

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

**Answered on May 20, 2020**

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

**Q. Did [company] sign the FCC's Keep Americans Connected Pledge?**

Yes, Verizon signed on to the "Keep Americans Connected" pledge.

**Q. When did [company's] Pledge period start? When does it end?**

The Pledge was announced on March 13, 2020. Verizon was the first company to extend through June 30, 2020 our commitment to waive late fees and to not terminate service for those consumers and small businesses who are unable to pay due to disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Other companies quickly followed suit, and the FCC extended the date for all to match the June 30 date.

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

The Keep Americans Connected Pledge was originally for a period of 60 days. As explained above, Verizon extended its original commitment through the end of June. Verizon is closely monitoring the situation as it continues to evolve.

**Shut Offs**

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

Verizon will not terminate service to any residential or small business customers because of their inability to pay their bills due to the disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

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

Customers experiencing a hardship should visit the appropriate page below or call Verizon at 1-800-VERIZON (1-800-837-4966).

Wireless: <https://www.verizonwireless.com/support/covid-19-faqs/#bill>

Business: <https://www.verizon.com/about/news/covid-response-business>

In Home: <https://www.verizon.com/support/consumer/announcements/covid-19#bill>

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

Customers need to opt-in by reaching out to Verizon, and there are a number of simple ways (including online) to do so.

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

Yes. Please see above.

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

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

Please reach out to Verizon at 1-800-VERIZON (1-800-837-4966).

**Q. I am unable to pay my bills during [company's] Pledge period.**

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

Any customer who signs up for COVID-19 relief through the Keep Americans Connected Pledge by June 30 will also be automatically enrolled in a deferred bill program to make it easier to get back on track paying off balances after June. For wireless customers, the deferred bill program will be implemented in different ways for service and device payments. For unpaid service charges, Verizon will defer past due balances so that customers will repay the unpaid balance in 6 equal installments over 6 months starting at the end of June or the beginning of July, depending on the customer's billing cycle. For device payment installments, Verizon will defer any unpaid device payment installments to the end of a device payment agreement and provide the customer with a new device payment schedule. Wireline residential and small business customers who sign up for relief through the Pledge will be enrolled in a 6-month deferred payment plan.

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

Please see above.

**Q. When will [company] begin shutting customers' service off again?**

Verizon is committed, for the duration of the pledge, to not terminate service to any residential or small business customers because of their inability to pay their bills due to the disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic. As the pandemic situation continues to evolve, we will continue to evaluate our practices to make sure they make sense for

our customers. We understand that this is a time of heightened worry and concern, and our primary goal is to keep our customers, employees and society connected.

### **Late Fees**

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

Verizon will waive any late fees that a residential or small business customer incurs because of their economic circumstances related to the coronavirus pandemic.

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

If our customers are experiencing a hardship, they should visit the appropriate page below or reach out to Verizon at 1-800-VERIZON (1-800-837-4966).

Wireless: <https://www.verizonwireless.com/support/covid-19-faqs/#bill>

Business: <https://www.verizon.com/about/news/covid-response-business>

In Home: <https://www.verizon.com/support/consumer/announcements/covid-19#bill>

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

Yes, customers need to opt-in by reaching out to Verizon through the myriad ways available to do so.

**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?**

Please see above.

**Q. When will [company] begin charging late fees again?**

Again, Verizon is committed, for the duration of the pledge, to waive any late fees that any residential or small business customers incur because of their economic circumstances related to the coronavirus pandemic. As the pandemic situation continues to evolve, we will continue to reevaluate our practices.

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

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

While more than half of our wireless customer base is on an unlimited data plan, we recognize there are many who may need additional connectivity during these trying

times. We're here for our customers and to make sure they have what they need to stay connected.

For our wireless customers: We added 15GB data for no charge to the plans of wireless and small business customers on metered plans, 15GB of 4G LTE hotspot data to wireless customers on unlimited plans, and 15GB of data to Jetpack plans at the beginning of the pandemic. We recently added another 15GB of data to these plans for use through May 31.

We're also waiving wireless data overage charges for customers who may be financially affected by the COVID-19 crisis.

For our Fios customers: As has always been the case, there are no data caps on Verizon home broadband and home voice services.

