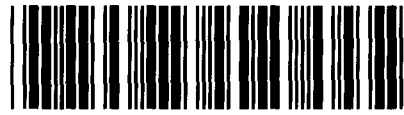


Control Number: 50664



Item Number: 32

Addendum StartPage: 0



March 20, 2020

Public Utility Commission of Texas ("Commission")
1701 N. Congress Ave.
Austin, Texas 78701

RE: Project No. 50664, *Issues Related to the State of Disaster for Coronavirus Disease 2019*;
Project No. 37277, *Project for Submitting Emergency Operations Plan and Notifications of Emergency Operations Exercises*

Taylor Telephone Cooperative, Inc. and its affiliates (collectively d/b/a "Taylor Telecom") wish to inform the Commission of the efforts they are taking to support Texans and customers during this difficult time. We are actively working to assist those impacted by the COVID-19 and grateful for the leadership of health care workers and officials from across the state while we all work diligently to help our fellow Texans.

It is especially important that Texans stay connected in the face of this public health crisis. During these trying times, our reliable telecommunications services are allowing our customers to practice the recommended social distancing and work from home, use remote or distance learning, engage in online commerce to obtain the supplies they need, keep in touch with loved ones remotely, and access telemedicine resources. Such connectivity is crucial to helping slow the spread of the virus.

During this time of significant need, Taylor Telecom has implemented the following voluntary measures to assist its customers:

- Taylor Telecom has informed Shawn Hazard, Emergency Management Coordinator, of its initial actions.
- Taylor Telecom is following the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC") [Keep Americans Connected Pledge](#). For example, we are not disconnecting the services of any customers who let us know they are unable to pay because of COVID-19.
- Taylor Telecom continues to maintain customer service, with precautions in place to help protect the health and safety of its customers and employees, such as:
 - We began employee outreach on March 9 and are now having daily manager meetings to keep all employees well informed.
 - Our technicians continue to perform installations and make trouble calls. They are asking screening questions before every customer service call and they are equipped with gloves, masks, hand sanitizer, and sanitizing spray. They have been instructed on how to properly use this equipment to protect themselves and customers.

- We closed our customer lobbies and are implementing a “curbside delivery” type process to allow customers to pick up equipment with less exposure to other people. We have asked customers to conduct business through pick-up, via telephone, or online.
- We are also doing our best to expand services to students and other customers who need additional connectivity during this time.
 - We are providing a special student plan (see attached FAQ and rate sheet) to help families—including low income families—provide connectivity for remote learning. We are working with school districts to try to reach all students in our area.
 - We have engaged subcontractors to help support our employees in order to perform as many installations as quickly as possible.
 - We are increasing spares to better ensure continuity of service even if there are longer-term supply chain issues or restrictions on business/movement going forward.
- We are communicating with customers as well as federal, state, and local leaders so they and their constituents know Taylor Telecom is maintaining service.

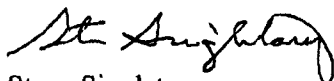
In addition to the pandemic, very early Thursday morning tornadoes touched down in our area and caused damage. We did not have any reportable outages, but in light of the tornadoes and the pandemic, we are following our Emergency Operations Plan. For that reason, we are filing a copy of this letter in Project No. 37277.

We recognize the important role that Taylor Telecom and other rural telecommunications providers have during this ongoing public health emergency, and we are taking our service responsibilities very seriously for the duration of this disaster. We will keep the Commission informed of any additional material commitments regarding COVID-19 in this project and/or through Mr. Hazard as may be directed.

To the extent it may be necessary, Taylor Telecom respectfully requests Commission action related to the suspension of rules requiring tariff pre-approval to waive or delay charges or offer promotions to assist customers during this outbreak.

Should the Commission or any customers have questions or concerns, we remain available at 1-800-238-4155 or info@taylor-tel.net.

Sincerely,



Steve Singletary
General Manager/CEO



Student Rate Plan Options Concerning COVID-19 Pandemic

No activation fee, no install fee, no requirement to continue after June 30th.

