

**PENNSYLVANIA
PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120**

Public Meeting held February 19, 2026

Commissioners Present:

Stephen M. DeFrank, Chairman
Kimberly Barrow, Vice Chair
Kathryn L. Zerfuss
John F. Coleman, Jr.
Ralph V. Yanora

Pennsylvania Telecommunications Relay
Service Advisory Board

M-00900239

OPINION AND ORDER

BY THE COMMISSION:

The Pennsylvania Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) is a communications service regulated by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (Commission) that offers a person with disabilities the ability to communicate “by wire or radio with a hearing individual in a manner that is functionally equivalent to the ability of a person who does not have a disability to communicate using voice communication services by wire or radio,” *i.e.*, access to the Public Switched Telephone Network in the same manner as a person without disability.¹ TRS offers persons, who are deaf, hearing, or speech impaired, three ways to connect to the service using various means: Traditional Telephone Relay, Video Relay and Internet Relay. Users who access TRS by telephone simply dial 7-1-1 to connect to a skillfully-trained Communications Assistant (CA) who follows a strict code of ethics and confidentiality for telephone TRS communications.

¹35 P.S. § 6701.2; *see also* 35 P.S. § 6701.4.

The CA then relays messages to the other person. TRS is available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

By Order entered May 29, 1990 (*May 29, 1990 Order*), the Commission established the Telecommunications Relay Service Advisory Board (TRS Advisory Board) for the purpose of reviewing the success of TRS in Pennsylvania. The TRS Advisory Board was also assigned the task of identifying any additional improvements which might need to be implemented to ensure the continued success of the TRS program. The TRS Advisory Board is composed of the following representatives: Hamilton Relay Inc. (Hamilton Relay) (1 representative who may serve unlimited terms); Hamilton Telephone Company d/b/a Hamilton Telecommunications (Hamilton Telephone) (1 representative who may serve unlimited terms);² the Pennsylvania Telephone Association (1 representative who may serve unlimited terms); the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry's Office for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing (ODHH) (1 representative who may serve unlimited terms), and from the community of persons who are, or who have experience with, people who are deaf or hard of hearing, or those with language and speech disorders (7 representatives who may serve an unlimited number of two-year terms, subject to reappointment by the Commission).³ The TRS Advisory Board meets quarterly in Harrisburg and functions as a user group providing guidance in such areas as problem solving and future enhancements.

² Hamilton Relay is the certificated jurisdictional provider for intrastate TRS in the Commonwealth. *See* Docket No. A-2014-2447601. Hamilton Telephone is the contractual provider for intrastate Captioned Telephone Relay Service in the Commonwealth. *See* Docket No. A-311355.

³ During its regular quarterly meeting held on March 1, 2023, the TRS Advisory Board amended its Bylaws to include, *inter alia*, the expansion of the number of terms the community representatives may serve from up to three, two-year terms, to an unlimited number of two-year terms, subject to renewed appointment by the Commission. To avoid the appearance of co-mingling advisory and adjudicatory functions, the TRS Advisory Board's amendments to its Bylaws also clarified that the two representatives from the Commission will no longer serve as voting members of the TRS Advisory Board, but as staff providing technical support.

The TRS Advisory Board By-Laws provide for 7 representatives from the community of persons who are, or who have experience with, people who are deaf or hard of hearing, or those with language and speech disorders, to serve on the TRS Advisory Board. The nominee for the TRS Advisory Board for the two-year term ending February 19, 2028, is Amy S. Goldman. This is Ms. Goldman's fourth consecutive appointment as a community representative to the TRS Advisory Board for a term of at least two years, her first approved by Commission Order entered December 9, 2016, the second by Commission Order entered March 28, 2019, and the third by Commission Order entered April 15, 2021, all at this Docket Number.

Ms. Goldman is a current TRS Advisory Board member whose most recent two-year term expired on January 31, 2023.⁴ Ms. Goldman's credentials and resume are well known to the Commission. As noted in our two prior orders, from 2012 to 2016, Ms. Goldman was an Associate Professor, Special Education Program, Department of Psychology, Organization, and Leadership Studies College of Education, Temple University. Ms. Goldman has also been involved through the Temple University Institute on Disabilities with the actual administration of Pennsylvania's Telecommunications Device Distribution Program (TDDP).⁵ As noted, Ms. Goldman has also served on the TRS Advisory Board in various capacities, including Secretary. She is a speech-language pathologist whose career has focused on how technology empowers people with significant speech impairments. She has conducted training on the importance of telecommunications for people with communication disabilities, both pre-service and continuing education, with an emphasis for transitioning youth. Her accomplishments also include providing testimony to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) on access to telecommunications for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

⁴ Due to administrative oversight resulting from internal staffing changes concerning the TRS Advisory Board, Ms. Goldman's most recent term officially ending January 31, 2023 was not renewed with a subsequent Commission Order. In the interim, however, Ms. Goldman has continued to serve as a member of the TRS Advisory Board, alternating positions as Chairperson and Secretary.

⁵ See generally 35 P.S. § 6701.3.

Ms. Goldman's expertise, input, and continued service to the TRS Advisory Board would prove beneficial to the TRS Advisory Board; **THEREFORE,**

IT IS ORDERED:

1. That the appointment of Ms. Amy S. Goldman to the Pennsylvania Telecommunications Relay Service Advisory Board for the two-year term ending February 19, 2028 is approved.
2. That a copy of this Opinion and Order be served on Amy S. Goldman.

BY THE COMMISSION,



Matthew Homsher
Secretary

(SEAL)

ORDER ADOPTED: February 19, 2026

ORDER ENTERED: February 19, 2026