



# WHAT DOES LOCAL SERVICE TELEPHONE COMPETITION MEAN FOR PA VERIZON CUSTOMERS?

## WHAT IS TELEPHONE COMPETITION?



Pennsylvania and federal laws govern the telecommunications services market. Specifically, Pennsylvania’s Chapter 30 laws are designed to encourage competition among local telephone, long-distance telephone, cable and other communications companies, and to lessen regulation where competition exists.

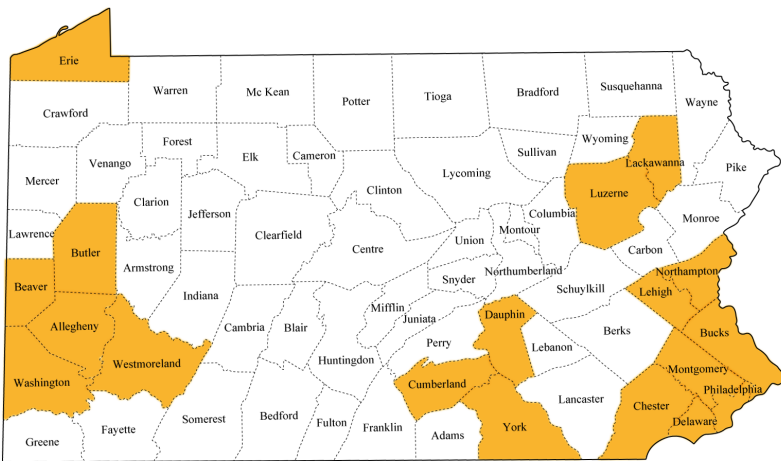
On March 4, 2015, in response to a Petition by Verizon North LLC and Verizon Pennsylvania LLC (collectively, Verizon), the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) determined that Basic Standalone Local Telephone Service is competitive in 153 wire centers in seven geographical areas within the Commonwealth served by Verizon. The wire centers are located in the following general service regions: **Philadelphia, Erie, Scranton/Wilkes-Barre, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, Allentown and York.** The PUC determined that enough competition exists in these wire centers from other voice service providers, including competitive local exchange carriers, cable telephony providers and wireless carriers.

## WHAT HAS CHANGED WITH YOUR TELEPHONE SERVICE?

Basic Standalone Local Telephone Service (see Glossary of Terms) was “detriffed” in those 153 wire centers for residential and small business customers. This means that Verizon is no longer required to maintain a tariff at the PUC containing the rates, terms and conditions of services in those wire centers. The rates, terms and conditions of services will now be published in Verizon’s Product Guide, which is available on its website at [www.verizon.com/tariffs/productguide](http://www.verizon.com/tariffs/productguide). The PUC’s action also means that the PUC no longer approves the prices Verizon charges for Basic Standalone Local Telephone Service in those wire centers. This is very similar to the contracts that customers may have with cable and wireless companies that are not subject to PUC oversight.

## WHICH CUSTOMERS WILL SEE A CHANGE?

The Verizon customers who will see a change are those who purchase Basic Standalone Local Telephone Service in certain areas called wire centers. The wire centers are located in the following counties: **Allegheny, Beaver, Bucks, Butler, Chester, Cumberland, Dauphin, Delaware, Erie, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Luzerne, Montgomery, Northampton, Philadelphia, Washington, Westmoreland and York.** The map provided identifies the areas where customers may see a change. If you are not located in one of these counties, then you are not impacted. If you think that you might be impacted, the list of impacted NPA NXXs (this is your area code and the first three numbers of your Verizon phone number) is listed at [www.verizon.com/about/community/pa\\_about.html](http://www.verizon.com/about/community/pa_about.html). Verizon estimates that this decision will impact between 250,000 and 300,000 of its customers.



*If you live in one of the highlighted counties and receive Basic Standalone Local Telephone Service from Verizon North or Verizon Pennsylvania, your service may have been classified as competitive. To find out more about Verizon wire centers with competitively classified local telephone services and their locations, contact Verizon at 1-800-VERIZON or visit Verizon’s website at [www.verizon.com/about/community/pa\\_about.html](http://www.verizon.com/about/community/pa_about.html).*

The PUC’s decision does not impact customers who purchase local telephone service as part of a bundle or package. These services have already been found to be competitive. This includes packages of local and long-distance service, such as the Freedom package, or if you purchase your local telephone service along with video or Internet. The PUC’s decision does not impact cable or wireless customers.

