

Pay Telephones



The Florida Public Service Commission (PSC) regulates the quality of pay phone service in Florida. There are approximately 470 pay phone providers in Florida and more than 51,000 pay phones. By law, Florida's pay phones are required to work properly and to meet certain quality standards.

Consumer Tips:

- ◆ Before making a phone call, read the information on the pay phone to know how much a local call will cost.
- ◆ Listen for the operator to identify which company is providing local and long distance service.
- ◆ Ask the operator how much it's going to cost for special services, such as collect or person-to-person calls, before phoning.

A Pay Phone Should Provide:

- 1) a clear phone line, free of noise and static
- 2) written dialing instructions that are clear and accurate
- 3) a clean and well-maintained environment
- 4) a telephone directory and a bracket to hold the directory (if local directory assistance is not free)
- 5) accessibility for a person with disabilities
- 6) sufficient light to read instructions after dark
- 7) a written statement of any phone services that are not available
- 8) a legible display of the number and address of the pay phone
- 9) a legible display of the name, address, and phone number of the company that provides the pay phone service
- 10) a functional automatic coin return
- 11) a written phone number and a free call for refunds and repair service
- 12) the ability to receive incoming calls (unless a written message is clearly displayed that incoming calls have been blocked)
- 13) an audible ring on incoming calls
- 14) access to 911 emergency service at no cost
- 15) access to all long distance companies available in the area
- 16) free direct service to a local operator
- 17) access to local and toll directory assistance
- 18) free access to toll free numbers

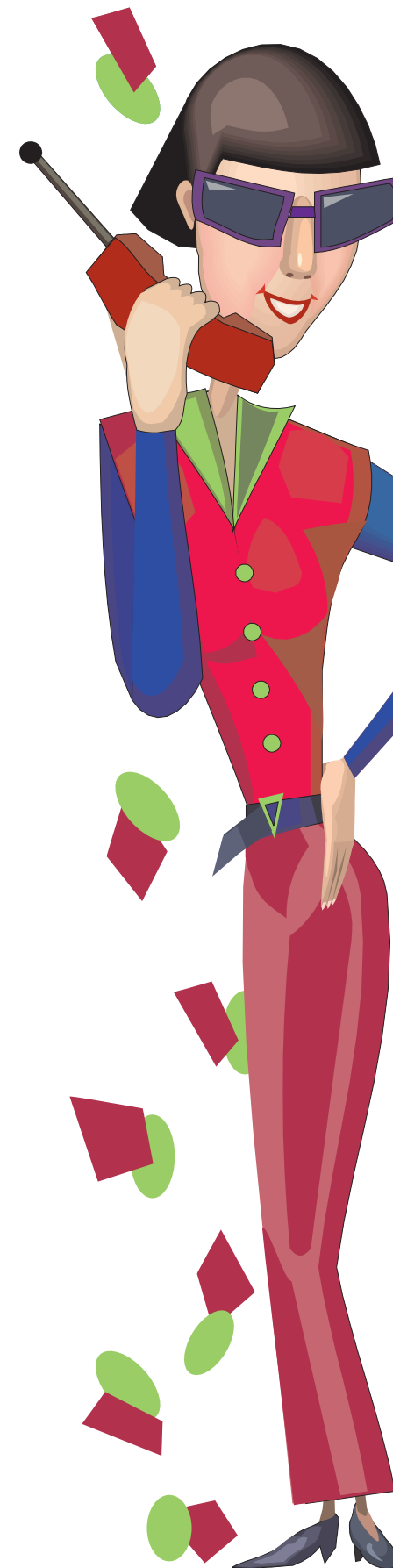
24-HOUR ON-LINE COMPLAINT FORMS
WWW.FLORIDAPSC.COM

If you have questions, you may call the Florida Public Service Commission's Division of Regulatory Compliance and Consumer Assistance at 1-800-342-3552, fax your questions to 1-800-511-0809, or contact the FPSC via the following e-mail address: contact@psc.state.fl.us.

Or write to the Florida Public Service Commission Division of Regulatory Compliance and Consumer Assistance 2450 Shumard Oak Boulevard Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0850

See our Internet home page at www.floridapsc.com.

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Florida Public Service Commission's

TIPS

ON

Telephone Service

Local Telephone Service
Cellular Service
Pay Telephones

Local Telephone Service



Both Florida and federal law allow competition for local telephone services. Your local telephone company will not change unless you choose to select a different company. When and if a competitive local telephone company begins to offer service in your area, you will likely learn of it through traditional marketing and advertising. You may also locate a competitive local telephone company in the front portion of the telephone directory.

What are some of the services local telephone companies are required to provide?

Incumbent or traditional local telephone companies are required to provide basic local telephone service to both residential and business customers; unlimited local calls within a local calling area; and access to emergency services, long distance companies, directory assistance, operator services, telecommunications relay services and an alphabetical directory listing. Competitive local telephone companies may offer different services.

Do rates and service in local telephone service areas vary between local phone companies?

Yes. In addition, your local calling area may vary between companies. This means that calls that were previously part of your local area and included as part of your monthly flat rate charge may be long distance, or calls that were at one time long distance may be considered local when using a different local provider. Be sure that you ask any telephone company that you choose not only about its rates, but also its calling area.

How can I save money on my local service?

One option would be to ask your local telephone company if it offers basic local telephone service as a measured rate service, rather than at a flat rate. With measured rate service, you are limited to a certain number of local calls or minutes

per month, and you incur additional charges for calls or minutes above your limit. Measured rate service is a great way to save money if you don't make many local calls. Local telephone companies are not required to offer a measured rate service option, so be sure to ask any local telephone company that you choose about this optional billing plan for local calling.

The PSC will continue to ensure the rights of all Florida consumers to obtain basic local telephone service, ensure service quality, and assist consumers who have complaints about rates and services.

Below are some general questions you may want to ask before you choose another local telephone company:

What are your rates for local service?

Do you offer a measured rate service?

Are there any connection charges?

Will my local calling area change?

Yes / No

What calling features (e.g. caller ID or call waiting) are included in the basic rate and what features are available as an extra option?

Can you tell me more about your company and its services?



Cellular Service



The Florida Public Service Commission (PSC) does not regulate cellular telephone companies. The PSC cannot resolve consumers' complaints regarding cellular telephone service. However, with the ever-increasing popularity of cellular telephones, it is important to mention a few things. Many customers choose cellular telephone companies as an alternative to a traditional telephone company. Like most telephone companies, cellular telephone companies offer a variety of service plans. Cellular service charges are generally based on minutes of use, or "air time," and a fixed monthly fee. Roaming or long distance charges may also apply when you are away from your home area.

Also, it is important that you know what is a local call and what is a long distance call. Many times, the local service area of the cellular company is not the same as the local telephone company's.

Cellular providers offer a variety of packages to meet the various needs of business and residential customers. You should discuss the various service plans with your cellular telephone company. Here are some general questions you may want to ask the cellular providers:

- 1) What services or packages do you offer?
- 2) What are the per-minute and monthly charges for these services?
- 3) Are there any other charges I need to know about?
- 4) What areas can I call before incurring additional charges or roaming fees?
- 5) Will I be able to pick up a signal in the area where I will use my phone the most?

Remember, the PSC does not regulate cellular telephone companies. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) does not regulate contractual arrangements with cellular providers, but does handle complaints about wireless service. The FCC can be reached at 1-800-CALL-FCC (1-800-225-5322).