

## When Your Telephone Company Discontinues Service

The FCC has rules to protect you when your service provider discontinues, reduces or impairs telephone service for any reason, including when the company declares bankruptcy. These rules are designed to protect you from abrupt change or termination of telephone service and to allow time for you to arrange service with another provider.

U.S. providers planning to discontinue, reduce or impair service are required to:

- Notify affected customers in writing about any such plans and inform you of your right to file comments with the FCC.
- Request permission from the FCC to discontinue, reduce or impair service after notifying customers.
- Continue providing service for a minimum number of days – 31 days for smaller providers and 60 days for larger providers – after the FCC releases a public notice announcing and seeking comment on the service provider’s proposal. The FCC can extend the termination date.

International telephone service providers must give customers 60 days’ notice.

### Customer empowerment: what you can do

If you object to a provider’s plan to discontinue, reduce or impair service, you can let the FCC know by responding to our public notice, which will include a deadline and procedures for filing comments. We will consider objections and other comments when evaluating the service provider’s request.

The FCC usually authorizes a service provider’s request unless customers are unable to receive similar services or a reasonable substitute from another provider.

### Transferring service to another provider

If a service provider sells or transfer its customer base to another company, FCC rules say:

- The acquiring company must provide customers 30 days’ advance notice of the transfer, including information about its rates and services.
- Customers may accept the acquiring company or choose another company.

If your account has been transferred to an acquiring company without adequate notice, you may be covered by the FCC’s slamming rules. Learn more at <https://www.fcc.gov/slamming>.

### Wireless or voice over IP service

If a wireless or VoIP provider discontinues, reduces or impairs your service without cause or notice, leaving you without alternative telephone service, you can file a complaint with the FCC.

## Filing a complaint

You have multiple options for filing a complaint with the FCC:

- File a complaint online at <https://consumercomplaints.fcc.gov>
- By phone: 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322); TTY: 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322); ASL: 1-844-432-2275
- By mail (please include your name, address, contact information and as much detail about your complaint as possible):

Federal Communications Commission  
Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau  
Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division  
445 12th Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20554

You may also want to contact your state public utility commission or consumer protection agency. State laws may offer additional protections for wireless and VoIP services. Check [www.naruc.org/about-naruc/regulatory-commissions/](http://www.naruc.org/about-naruc/regulatory-commissions/) or the government section or blue pages of your local telephone directory for contact information.

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Last Reviewed 6/27/16

