



The Corrections Innovation Leader

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GTL and Purple Communications Partner to Launch Video Relay Service (VRS) for Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing Inmates

VRS provides video calls - meeting the unique needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing inmates

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Reston, Virginia – June 14, 2016 – Global Tel*Link ([GTL](#)), the leading provider of correctional technology solutions and an innovator in payment services solutions for government, today announced a partnership with Purple Communications, Inc., to empower deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals who are incarcerated with a new Video Relay Service (VRS).

Discussions began in late 2014 as GTL understood our customers needed to meet the unique needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals in facilities who were not familiar with traditional Text Telephone/Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TTY/TDD) devices. In response to both our customer and inmate requests, GTL began to forge partnerships with existing VRS providers. Purple Communications was chosen as a partner not only for their vast experience in the corrections industry but also because of their willingness to adapt their VRS applications to GTL's stringent security standards. By integrating their hardware and software solutions, GTL and Purple can offer deaf and hard-of-hearing inmates a state-of-the-art VRS service which supplants outdated TTY/TDD services.

The FCC currently only requires Inmate Calling Services (ICS) providers like GTL to provide deaf and hard-of-hearing inmates with teletypewriter (TTY) devices; however, GTL's new VRS service goes above and beyond those FCC requirements by providing a video service and a live person to sign on behalf of deaf or hard-of-hearing inmates. We believe this further strengthens our position in the industry, as not only a technological innovator but also an industry thought leader.

Purple Communications has made VRS simple for everyone to use. Essentially, when a deaf or hard-of-hearing individual attempts to make a phone call, they dial the number which is already registered with Purple and the number then rings into a phone with a Purple application (a lot like Skype,) so people who know sign language can sign to each other directly.

Additionally, in situations where a deaf or hard-of-hearing inmate dials a voice telephone user, they are connected to Purple's Relay Service and an interpreter appears on the screen. At that point this interpreter relays the call between the parties, using sign language with the inmate and voice with the hearing party. These interpreters serve as the intermediary and provide 24/7 VRS service in both English and Spanish. VRS calls may also be recorded and monitored to ensure security and safety. Currently, GTL is providing VRS service in three state DOC's and several counties across the nation.



Photo Description: The VRS application is simple and easy to use. Using GTL’s multipurpose Flex® Link video terminal, the inmate selects the VRS app and dials the called party; all subsequent steps are automated. The system knows if the called number is registered to another VRS user and if so connects the individuals via video directly. If the called number is not a registered VRS phone number a video interpreter automatically appears on the inmate screen so the interpreter can sign with the inmate and speak with the called party.

“Many deaf and hard-of-hearing inmates were simply not familiar with the TTY devices and were unable to communicate with lawyers and family members. Imagine being in jail and in a place where no one can speak your language. GTL’s VRS product removes that barrier and restores the line of communication many of these inmates have been lacking for, in some cases, years,” said Brian Peters, Executive Director of Inmate Applications and Hardware at GTL. “We spent nearly two years working with our industry partners to create a secure VRS solution we are all proud of. To see the smiles on the faces of both the inmates and the family members when using this technology is priceless.”

For more information or to receive a demonstration of this technology [contact GTL](#) today. This new VRS solution will also be demonstrated by GTL in booth #822 at the [National Sheriffs’ Association’s Annual Conference and Exhibition](#) in Minneapolis, Minnesota, June 26-28.

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About Global Tel*Link

GTL is the leading provider of integrated correctional technology solutions, delivering financial value, security, and ease of operation to our customers through visionary products and solutions at the forefront of corrections innovation. As a trusted correctional industry leader, GTL provides service to approximately fifty percent of inmates nationwide, including service to 33 state departments of corrections, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and 32 of the largest city/county facilities. GTL is headquartered in Reston, Virginia, with more than 10 regional offices across the country. To find out more about GTL, please visit our website www.gtl.net. You can also view us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#).