

## **STANDARD COVID-19 RESPONSE FAQ TO TELECOMMUNICATIONS PROVIDERS FOR MASSACHUSETTS RESIDENTS**

### **The FCC's Keep Americans Connected Pledge**

**Q. Did Charter sign the FCC's Keep Americans Connected Pledge?**

Charter has joined the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) Keep Americans Connected Pledge. The FCC's press releases are available here: <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-363033A1.pdf> and <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-364358A1.pdf>.

**Q. When did Charter's Pledge period start?**

On March 16, 2020, Charter commenced voluntary emergency relief measures, which included measures that go beyond the commitments made to the FCC.

**When does it end?**

Charter recently announced an extension of the voluntary commitments through June 30, 2020. (<https://policy.charter.com>).

**Q. Does Charter plan to extend the Pledge, or portions of the Pledge, at all?**

In March, we voluntarily committed to suspending collections, not charging late fees or terminating service for residential or small business customers who let us know they are experiencing Covid-19-related economic challenges, and we have extended this commitment through June 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **Shut Offs**

**Q. What is Charter's shut-off policy during the Pledge time period?**

In March, we voluntarily committed to not terminating service for residential or small business customers who let us know they are experiencing Covid-19-related economic challenges, and we have extended this commitment through June 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Q. How can I qualify to avoid having my service shut off?**

Residential or small business customers who are experiencing Covid-19-related economic challenges who contact us at 1-844-579-3743 to avoid service interruption.

**Q. Do I need to opt-in to the shut-off part of the Pledge or will I automatically be protected from shut offs?**

Residential or small business customers who are experiencing Covid-19-related economic challenges need to contact us at 1-844-579-3743 to avoid service interruptions.

**Q. I am behind on my bills, or I know I will not be able to pay my current or upcoming bill by the due date listed on my bill. I am worried my service will be shut off.**

**Do I need to contact Charter to prevent shut off, and if so, how can I contact the company?**

Residential or small business customers who are experiencing Covid-19-related economic challenges need to contact us at 1-844-579-3743 to avoid service interruptions.

**Q. My broadband and/or telephone service has been shut off.**

**How do I get my service turned back on?**

For inquiries about service restoration, call 1-844-579-3743.

**Q. I am unable to pay my bills during Charter's Pledge period.**

**When will I be expected to pay my unpaid bills once the Pledge period is over?**

Customers who contact Charter prior to June 30, 2020 and indicate that they are having difficulty paying their broadband and/or telephone service due to COVID-related financial hardship are eligible to have their payments deferred. Charter will defer customer payments through June 30, 2020, however during that time the balance will continue to accrue.

**Q. Will Charter offer a payment plan for my unpaid bills beginning now or once the Pledge period is over?**

Customers who contact Charter prior to June 30, 2020 and indicate that they are having difficulty paying their broadband and/or telephone service due to COVID-related financial hardship are eligible to have their payments deferred. Charter will defer customer payments through June 30, 2020, however during that time the balance will continue to accrue.

**Q. When will Charter begin shutting customers' service off again?**

In March, we committed to not terminating service for residential or small business customers who let us know they are experiencing Covid-19-related economic challenges, and we have extended this commitment through June 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Late Fees**

**Q. What is Charter's late-fee policy during the Pledge period?**

Beginning on March 16<sup>th</sup>, we committed to not charging late fees for residential or small business customers who let us know they are experiencing Covid-19-related economic challenges, and we have extended this commitment through June 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Q. How can I qualify for waived late fees?**

Residential or small business customers who are experiencing Covid-19-related economic challenges who contact us at 1-844-579-3743 to have their late fee waived.

**Q. Do I need to opt-in to the late-fee waiver part of the Pledge or will my late fees automatically be waived?**

Residential or small business customers who are experiencing Covid-19-related economic challenges who contact us at 1-844-579-3743 to request the waiver of late fees.

**Q. I am behind on my bills, or I know I will not be able to pay my current or upcoming bill by the due date listed on my bill. I am worried about late fees.**

**Do I need to contact Charter to seek waiver of any late fees. If so, how can I contact the company?**

Residential or small business customers who are experiencing Covid-19-related economic challenges who contact us at 1-844-579-3743 for the waiver of late fees.

