

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

Answered on **5-26-2020**

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

- Q. Did OpenCape sign the FCC's Keep Americans Connected Pledge?** Yes, we did sign it and even went above and beyond the pledge well before signing it. We offered all OpenCape customers free bandwidth upgrades regardless of the contracted size of their service. If they felt they needed more bandwidth to cope with COVID-19 we offered it 100% free of charge. We also offered financial assistance to any customers that was having difficulty with their bills, that included:
- a. No shut off
  - b. Elimination of 50% of any outstanding bills and reduction of service fee going forward
  - c. Ability to make no payments now if needed and up to 24 months to catch up after Pandemic passed
- Q. When did OpenCape's Pledge period start? When does it end?** Started March 12- Still in force
- Q. Does OpenCape plan to extend the Pledge, or portions of the Pledge, at all?** We will continue to honor that pledge for as long as is needed

**Shut Offs**

- Q. What is [company's] shut-off policy during the Pledge time period?** No shut off's unless requested
- Q. How can I qualify to avoid having my service shut off?** Simply contact OpenCape if having trouble 508-362-2224
- Q. Do I need to opt-in to the shut-off part of the Pledge or will I automatically be protected from shut offs?** Automatically
- 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 OpenCape to prevent shut off, and if so, how can I contact the company? 508-362-2224
- Q. My broadband and/or telephone service has been shut off.**
- How do I get my service turned back on? We have not shut anyone off
- Q. I am unable to pay my bills during OpenCape's Pledge period.**

**When will I be expected to pay my unpaid bills once the Pledge period is over?** 24 months 50% will be forgiven

- Q. Will OpenCape offer a payment plan for my unpaid bills beginning now or once the Pledge period is over?** Yes
- Q. When will OpenCape begin shutting customers' service off again?** Undecided as of yet, but we would give customers 30 days advance notice

### Late Fees

- Q. What is [company's] late-fee policy during the Pledge period?** Late Fees are waived
- Q. How can I qualify for waived late fees?** Simply request
- Q. Do I need to opt-in to the late-fee waiver part of the Pledge or will my late fees automatically be waived?** Automatic
- 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 [company] to seek waiver of any late fees. If so, how can I contact the company?** No need to contact company all late fees waived
- Q. When will [company] begin charging late fees again?** Undecided as of yet, but we would give customers 30 days advance notice

### Changes in Broadband/Wireless Service

- Q. Has [company] made any changes to its data caps or data speeds for my broadband/wireless service?** No Changes
- 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?** No
- Q. More people are working from home and communicating online.**  
**Does OpenCape have enough bandwidth to accommodate everyone? Will I experience any service issues as a result of this increased demand?** You will not experience any service deficiencies; we have plenty of bandwidth available
- Q. If [company] lowers my data caps or data speeds for any reason during this crisis, will [company] notify me?** We will not lower under any circumstance
- Q. I am afraid I can no longer afford my current service plan with OpenCape, but I currently have a contract with [company].**

Will I be charged any fees for canceling my broadband/wireless service or switching to a less expensive plan? **No fees for canceling**

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

Will [company] charge me a reinstallation or reconnection fee if I reestablish service in the future? **No**

**Cable Television OpenCape does not offer TV\_Service The questions below do not apply**

**Q. I have cable service with [company].**

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

**Q. I have bundled cable and broadband and/or telephone service with [company].**

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

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

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

**Q. I have bundled cable and broadband and/or telephone service with [company], 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?**

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

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

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

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

**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 [company] have any plans to reimburse me for this fee?**

**Cellphone Leasing/Purchase OpenCape does not offer Cellphone Leasing/Purchasing -  
The questions below do not apply**

- Q. I currently pay [company] 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?**
- 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 [company] offering any payment plans related to cellphone purchase/lease amounts that weren't paid during the Pledge period?**
- 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?**
- 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 [company] without incurring any termination fee, change fee, or further monthly fees?**

**Wi-Fi Hotspots**

- Q. OpenCape offered to open its Wi-Fi hotspots during the Pledge period. We do not have any hotspots, although we are working with the 33 libraries, we connect on the Cape to potentially pay for WIFI extenders to offer free WIFI in parking lots of libraries**  
**What does this mean?**
- Q. How can I locate the Wi-Fi hotspots that [company] is making publicly accessible during the Pledge period? Does [company] have a map available of all Wi-Fi hotspots? NA**

**Low-Income Programs**

- Q. What current programs does [company] offer to low-income customers that need access to broadband and/or telephone services? OpenCape does not currently offer residential services only enterprise, business and municipal**
- Q. Who qualifies for these broadband and/or telephone low-income assistance programs?NA**
- Q. How can I sign up for these broadband and/or telephone low-income assistance programs?NA**

- Q. Does [company] offer any cable service packages for low-income households? If so, what are they? **NA**
- Q. Does [company] participate as a provider in the FCC's Lifeline Program? **NA**
- Q. What benefits can I receive as a [company] customer through the Lifeline Program? **NA**
- Q. I am a current Lifeline customer with [company]. **NA**
- Will I be asked to certify or verify my Lifeline eligibility during the Pledge period? **NA**

#### **Contacting OpenCape During COVID-19**

- Q. What is the best way to contact [company] with any questions or concerns during the COVID-19 crisis? **508-362-2224 or info@opencape.org**
- Q. I am worried that customer service phone lines will be overloaded.
- Does [company] offer live chat or other Internet-based assistance with live customer service personnel? **NA**

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

- Q. What precautions is [company] taking to maintain social distancing during service calls and at its stores? **NO stores, we have suspended installations currently but will resume on June 1 following all best practices**

#### **Other Assistance Programs**

- Q. Is [company] offering any other programs or assistance to Massachusetts residents during the COVID-19 crisis? If so, what are they? **We offered all OpenCape customers free bandwidth upgrades regardless of the contracted size of their service. If they felt they needed more bandwidth to cope with COVID-19 we offered it 100% free of charge. We also offered financial assistance to any customers that was having difficulty with their bills, that included:**
- a. **No shut off**
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- Q. What steps is [company] taking to help educators and students stay connected and to keep students learning during the COVID-19 crisis? **OpenCape connects 17 of 19**

High Schools on Cape and an additional 40-50 middle/elementary schools. We offered all schools free bandwidth upgrades and are working with any other needs they request.

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

As we don't connect residents yet, the best we can do is make sure our medical clients have all the access they need