**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. If our customers are experiencing a hardship, they should visit the appropriate page below or reach out to Verizon at 1-800-VERIZON (1-800-837-4966).

Wireless: <https://www.verizonwireless.com/support/covid-19-faqs/#bill>

Business: <https://www.verizon.com/about/news/covid-response-business>

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

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

The situation facing consumers, businesses, and governments continues to evolve rapidly and we will continue to reassess our plans on an ongoing basis.

Verizon's fiber optic and wireless networks have met the shifting demands of customers and continue to perform well. In small pockets where there has been a significant increase in usage, our engineers have quickly added capacity to meet customers' demand.

Early on in the pandemic, Verizon worked with the FCC to obtain authorization to use additional spectrum to help meet increased customer demand for broadband. While our network is successfully handling the increased traffic, we want to stay ahead of any challenges that might emerge.

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

Verizon does not impose, and has never imposed, data caps on Fios broadband services.

**Q. I am afraid I can no longer afford my current service plan with [company], 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?**

If our customers are experiencing a hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they should contact us by one of the methods identified above. If they cancel their contract, they will be subject to the terms and conditions of the customer service agreement, including early termination fees.

For information on how customers can suspend their Verizon Fios services, please visit: <https://www.verizon.com/home/cancel-fios/>

For information on how customers can suspend their Verizon wireless services, please visit: <https://www.verizonwireless.com/support/suspend-service-faqs/>

**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?**

If a customer suspends their service, there is no reinstallation or reconnection fee when they reactivate the service.

If a customer cancels service, as opposed to suspends service, and in the future wishes to subscribe again to Verizon, then their order would be treated as new service subject to any installation or activation fees and promotions offered at that time.

### **Cable Television**

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

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

Verizon's commitment to the Pledge includes all Fios services, including cable.

**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?**

Customers experiencing a hardship should visit the appropriate page below or call Verizon at 1-800-VERIZON (1-800-837-4966).

Wireless: <https://www.verizonwireless.com/support/covid-19-faqs/#bill>

Business: <https://www.verizon.com/about/news/covid-response-business>

In Home: <https://www.verizon.com/support/consumer/announcements/covid-19#bill>

**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?**

If our customers are experiencing a hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they should contact us by one of the methods identified above. Pursuant to the Pledge, Verizon will not terminate service or charge late fees to any residential or small business customers because of their inability to pay their bills due to the disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

Under these circumstances, Verizon will not downgrade your cable service unless requested.

**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?**

Yes.

**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?**

If our customers are experiencing a hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they should contact us by one of the methods identified above. If they cancel their contract, they will be subject to the terms and conditions of the customer service agreement, including early termination fees.

Customers also may change their plans to one that is less expensive. These changes can be made online or over the phone, and there is no fee to switch television packages as long as customers do not drop service, if they are in an existing term agreement.

For information on how customers can suspend their Verizon Fios services, please visit: <https://www.verizon.com/home/cancel-fios/>

For information on how customers can suspend their Verizon wireless services, please visit: <https://www.verizonwireless.com/support/suspend-service-faqs/>

**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?**

If a customer suspends their service, there is no reinstallation or reconnection fee when they reactivate the service.

If our customers are experiencing a hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they should contact us by one of the methods identified above. Pursuant to the Pledge, Verizon will not terminate service or charge late fees to any residential or small business customers because of their inability to pay their bills due to the disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

If a customer cancels service and in the future wishes to subscribe again to Verizon, then their order would be treated as new service subject to any installation or activation fees and promotions offered at that time.

**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?**

At this time, we are not providing customers with credits for live sporting events; however, we are closely monitoring the situation and remain in constant communication with the leagues and programmers as the situation evolves. It is our understanding that the leagues are working hard and creatively to bring live sporting events back as soon as that can be done in a safe manner.

In the meantime, we will continue to negotiate aggressively on our customers' behalf with the sports leagues, regional sports networks and other content companies that provide programming to us to ensure we provide our customers the best value we can. Regional sports networks and programmers have significant leverage given their exclusive and must-have content. As such, costs for this content may not be tied to the availability of live sports.