**Q. When will Charter begin charging late fees again?**

Beginning on March 16<sup>th</sup>, we committed to not charging late fees for residential or small business customers who let us know they are experiencing Covid-19-related economic challenges, and we have extended this commitment through June 30<sup>th</sup>.

## **Changes in Broadband/Wireless Service**

**Q. Has Charter made any changes to its data caps or data speeds for my broadband/wireless service?**

Spectrum has no data caps on its internet or mobile services. We sell Spectrum Mobile by the gig and with an unlimited service plan. Spectrum Mobile service is available only to Spectrum Internet customers, which ensures our mobile customers have access to in-home broadband. Mobile customers offload most of their traffic to Wi-Fi service when they are home – which is most of the time during the pandemic – so their reliance on traditional mobile data is reduced regardless of which company provides it.

**Q. I'm worried that I can't pay my broadband/wireless bill by the due date.**

**Will I experience any change in my data caps or data speeds as a result?**

Spectrum Internet has no data caps and has no plans to change to its data speeds at this time.

Spectrum Mobile has no data caps and has no plan to change to its data speeds at this time. We sell Spectrum Mobile by the gig and with an unlimited plan. Spectrum Mobile service is available only to Spectrum Internet customers, which ensures our mobile customers have access to in-home broadband. Mobile customers offload most of their traffic to Wi-Fi service when they are home – which is most of the time during the pandemic – so their reliance on traditional mobile data is reduced regardless of which company provides it.

Customers who are experiencing Covid-19-related economic challenges can contact us at 1-844-579-3743 to avoid suspension of service.

**Q. More people are working from home and communicating online.**

**Does Charter have enough bandwidth to accommodate everyone? Will I experience any service issues as a result of this increased demand?**

Charter's network is built to sustain maximum capacity during peak evening usage (7PM-11PM), so the COVID-related surge we are experiencing during daytime hours is well within the network's capabilities to manage.

To better explain how changing customer demand is affecting network usage and performance, Charter has joined other providers to report key metrics during the pandemic that will better inform the public regarding usage trends and network performance. Information on how Charter and the cable industry's networks are performing in Massachusetts is available on the NCTA COVID dashboard at:  
<https://www.ncta.com/COVIDdashboard>

- Q. If Charter lowers my data caps or data speeds for any reason during this crisis, will Charter notify me?**

Spectrum does not have data caps on its internet or mobile services.

- Q. I am afraid I can no longer afford my current service plan with Charter, but I currently have a contract with Charter.**

**Will I be charged any fees for canceling my broadband/wireless service or switching to a less expensive plan?**

No Charter customer in Massachusetts is on a service contract. Customers are free to make changes at any time to their account. Wireless customers who cancel their internet account but keep their wireless account, however, will be subject to a \$20 increase to their wireless monthly bill.

- Q. I need to cancel my broadband/wireless service because I can no longer afford it due to this crisis.**

**Will Charter charge me a reinstallation or reconnection fee if I reestablish service in the future?**

Charter customers who have cancelled their services are subject to the same installation fee as new customers. Charter requires that any outstanding balances be paid prior to reconnection.

Charter customers, however, can avoid that installation fee on their broadband service if they place their account on a seasonal hold. There is a monthly charge associated with maintaining a seasonal hold on broadband service. Charter does not have a seasonal hold option for wireless service.

## **Cable Television**

- Q. I have cable service with Charter.**

**Does the Pledge apply to cable service as well?**

The Keep Americans Connected Pledge ensures Americans, and more specifically Charter's customers who contact us, do not lose broadband or telephone connectivity because of an inability to pay bills due to the disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Charter has extended its pledge to include video cable services.

**Q. I have bundled cable and broadband and/or telephone service with Charter.**

**If I am unable to pay my bills, will Charter shut off my cable service during the Pledge period?**

The Keep Americans Connected Pledge ensures Americans, and more specifically Charter's customers who contact us, do not lose broadband or telephone connectivity because of an inability to pay bills due to the disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Charter has extended its pledge to include video cable services. The pledge period runs through June 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Q. I live in an area where I cannot get access to digital channels over the airwaves, even with a digital antenna.**

**Will Charter keep me on basic service cable even if I am unable to pay my bills?**

The Keep Americans Connected Pledge ensures Americans, and more specifically Charter's customers who contact us, do not lose broadband or telephone connectivity because of an inability to pay bills due to the disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Charter has extended its pledge to include video cable services. The pledge period runs through June 30<sup>th</sup>. For households served by Charter any customer can subscribe to a basic service package that includes traditional, over the air digital broadcast channels.

