

# Commission Seeks Comment on TTY-RTT Transition

May 31, 2016



The Federal Communications Commission's (FCC or the Commission) [Notice of Proposed Rulemaking](#) (NPRM) on the transition from text telephone (TTY) to real-time text (RTT) was published in the Federal Register on May 25, 2016, which triggers comment and reply deadlines of **July 11** and **July 25**. The Commission proposes to amend its rules to replace the obligations of wireless service providers and equipment manufacturers to support TTY technology with obligations that these entities support RTT over IP-based wireless voice services. The proposal requires RTT to be interoperable across networks and backwards compatible with TTY technology. The Commission proposes that larger Tier I wireless providers must implement RTT by **December 31, 2017**, and **seeks comment on an appropriate timeline for smaller providers (i.e., non-nationwide carriers)**.

The NPRM was adopted at the FCC's open meeting on April 28, 2016 and seeks comment on proposals to transition from "outdated" TTY technology, which requires users to buy a stand-alone device, to RTT, which uses off-the-shelf technology. RTT allows individuals with and without disabilities to communicate directly with one another, using text on a voice line. Among the questions on which the FCC seeks comment is whether to require certain features, such as 911 access and conference calling and the appropriate deadline for smaller providers to comply, including **whether to have a separate deadline for Tier II (non-nationwide but with more than 500,000 subscribers) and Tier III (fewer than 500,000 subscribers)**. Other areas for comment include the full range of technical capabilities of RTT devices, and the best approach to consumer outreach and education.

This proceeding resulted from the Commission's grant of [temporary waivers](#) for AT&T and Verizon to substitute TTY with RTT last year. AT&T had also filed a petition for rulemaking on the issue.