

## KNOW ABOUT YOUR PHONE SERVICE

*and...*

- SAVE MONEY
- AVOID TELEPHONE FRAUD
- GET THE SERVICE THAT IS BEST FOR YOU



### California Public Utilities Commission

#### Telecommunications Education and Assistance in Multiple-Languages (TEAM) Program

[www.cpuc.ca.gov/team-and-changes](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/team-and-changes)

[cabteamandchanges@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:cabteamandchanges@cpuc.ca.gov)

If you are not able to resolve  
your dispute with your service provider,  
call the Consumer Affairs Branch  
(800) 649-7570



If you have a problem with telephone fraud, contact your phone company right away, get the charges removed and get returned to the service you wanted. If necessary, call the fraud hotline. To learn more, get the CPUC's brochure by calling the fraud hotline or print a copy from: [www.calphoneinfo.com](http://www.calphoneinfo.com).

## Take Charge of Your Phone Service

CALIFORNIA  
PUBLIC  
UTILITIES  
COMMISSION





## Options

### Local Phone Service

Compare prices and services. Local phone fees may include:

- One-time fees for starting or changing service.
- Monthly Fees.
- Charges for calls outside your local calling area.

### Long Distance Phone Service

There are many long distance companies to choose from. Find out:

- How much will a plan cost each month and what will it include?
- Are there minimum charges?
- Be aware that special or promotional rates may only last a short time.

## Take Charge of your Phone Service

### California LifeLine

You may qualify to receive a discount on local phone service. There are two ways to qualify. First, if your income is less than:

|                        |           |
|------------------------|-----------|
| 1-2 members            | \$ 25,100 |
| 3 members              | \$ 29,300 |
| 4 members              | \$ 35,400 |
| Each additional member | \$ 6,100  |

(Effective until 05/31/14)

Second, you may qualify if you receive SSI, NSL, Medicaid, Medi-Cal, Healthy Families, LIHEAP, Food Stamps, TANF, WIC or certain tribal assistance.

- If you are currently enrolled, send in the renewal form each year or you will be removed and will have to re-apply.
- Call your phone company to receive the forms and instructions.

### Telephone Fraud

Avoid fraud by studying your phone bill every month. Look out for:

- **Misleading Ads** - Read the entire ad carefully before you select the service. Keep ads for services you subscribe to. Ask for the information in your native language.
- **Slamming** - This is when your phone service is changed from one company to another without your permission.
- **Cramming** - This is when charges are added to your phone bill without your permission. These charges may be related to anything.



### Prepaid Phone Cards

A prepaid phone card lets you make calls from any phone. Each card should include:

1. The company name.
2. A description of all charges.
3. A 24-hour toll-free customer service number.
4. An expiration date.
5. How to get a refund for dropped calls.
6. How minutes are rounded: up or down.
7. How to add funds to the card.

### Cell Phone Service Tips

The CPUC has issued a brochure on choosing cell phone service. To get one, call: 1-800-649-7570, or print it off the website: [www.calphoneinfo.com](http://www.calphoneinfo.com). In general:

- Know when, where and how you want to use a cell phone and shop around.
- Understand what you are signing up for and how much it costs.
- Use the trial period to test your service and if necessary, cancel during that time without being charged an early termination fee.