## HOW ARE CUSTOMERS STILL PROTECTED?

The PUC's action requires Verizon to provide a 30-day written notice to customers prior to changing rates in competitive wire centers. Verizon also will maintain an updated pricing list at the PUC and on its website at [www.verizon.com/tariffs/productguide](http://www.verizon.com/tariffs/productguide). A pricing list includes the most recent prices for Basic Standalone Local Telephone Service and for other competitive services.

The PUC will continue to oversee the safety, adequacy, reliability and privacy of telecommunications services provided by Verizon in competitive wire centers. The PUC will continue to handle complaints from Verizon customers in competitive wire centers. This includes receiving complaints on slamming and cramming, 911 obligations, Telecommunications Relay Service and Lifeline requirements. This also includes complaints about the quality of service on the ordering, installation, suspension, termination and restoration of Basic Standalone Local Telephone Service. PUC protections will continue for third-party notifications and medical certifications.

## HOW DO I FILE A COMPLAINT ABOUT MY SERVICE?

If you are a customer in a competitive wire center and are experiencing a problem with your telephone service provided by Verizon, contact Verizon first about the issue. If you are not satisfied after speaking with Verizon at 1-800-VERIZON, you may contact the PUC's Bureau of Consumer Services at 1-800-692-7380 for further assistance. It is important to know that the PUC no longer regulates the prices charged for telephone services provided by Verizon in the 153 competitive wire centers.

The PUC does not regulate wireless phone companies, the rates of long-distance companies or cable TV companies. Contact your local municipality about cable TV problems, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) at 1-888-225-5322 or [www.fcc.gov](http://www.fcc.gov), or the Office of Attorney General at 1-800-441-2555 or [www.attorneygeneral.gov](http://www.attorneygeneral.gov). You also may contact the FCC about problems with your wireless phone service, long-distance service and cable TV service.

### PA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

Bureau of Consumer Services  
P.O. Box 3265  
Harrisburg, PA 17105-3265  
1-800-692-7380  
TTY 1-877-710-7079  
(for people with speech or hearing loss)

[www.puc.pa.gov](http://www.puc.pa.gov)



@PA\_PUC



Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

### BASIC STANDALONE LOCAL TELEPHONE SERVICE

A landline-based service Verizon provides that allows a customer to make local telephone calls, receive telephone calls and call 911. The service does not allow for long-distance calls to be made outside of the local calling area.

### COMPETITION

The ability of a customer to choose Basic Standalone Local Telephone Service or like or similar services from other service providers.

### CHAPTER 30

The chapter from the Pennsylvania Public Utility Code (Title 66) dealing with Alternative Form of Regulation of Telecommunications Services. Chapter 30 allows the PUC to determine whether stand-alone basic telephone service is competitive.

### TELEPHONE EXCHANGE

A telecommunications system of switches and other equipment located in a Verizon central office that connects telephones in a certain geographic area. A telephone exchange can contain one or more wire centers.

### CENTRAL OFFICE

Verizon building where users' lines join to switching equipment that connects other users to each other to make telephone calls, both locally and via long-distance carriers.

### NUMBERING PLAN AREA (NPA)

This is the area code. It is the first three numbers of a 10-digit telephone number, such as 717-XXX-XXXX.

### NXX, NXX CODE, CENTRAL OFFICE CODE, OR CO CODE

In a seven-digit local phone number, the first three numbers, such as 234-XXXX, are known as the NXX or central office code.

### WIRE CENTERS

A wire center is typically made up of one or more central offices, the telephone lines served by a particular central office and the switching equipment used to route telephone calls in a certain geographic area.

### CRAMMING

The illegal practice of placing unauthorized, misleading or deceptive charges on your telephone bill.

### SLAMMING

The illegal practice of switching your telephone provider to another provider without your permission.