**Q. I have bundled cable and broadband and/or telephone service with Charter, and I am worried about incurring late fees during this time.**

**Does the late-fee waiver in the Pledge apply to my bills, even though those include charges for cable service?**

Yes, however, residential or small business customers who are experiencing Covid-19-related economic challenges need to contact us at 1-844-579-3743 for waiver of late fees.

**Q. I can no longer afford my cable service plan, but I have a contract with Charter for this plan.**

**Will I be charged any fees for canceling my cable service or switching to a less expensive plan?**

No Charter customer in Massachusetts is on a service contract. Customers are free to make changes at any time to their account.

**Q. I can no longer afford my cable service plan due to this crisis.**

**Will Charter charge me a reinstallation or reconnection fee if I reestablish service in the future?**

Charter customers who have cancelled their services are subject to the same installation fee as new customers. Charter requires that any outstanding balances be paid prior to reconnection.

Charter customers, however, can avoid that installation fees for cable service if they place their account on a seasonal hold. There is a monthly charge associated with maintaining a seasonal hold.

**Q. I am still being charged a Regional Sports Fee as part of my cable bill, but no new sports are being broadcast.**

**Why am I still being charged this fee? Does Charter have any plans to reimburse me for this fee?**

Charter Spectrum does not charge a regional sports fee except in a small number of cases where customers remain on legacy Time Warner Cable packages, which has a nominal sports fee.

Charter continues to be charged for sports programming by the companies whose program channels we carry, despite the fact that no live games are being played. Ultimately, this is a decision for the leagues, teams, and program channels to resolve, but we have consistently said that, to the extent we receive any rebates for cancelled sports programming, we of course will pass them along to our customers.

**Cellphone Leasing/Purchase**

**Q. I currently pay Charter a monthly fee for the purchase/lease of my cellphone.**

**How does the Pledge affect these payments? Am I at risk of losing my cellphone if I cannot pay my bills?**

Mobile Customers who contact Charter prior to June 30, 2020 and indicate that they are having difficulty paying their mobile phone retail installment contract due to COVID-related financial hardship can be enrolled in Spectrum Mobile's Payment Deferral Plan.

This plan will defer the customer's payments but the balance will continue to accrue. Payments will resume on or after July 1, 2020.

**Q. My monthly cellphone purchase/lease payment is significant, and I am worried I will not be able to pay after the Pledge period is over.**

**Is Charter offering any payment plans related to cellphone purchase/lease amounts that weren't paid during the Pledge period?**

Mobile Customers who contact Charter prior to June 30, 2020 and indicate that they are having difficulty paying their mobile phone retail installment contract due to COVID-related financial hardship can be enrolled in Spectrum Mobile's Payment Deferral Plan.

This plan will defer the customer's payments but the balance will continue to accrue. Payments will resume on or after July 1, 2020.

**Q. I can no longer afford the monthly fee for the purchase/lease of my cellphone.**

**Am I able to trade in my current cellphone for a less expensive cellphone, and if so, will I be charged any type of termination or change fee?**

Customers that have paid 50% or more towards their mobile phone retail installment contract may trade in their cellphone for a less expensive cellphone and they will not be charged any type of termination fee.

Customers that have paid 50% or less towards their mobile phone retail installment contract may make a payment against the outstanding device balance to achieve the 50% pay-off requirement; the customer may then trade in their cellphone for a less expensive cellphone and they will not be charged any type of termination fee.

**Q. I can no longer afford the monthly fee for the purchase/lease of my cellphone.**

**Can I cancel my wireless service and return my cellphone to Charter without incurring any termination fee, change fee, or further monthly fees?**

A Charter customer that has purchased their cellphone may cancel their service at any time without paying a termination fee.

A Charter customer that has purchased a cellphone via a mobile phone retail installment contract may return the cellphone in accordance with Charter's Return Policy and receive a full refund. A Charter customer that purchased a cellphone via a mobile phone retail installment contract and is outside the Return Policy timeframe will need to pay for their cellphone in full.