We continue to push programming entities to issue credits. Where a sports network gives us a rebate, we will pass that on to customers. Customers also may change their plans to one that does not have sports channels and avoid the RSN fees. These changes can be made online or over the phone, and there is no fee to switch television packages as long as customers do not drop service, if they are in an existing term agreement. We offer television packages that give consumers choice and flexibility. As millions are staying home due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we're working to provide free online content to our Fios TV and wireless customers, including both entertainment options and educational materials. For example, we are providing free access to SHOWTIME and Epix for our Fios TV customers who do not subscribe to those services.

### **Cellphone Leasing/Purchase**

**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?**

As described above, for device payment installments by residential and small business customers seeking relief under the Pledge, Verizon will defer any unpaid device payment installments to the end of a device payment agreement and provide the customer with a new device payment schedule. There is no risk of losing your phone for non-payment. While Verizon has the right to repossess a phone due to non-payment, Verizon policy is not to do so.

**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?**

Any wireless customer who signs up for COVID-19 relief through the Keep Americans Connected Pledge by June 30 will also be automatically enrolled in a deferred bill program to make it easier to get back on track paying off balances after June. For wireless customers, the deferred bill program will be implemented in different ways for service and device payments. For unpaid service charges, Verizon will defer past due balances so that customers will repay the unpaid balance in 6 equal installments over 6 months starting at the end of June or the beginning of July, depending on the customer's billing cycle. For device payment installments, Verizon will defer any unpaid device payment installments to the end of a device payment agreement and provide the customer with a new device payment schedule.



**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?**

No, Verizon's trade-in program does not support that type of trade. Customers are still subject to the terms and conditions of their device payment agreement.

Also, see answer to preceding question. It is important that our customers, if experiencing a hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic, contact us by one of the methods identified 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 [company] without incurring any termination fee, change fee, or further monthly fees?**

If our customers are experiencing a hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they should contact us by one of the methods identified above. If they cancel their service contract, they will be subject to the terms and conditions of the customer service agreement, including early termination fees (if applicable), and the terms and conditions of the device payment agreement, if applicable.

For information on how customers can suspend their Verizon wireless services, please visit: <https://www.verizonwireless.com/support/suspend-service-faqs/>

### **Wi-Fi Hotspots**

**Q. [company] offered to open its Wi-Fi hotspots during the Pledge period.**

This is not applicable to Verizon.

**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?**

This is not applicable to Verizon.

### **Low-Income Programs**

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

Verizon Massachusetts participates in the FCC Lifeline discount program. Information on qualifications and the application process can be found at <https://www.verizon.com/support/consumer/account/manage-account/lifeline-discount>

During COVID-19, Verizon is providing additional support for low income households. Customers who have Lifeline service (either home phone or broadband) as of March 20th will have all billing charges waived for 60 days (two billing cycles) beginning with the March 22 bills. Eligible new customers can also sign up for a low-income broadband pricing as follows:

- \$20 off any Fios Home Internet Mix & Match plan, as reflected below with discounts applied:
  - 200/200 Mbps for \$19.99/mo
  - 400/400 Mbps for \$39.99/mo
  - Gigabit Connection for \$59.99/mo (includes Fios router)
- Router rental charge waived for 60 days as part of the Verizon COVID-19 response (customers may also choose to buy or bring their own router).
- One year of Disney+ on us.

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

Information on qualifications and the application process can be found at <https://www.verizon.com/support/consumer/account/manage-account/lifeline-discount>

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

Information on qualifications and the application process can be found at <https://www.verizon.com/support/consumer/account/manage-account/lifeline-discount>

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

Verizon does not offer cable service package discounts specifically for low-income households.

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

Yes, see above.

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

Information on the benefits available can be found at <https://www.verizon.com/support/consumer/account/manage-account/lifeline-discount>

**Q. I am a current Lifeline customer with [company].**

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

Lifeline recertification is conducted by the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) as part of the National Verifier Recertification Process. Additional information

regarding the process can be found at  
<https://www.usac.org/lifeline/eligibility/recertify-subscribers/recertification-process/>

### **Contacting [company] During COVID-19**

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

Customers should visit the appropriate page below or reach out to Verizon at 1-800-VERIZON (1-800-837-4966).

