterans Service Officer, you can bring life-changing benefits of a captioned telephone to your veterans – allowing them to receive a phone at no cost\* by simply certifying their hearing loss on one simple form.**

### What are some of the features and benefits of the Hamilton CapTel phone?

- Fast, accurate captions displayed at nearly real-time show what the other person is saying
- Amplified handset with tone control to adjust voices to different pitches
- Integrated answering machine “captions” voice messages
- Up to 500 lines of conversations are stored that provide the ability to review later
- Speakerphone (2400i model)
- Conveniently store contacts in the phone book menu
- Save favorite contacts to a speed dial list
- Adjust background and font colors
- Adjust font size
- Bluetooth® technology (2400i model)

\*Independent third-party professional certification required.

FEDERAL LAW PROHIBITS ANYONE BUT REGISTERED USERS WITH HEARING LOSS FROM USING INTERNET PROTOCOL (IP) CAPTIONED TELEPHONES WITH THE CAPTIONS TURNED ON. IP Captioned Telephone Service may use a live operator. The operator generates captions of what the other party to the call says. These captions are then sent to your phone. There is a cost for each minute of captions generated, paid from a federally administered fund. To learn more, visit [fcc.gov](http://fcc.gov).

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## How can a veteran get a captioned telephone?

U.S. military veterans with documented hearing loss are eligible to receive a captioned telephone at no cost.\* A Certificate of Hearing Loss Form, completed by an independent third-party professional that can verify the veteran's hearing loss, is required. Examples of third-party professionals include: audiologists, doctors, hearing-related professionals, and government/veterans programs. VSOs/NSOs are qualified to certify a veteran's hearing loss by simply reviewing the veteran's VA records to verify they have hearing loss. The Certificate of Hearing Loss Form can be downloaded online at [HeroesWithHearingLoss.org](http://HeroesWithHearingLoss.org). To receive pre-printed forms directly to your office, call **800-974-1517**.

## Does a Veteran's hearing loss need to be service connected?

No. HWHL is not governed by the VA system, nor does the ordering process involve the VA. Therefore, a veteran's hearing loss need only be certified by a third-party professional (such as a VSO) – the hearing loss does not need to be service connected, nor does it need to be a certain level of loss.

## Are surviving spouses of a deceased veteran eligible to receive a phone at no cost?\*

Absolutely! We are happy to provide the same service to the widow or widower of any veteran. To receive the Hamilton CapTel phone at no cost\*, they would need their hearing healthcare professional to complete a Certificate of Hearing Loss Form certifying they have hearing loss.

## Are there other requirements for using the phone?

Yes – telephone service and high-speed Internet access are required to use the CapTel phone. There are non-Internet based phones, which may be available at no cost depending on certain factors, as well as no-cost



Hamilton CapTel 2400i

apps for computers, smartphones, and tablets. Please call us at **800-974-1517** to explore all of our options!

## What if a veteran needs help installing the phone?

Hamilton CapTel phones easily connect to telephone and Internet services and many veterans install the phone themselves, or with the support of a family member. Others may choose to take advantage of our complimentary installation assistance – available over the phone or in-person in most areas.

## Are active duty military members eligible?

Yes! We are happy to provide the same services to those who are currently serving on active duty.

## Can a VSO get a demo phone for their office?

Yes! A VSO can easily request a no-cost demo phone for their office. Simply call **800-974-1517** and indicate that you're a VSO interested in the Heroes With Hearing Loss program. Demo phones are already sitting in hundreds of VSO offices across the nation.

## Can the demo phone make live calls?

Yes! The demo phone can display captioning of a live call or be placed in "demo mode," where a sample conversation appears on the screen to show how captions will appear.

## Please contact us with any questions:

**800-974-1517**

[HeroesWithHearingLoss.org](http://HeroesWithHearingLoss.org)

Third-party charges may apply: the Hamilton CapTel phone requires telephone service and high-speed Internet access. Wi-Fi capable. Voice and data plans may be required when using Hamilton CapTel on a smartphone or tablet. Third-party trademarks mentioned are the property of their respective owners.