## **Wi-Fi Hotspots**

**Q. Charter offered to open its Wi-Fi hotspots during the Pledge period.**

**What does this mean?**

Charter has opened its Wi-Fi hotspots across its footprint for public use through June 30<sup>th</sup>, which allows people who are not Spectrum customers to access these hotspots.

**Q. How can I locate the Wi-Fi hotspots that Charter is making publicly accessible during the Pledge period? Does Charter have a map available of all Wi-Fi hotspots?**

A map with all of the hotspot locations are available at [Spectrum.com/WiFi-Hotspots](https://www.spectrum.com/WiFi-Hotspots).

## **Low-Income Programs**

**Q. What current programs does Charter offer to low-income customers that need access to broadband and/or telephone services?**

Charter continues to offer [Spectrum Internet Assist](#), our high speed, low cost broadband program to any eligible low-income households.

**Q. Who qualifies for these broadband and/or telephone low-income assistance programs?**

To be eligible for Spectrum Internet Assist, one or more members of your household must be a recipient of one of the following assistance programs: National School Lunch Program (NSLP); Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) of the NSLP; or, Supplemental Security Income (for applicants age 65+ only).

**Q. How can I sign up for these broadband and/or telephone low-income assistance programs?**

Customers who believe they may qualify for Spectrum Internet Assist can learn more and/or download an application at [SpectrumInternetAssist.com](https://www.spectrum.com/InternetAssist) or may contact us at 1-844-579-3743. In order to make it easier to sign up for Charter's low-cost broadband program, Charter is testing and will soon implement online applications, including the ability to upload eligibility documentation, for Spectrum Internet Assist.

**Q. Does Charter offer any cable service packages for low-income households? If so, what are they?**

Charter offers a variety of tiers that allows customers to customize their video package to best meet their needs and budget. Charter's rate card (available at <https://www.spectrum.com/browse/content/ratecard>) outlines the different offerings we have available for Spectrum TV.

**Q. Does Charter participate as a provider in the FCC's Lifeline Program?**

Charter does not offer Lifeline services in the Commonwealth.

**Q. What benefits can I receive as a Charter customer through the Lifeline Program?**

N/A

**Q. I am a current Lifeline customer with Charter.**

**Will I be asked to certify or verify my Lifeline eligibility during the Pledge period?**

N/A

**Contacting Charter During COVID-19**

**Q. What is the best way to contact Charter with any questions or concerns during the COVID-19 crisis?**

Residential or small business customers should contact us at 1-844-579-3743.

In addition, below are electronic links to Charter's website communications for our residential, business and mobile customers:

**COVID-19 Update:**

<https://www.spectrum.net/support/internet/covid-19-information-spectrum-customers>

**Safety and Self Service:**

<https://www.spectrum.net/support/internet/safety-and-self-service-during-covid-19-0>

**Educational Offer:**

<https://www.spectrum.net/support/internet/coronavirus-covid-19-educational-internet-offer>

**Community Assistance:**

<https://www.spectrum.net/support/internet/covid-19-community-assistance>

**Store Locations:**

<https://www.spectrum.net/support/general/spectrum-store-locations>

**Contact Us:**

<https://www.spectrum.net/contact-us/>

***SpectrumBusiness.net***

**COVID-19 Information for Spectrum Business Customers:**

<https://www.spectrumbusiness.net/support/internet/coronavirus-covid-19-information-spectrum-businesscustomers>

**Safety and Self-Service:**

<https://www.spectrumbusiness.net/support/internet/safety-and-self-service-during-covid-19>

**Store Locator:**

<https://www.spectrumbusiness.net/support/billing/store-locator>

***SpectrumMobile.com***

**COVID-19 Update:**

<https://mobile.spectrum.com/support/article/360040980371/covid19-update>

**Spectrum Mobile Store Locator:**

<https://mobile.spectrum.com/support/article/360000128167/spectrum-mobile-store-locator>

**Spectrum WiFi Hotspots:**

<https://mobile.spectrum.com/support/article/360002063267/spectrum-wifi-hotspots>

**Connect to Spectrum WiFi Hotspots:**

<https://mobile.spectrum.com/support/article/360001952667/connect-to-spectrum-wifi-hotspots>

**Q. I am worried that customer service phone lines will be overloaded.**

**Does Charter offer live chat or other Internet-based assistance with live customer service personnel?**

Customers can download the [My Spectrum App](#) to access their accounts online, or use the Ask Spectrum Virtual Agent. Customer can also use [Spectrum.net](#) to manage their account and troubleshoot service. Spectrum Mobile customers can visit [mobile.spectrum.com/support](#) or download the [Spectrum Mobile Account App](#) for support and account management.