Wireless: <https://www.verizonwireless.com/support/covid-19-faqs/#bill>

Business: <https://www.verizon.com/about/news/covid-response-business>

In Home: <https://www.verizon.com/support/consumer/announcements/covid-19#bill>

- 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?**

Additional online support, including chat support, can be accessed by navigating to [www.verizon.com/support/](http://www.verizon.com/support/) or [www.verizonwireless.com/support/](http://www.verizonwireless.com/support/)

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

- Q. What precautions is [company] taking to maintain social distancing during service calls and at its stores?**

To the maximum extent possible Verizon employees are in a work-from-home status, many retail stores have been closed, and call center and field operations work processes have been adjusted, including to implement remote-work practices where possible and to implement safety and hygiene practices in accordance with Centers for Disease Control (“CDC”) guidelines.

To reduce the spread of COVID-19 and keep our employees and customers safe, we are making every attempt to perform work without going into homes or small businesses, and are limiting installs to medical emergencies and critical installations. To that end, we have taken steps to limit how often our technicians must go into consumer homes and small business locations. We will repair services up to where the service enters a consumer’s location, and will work with the consumer to troubleshoot and support self-repair on any required work inside a home or business. Qualified orders will be provided self-install options, or consumers may place an order for a technician-required installation and it will be held for future installation on a priority basis. Consumers will receive notification to select an installation date when it is safe for our techs and customers to resume normal operations.

We're also piloting a virtual assistant tech tool that allows our field technicians to interact with customers via real time, interactive video chat. This tool can help to resolve inside the home troubles without the technician having to enter the home. In addition, self install options are available for qualified service orders.

Verizon's retail locations are operating on an appointment-only basis and we are strictly limiting the number of customers in the store to one per employee. Retail stores have implemented limited hours and use those to perform critical troubleshooting, as well as priority access for first responders, health care, and teachers in addition to fulfillment of online in-store pickup orders. We also seek to address the unique needs of at-risk and elderly populations through our contactless service and payments outside and inside of the retail environment, social distancing protocols and management of traffic within our stores.

### **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?**

Additional information about what Verizon is doing to help its customers during the Coronavirus pandemic is available at [verizon.com/about/news/our-response-coronavirus](https://www.verizon.com/about/news/our-response-coronavirus).

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

Verizon is working with education, government and healthcare agencies to provide remote connectivity options, call centers, interactive voice response services (IVRs) and conferencing solutions. For the more than 250 schools that are Verizon Innovative Learning schools, we tripled the data allowance provided to them through our VILS program. Verizon recently announced that it is working with the Los Angeles Unified School District to provide internet connectivity for students who don't have internet access at home. We also launched a partnership to offer all students and teachers in high schools within the U.S. free digital access to NYTimes.com, to help keep students educated, informed and connected during these difficult times.

Now, more than ever, we recognize the sacrifices and importance of those who support our communities. That's why Verizon is committed to supporting them through unique offers, discounts, recognition and donations. Starting April 23, Verizon expanded our best wireless unlimited pricing to nurses, who are doing such critical work keeping our friends, family and neighbors cared for, and teachers, who are keeping our students engaged and learning. They joined active-duty military, veterans and people who work as first responders who already benefit from this ongoing pricing for their personal accounts and for their families.

**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?**

Verizon is partnering with first responders, governments, schools, and public health agencies to deliver on critical missions. We closely monitor our networks' demands to make sure they are working for all of our customers, including hospitals, first responders, and government agencies serving on the front lines of fighting this pandemic. We offer priority access to our networks for EMTs and first responders and we're deploying portable cell sites to add network capacity at Emergency Operations Centers, mobile testing sites, and quarantine areas nationwide. The Verizon Response Team is currently leading nearly 160 engagements in the United States and has deployed mobile cell sites, WiFi hotspots, free charging stations and other solutions that help boost network performance and enable communications.

Along with public and private healthcare agencies, Verizon is delivering solutions that allow healthcare professionals to stay connected to patients and each other, including the enablement of coronavirus testing through connected technologies, such as mobile hotspots, smartphones and tablets. The delivery of a reliable, secure network helps healthcare workers stay connected to patient records, on-premises laboratory results and other critical information they need when time to diagnosis and care is critical.