



Control Number: 50664



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March 23, 2020

Central Records Filing Clerk  
Public Utility Commission of Texas  
1701 N. Congress Avenue  
Austin, Texas 7701

RE: Project No. 50664; Issues Related to the State of Disaster to the Coronavirus Disease 2019

Livingston Telephone Company, along with its affiliates ("LivCom"), provides this response to the Public Utility Commission of Texas' ("Commission") request for interested parties to inform the and provide the Commission with a summary of initiatives LivCom is taking related to COVID-19. LivCom understands the rapidly changing nature of the coronavirus pandemic and continues to closely monitor local, state and federal authorities for guidance to protect its employees and the community.

Recently, the Federal Communications Commission ("FCC") issued a press release detailing its efforts that during the current pandemic, Americans affected by the virus will not lose access to their telephone and broadband services called the "Keep Americans Connected Pledge." LivCom (under its parent name USConnect) has taken the FCC's Pledge to keep Americans connected supporting their efforts. As part of this pledge, LivCom has agreed that for the next 60 days that: 1) LivCom will not terminate service to any residential or small business customers because of their inability to pay their bills due to the disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic; 2) will waive any late fees that any residential or small business customers incur because of their economic circumstances related to the coronavirus pandemic and 3) open its Wi-Fi hotspots to any American who needs them.

LivCom has extended its student connect program (a discounted Internet offering) to all students and teachers. LivCom has worked closely with the district on its emergency learning plans and is offering to connect students who have not had service for 90 days for free through then end of the school closure. The district used its emergency phone message system to get the message to parents of 9-12<sup>th</sup> graders. LivCom designated a customer representative to handle the calls. LivCom also opened an expanded hotspot next to its business office (which has a large field for parking) that will automatically authenticate all student issued chrome books and provide access to download/upload





assignments from their vehicles. LivCom is also working with the school to get fiber access to free lunch drop-off locations. LivCom has added hours to its technician schedules to fulfill all student and teleworker request for connection.

LivCom provided e-Blast alerts to customers, door placards have been distributed, websites have a special Covid-19 page and Facebook has been updated and will be kept current. The Company marquee at its business location will also be updated as situations prevail. Since the marquee is at a central location it is also being used to broadcast community announcements including the locations of free breakfast/lunch pickups for students.

LivCom remains open with the Following Modifications:

- Staff receiving daily instructions and weekly Corporation-wide updates
- One customer representative will work from home as a preventative measure; the other representatives will observe social distancing of at least 6 feet
- Company lobby is closed
- Customers are required to use the drive-thru or customer drop box for bill payment. An additional drive thru lane has been opened
- Customers have been educated about e-bill options
- Customer representatives are doing pre-screening for any premise visit:
  - 1) have you traveled recently?
  - 2) does anyone in the home have a fever/cough or any illness?
  - 3) has anyone in the home been diagnosed, exposed or quarantined?
- Representatives have been issued sanitization products and gloves
- Representatives required to wear gloves when handling customer payment, mail or cash
- Started to send non-essential/high risk personnel home to work
- Planning for completely remote worker customer service in place (phone system is ready, webcams ordered, computer station relocation plans in place)
- All other essential personnel that reports to the office will observe social distancing
- All travel and training plans have been canceled

All technicians have been distributed the National Communications Coordination Access and Fuel letters with instruction to keep them in their trucks. Guidance on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce recommendations and provisions that apply have been implemented as follows:

- Technician/engineers will report directly to their trucks/vehicles (all break rooms and common areas have been closed)
- Inventory specialists will stock technician/engineer trucks/vehicles to eliminate employee contact, initiated 3/17/2020, under Phase I



- Technicians have been issued hand sanitizer, gloves, respirator masks (pending delivery 3/23) and sanitization materials
- Technicians have received instructions via video on proper usage and hand washing
- Technicians will use the same three prescreening questions as the customer services representative and request social distancing prior to entering the home:
- Technicians have been instructed to have ID badges on their person at all time
- Technicians will discontinue a visit if they feel unsafe and notify supervisor
- Remote troubleshooting increased and non-critical customer visits discontinued

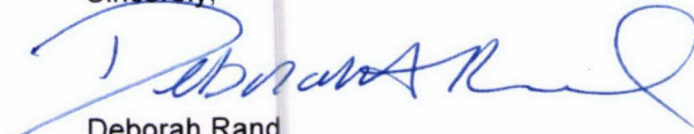
Livingston and surrounding city mandates:

- Livingston Independent School District closed through April 3
- Governor Abbott Declares State of Public Health Disaster (3/17/20)
- Governor Abbott activates National Guard (3/17/2020)
- Governor Abbot prohibits the social gathering of 10 or more people and has closed bars, restaurants, food courts, gyms, nail salons and massage parlors
- Governor Abbott prohibits visitation to nursing homes, retirement care facilities and long-term care facilities unless to provide critical assistance

LivCom will continue to monitor developments and follow recommendations from the CDC, WHO, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Public Utilities Commission of Texas, Governor's Office, Texas Department of State Health Services. As news develops, we are communicating new guidelines and cautions to our employees and continue to develop and refine our internal procedures and response plans. While our primary concern remains the health and safety of our employees and customers, we are doing our part to ensure continuity of service that our customers can rely on during these extraordinary and unprecedented times.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact me ([drand@usch.com](mailto:drand@usch.com)) at (603) 472-9786. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Deborah Rand  
CEO/President