### **Technical Assistance and Social Distancing**

**Q. What precautions is Charter taking to maintain social distancing during service calls and at its stores?**

We have dramatically reduced the number of employees going into the field or into the office, while maintaining the efficacy of our business operations that is so critical to fighting this pandemic. We have implemented extra cleanings, we are staggering shift and break schedules and limiting trainings and meetings, and overall following CDC guidance.

We have also altered our field operations protocol by increasing educational efforts around customer self-installation and through proactive direct shipment of customer premises equipment, resulting in approximately 90% scheduled self-installations. Where a technician is required, the request is reviewed to ensure the work cannot be completed off-site and technicians will enter a customer residence only if customers confirm they are healthy and have had no known exposure to an individual diagnosed with Covid-19.

Additionally, our employees have received clear instructions to stay home if they are sick and we follow CDC recommendations for quarantining and other employee health and safety protocols.

### **Other Assistance Programs**

**Q. Is Charter offering any other programs or assistance to Massachusetts residents during the COVID-19 crisis? If so, what are they?**

Charter has donated significant airtime to run public service announcements and Spectrum News also opened its websites to ensure people have access to high-quality local news and information.

To give our customers more options for family-friendly content, Charter has provided Disney Junior, Disney XD, Game Show Network and UPTV at no additional charge to Spectrum TV customers who do not currently receive those channels for a limited time.

To energize America's small businesses as they reopen their doors and help restart the economy, Charter is providing one month of free services to any new customer that signs up

for Spectrum Business as their connectivity provider. And to help small business navigate the economic challenges brought on by this difficult time, Charter has rolled out new online tools and resources on the Spectrum Business website including links to the federal Small Business Administration's (SBA) various pandemic-related financial assistance programs. Charter is also working with SCORE, a nonprofit partner of the SBA, which has mentors and advisors to help business owners navigate SBA loans; the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act; or any other challenges business owners might be facing. Additionally, Spectrum Reach, the advertising arm for Charter, is working with local businesses to provide guidance and support, and has partnered with Waymark to offer a free 30-second video that any business can create and use on their website, share on social media, or use on television with a discounted TV advertising campaign.

**Q. What steps is Charter taking to help educators and students stay connected and to keep students learning during the COVID-19 crisis?**


Beginning on March 16, 2020 Charter committed to offer Spectrum Internet up to 100 Mbps (200 Mbps in most areas) for free, including in-home Wi-Fi and a self-installation kit, for 60 days to households with K-12 and/or college students or educators who do not already have a Spectrum Internet subscription, and recently announced that the offer has been extended through June 30<sup>th</sup>. Charter will partner with school districts to ensure local communities are aware of these tools to help students learn remotely. By the end of the school year, we expect that this offer will have helped approximately 400,000 students and teachers and their families continue schooling through remote learning. Those interested in enrolling should call 1-844-488-8395.

**Q. What steps is Charter taking to help health care workers stay connected to patients and incorporate telemedicine into their practice during the COVID-19 crisis?**

More than ever, telehealth services are having a dramatic and positive impact on healthcare throughout the country, which is why Charter's Spectrum Enterprise business focuses on delivering communications solutions to healthcare organizations of all sizes, including hospitals and emergency first responders. Through our reliable, secure fiber network, we help improve patient outcomes by accelerating access to critical health information through high-speed file transfer and increased application performance. Recognizing the vital importance of telehealth services during this COVID-19 crisis, Spectrum Enterprise has offered healthcare clients expedited temporary bandwidth upgrades to better help them meet their increased patient needs.

The FCC made \$200 million in funding available for its COVID-19 Telehealth Program, which helps eligible healthcare providers maximize their provision of connected care services

during the pandemic and Charter is eager to provide these services so that eligible health care providers can take advantage of this funding.



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