Low Income Families

(confirmed Free/Reduced lunches, or other low-income program participation required)

Internet Options:

10MB Internet – Free until 6/30/2020 OR

Slowest Retail Speed for ½ off non-contract rate (Copper customers – Max available speed; Fiber areas – 50MB)

Non-Low Income Families

Internet Options:

10MB Internet –\$15/mo until 6/30/2020 OR

Slowest Retail Speed for \$15 off non-contract rate (Copper customers – Max available speed; Fiber areas – 50MB)

**** Service availability is not guaranteed. We will attempt to connect everyone, as quickly and safely as we possibly can, but there may be instances or locations that we are unable to serve****

Please call our offices at 325-846-4111 for more details.

Taylor Telecom COVID-19 Internet Relief Plan **Frequently Asked Questions**

Thousands of students across the nation have transitioned to online coursework for the rest of the spring semester due to the recent Coronavirus pandemic.

Through its newly launched COVID-19 Internet Relief Plan, Taylor Telecom is offering free and discounted Internet access to college students who have been affected in its service areas. These benefits will be available and assist them for the next 90 days.

The plan is consistent with the Federal Communications Commission's Keep Americans Connected Pledge and includes free installation.

1. What is the COVID-19 Internet Relief Plan?

The COVID-19 Internet Relief Plan is an offer for FREE OR DISCOUNTED Internet service to college and k-12 students who have been affected by the Coronavirus pandemic. It is consistent with the FCC's Keep Americans Connected Pledge.

The plan also offers FREE INSTALLATION and as always, our plans never have usage caps.

2. How long is the COVID-19 Internet Relief Plan being offered?

The COVID-19 Internet Relief Plan is being offered through Tuesday, June 30, 2020.

3. What are the available speeds and pricing being offered?

There are two discounted rate plans offered. 10MB and Max Copper or 50MB (fiber).

For Students that are on low income programs (free or reduced lunches, SNAP, WIC, TANF, etc): the 10MB plan is free or the next highest speed plan (Max Copper or 50MB for Fiber) is ½ off of the non-contract price.

For all other students: the 10MB plan is \$15.00 or the next highest speed plan (Max Copper or 50MB for Fiber) is \$15 off the non-contract price.

The discount is only valid through June 30th. We will be contacting customers prior to the this date to discuss the continuation of service.

During this period, we will provide a modem for lease, free of charge. At the end of this period, the modem will need to be returned or purchased. If the modem is not returned, then you will be billed for the retail cost of the equipment.

4. Will we require a credit check and/or deposit?

We will require a credit check, as we would for any new customer, however we will temporarily waive the deposit requirement. If the customer decides to continue service after June 30th, then they will need to provide payment for a deposit (if it would normally be required).

If the customer activates any other services (telephone or SkitterTV), then deposits will be collected.

5. Who is eligible for this plan?

New customers that are (or have) students at home within Taylor Telecom's service area.

Immediate or near-immediate service is not guaranteed. Due to network limitations, weather, and other items that may be outside of our control, we can not guarantee service to all that may qualify.

6. Do students need to provide documentation to qualify?

Yes. Students (or parents of students) must provide eligible documentation to either a Customer Service Representative or a Technician prior to confirmation. Eligible documentation includes a valid student ID or any other paperwork that proves they are currently enrolled either in K-12 or an institute of higher learning.

Low-income students must provide eligible documentation to either a Customer Service Representative or a Technician prior to confirmation.

Eligible documentation must include a valid student ID, or any other paperwork that proves they are currently enrolled in college courses this spring semester as well as eligible low-income documentation (i.e. SNAP, WIC, TANF) card that proves they are currently receiving government assistance. Additionally, we are working with local school districts, so ISDs can provide us with verification directly.

7. Will the customer need to return the installation equipment if they do not wish to continue with our service at the end of June 2020?

If the customer does NOT wish to continue with our service, the equipment must be returned from that customer when the plan ends on Tuesday, June 30, 2020. If the equipment is not returned, then the customer will be billed at the retail rate for the equipment.

New customers who qualify for this plan will NOT be charged an installation fee which includes equipment.

8. How is Taylor Telecom promoting the COVID-19 Internet Relief Plan?

Taylor Telecom is working with all of our local schools to ensure those students without internet service receive the information. Additionally, the information is provided to CSRs as an option, when potential customers comment about the need for service without the ability to pay.