

**TRACFONE WIRELESS COVID-19 RESPONSES TO FAQ TO  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS PROVIDERS FOR MASSACHUSETTS RESIDENTS**

**Answered on June 4, 2020**

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

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

Yes.

While the Pledge does not apply to TracFone's prepaid customers because prepaid customers do not receive bills or incur late fees, TracFone is committed to the principles of the Pledge and has incorporated programs and policies to assist its prepaid customers maintain service during the COVID-19 crisis. For prepaid wireless service, TracFone's customers pay before service is initiated, and typically service runs for 30 days. If a TracFone prepaid customer has difficulty renewing their service, TracFone offers two different options for its customers so that they can maintain service: (1) if qualified, a customer can transition their prepaid service to TracFone's Lifeline service, branded as SafeLink; or (2) TracFone has two "bridge plans" that assist customers to extend their service. The first "bridge plan" is a 7-day plan for \$10 that provides the customer with unlimited voice minutes and texts and 5 GBs of data. The second "bridge plan" is a 15-day plan for \$20 that provides the customer with unlimited voice minutes and texts and 10 GBs of data.

In addition, TracFone provides Lifeline service through its SafeLink brand and has provided enhanced services during COVID-19, such as unlimited voice and an additional 5 GBs of data (for a total of 8 GBs) per month. Customers can access details on SafeLink and its enhanced offerings here:  
<https://www.safelinkwireless.com/Enrollment/Safelink/en/Web/www/default/index.html#!/newHome>.

**Q. When did TracFone's Pledge period start? When does it end?**

On March 13, TracFone signed the Keep Americans Connected Pledge and committed to extend the Pledge to June 30.

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

On May 12, TracFone agreed to extend its Pledge commitments through June 30.

## **Shut Offs**

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

TracFone provides prepaid wireless service and wireless Lifeline service. TracFone does not send bills to its customers. As shared above, TracFone offers two options to prepaid customers to extend their service.

For Lifeline customers, see answers below.

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

See above.

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

See above.

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

See above.

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

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

See above.

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

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

See above.

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

See above.

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

See above.

## **Late Fees**

**Q. What is TracFone’s late-fee policy during the Pledge period?**

TracFone only provides prepaid wireless service and wireless Lifeline service, there are no late fees related to those services.

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

See above.

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

See above.

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

See above.

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

See above.

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

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

Yes.

As part of its COVID-19 response, SafeLink has offered an additional 5GBs of broadband data (for a total of 8 GBs per month) and unlimited voice minutes each month, to all Lifeline subscribers from March–June 30.

For TracFone prepaid wireless customers, Straight Talk Wireless and TracFone Wireless (two brands within TracFone Wireless) offers enhanced benefits during the COVID-19 crisis until June 30. To find out more about the benefits available, Straight Talk and TracFone customers should text “COVID” to 611611.

**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?**

N/A.

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

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

TracFone's service operates on all four of America's major wireless networks as a Mobile Virtual Network Operator. There are teams working 24/7 to ensure that TracFone continues to provide service for all its customers, even during times of anticipated heavier traffic.

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

Yes.

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

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

TracFone only provides prepaid wireless and wireless Lifeline services. There is no contract with those services.

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

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

No.

### **Cellphone Leasing/Purchase**

**Q. I currently pay TracFone 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?**

TracFone provides phone leasing through a third-party company, SmartPay. For more information regarding SmartPay, consumers should directly contact SmartPay through its website: <https://www.smartpaylease.com/>.

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

See above.

- 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?**

See above.

- 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 TracFone without incurring any termination fee, change fee, or further monthly fees?**

See above.

### **Wi-Fi Hotspots**

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

**What does this mean?**

TracFone does not operate any Wi-Fi hotspots.

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

See above.

### **Low-Income Programs**

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

TracFone provides low-income offerings through its Lifeline brands, including SafeLink and Walmart Family Mobile plans.

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

A consumer can demonstrate their eligibility for the Lifeline program by either showing that they participate in one of the low-income qualifying programs, such as Medicaid or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; or by showing that their household income is at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines. For a complete explanation of Lifeline eligibility, a consumer should access the following link:

[www.usac.org/lifeline/eligibility/customer-eligibility/program-eligibility](http://www.usac.org/lifeline/eligibility/customer-eligibility/program-eligibility).

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

Eligible consumers can sign up for Lifeline at SafeLink's website:

[https://www.safelinkwireless.com/Enrollment/Safelink/en/Web/www/default/index.html#!/newHome?utm\\_source=dmecl&utm\\_medium=ST\\_Referral&utm\\_content=click\\_to\\_apply&utm\\_campaign=COVID](https://www.safelinkwireless.com/Enrollment/Safelink/en/Web/www/default/index.html#!/newHome?utm_source=dmecl&utm_medium=ST_Referral&utm_content=click_to_apply&utm_campaign=COVID).

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

No.

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

Yes.

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

Lifeline subscribers receive 3 GBs of broadband data service, 350 voice minutes, and unlimited text messages each month, at no charge. In addition, SafeLink offers three free telehealth visits per month with a licensed healthcare professional through Doc.com. For veterans, SafeLink permits veterans to use the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' VA Video Connect application on their SafeLink phones, without incurring data usage.

As part of its COVID-19 response, SafeLink has offered an additional 5 GBs of broadband data (for a total of 8 GBs per month) and unlimited voice minutes each month, to all Lifeline subscribers from March–June 30.

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

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

No. Pursuant to the Lifeline Waiver Orders on March 17 and April 29, 2020, the FCC suspended the Lifeline reverification requirements through June 30, 2020. On June 1, 2020, the FCC extended those waivers again, through the end of August. New customers enrolling for Lifeline must still demonstrate their eligibility.

### **Contacting TracFone During COVID-19**

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

Existing TracFone customers may text "COVID" 611611 to learn more about the enhanced benefits that are specific to their plan. In addition, consumers can contact SafeLink Customer Care at 1-800-SAFELINK (723-3546).

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

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

In order to handle additional customer service calls, TracFone has increased its call back technology in order to give more customers a call back option and authorized ongoing overtime for call center agents.

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

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

TracFone does not operate any brick-and-mortar retail stores in Massachusetts. However, in order to mitigate the customer service impacts of COVID-19, TracFone has adopted remote work for employees and used hotel conference rooms as pop-up call centers to reduce the number of customer service agents working within call centers.

### **Other Assistance Programs**

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

All enhanced benefits are described above.

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

The additional data service provided to SafeLink customers can help keep students connected to distance learning when the SafeLink device is activated as a hotspot.

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

Tracfone has partnered with Doc.com to provide SafeLink customers with **three free telehealth visits per month** with Doc.com's licensed healthcare professionals, including physician visits, in 19 states. This benefit is available in Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Tennessee, and Washington, D.C. SafeLink subscribers can download the Doc.com application for free, and Doc.com's network of healthcare professionals is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.