



Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel

Your Residential Utility Consumer Advocate

CONSUMERS' FACT SHEET

Utility questions, concerns or complaints?

CALL TOLL FREE:

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THE FACTS ABOUT PHONE NUMBER PORTABILITY

Keeping your telephone number when switching providers



What is number portability?

Telephone number portability enables consumers to keep their existing telephone number when switching from one telephone provider to another if the customer stays within the same geographic area.

Switching numbers

Currently, consumers can keep their existing telephone number and switch from a wireless, wireline or Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) provider to any other wireless, wireline or VoIP provider. Consumers who choose to give up their home telephone service in favor of wireless service can take their home telephone number with them.

Tips to consider

Consumers who wish to keep their telephone number when switching should be aware that:

- ▶ Service should not be canceled with their existing carrier before signing with a new company. The new company will contact the consumers' existing carrier to terminate the existing agreement to ensure there is no break in service.

- ▶ Most wireline numbers can be switched to another provider as long as the consumer is staying in the same area. Wireless phone numbers may be transferred between providers only within the same metropolitan area. For example, wireless customers in Toledo may not be able to transfer their number to a carrier in Dayton.

"Consumers who choose to give up their home telephone service in favor of wireless service can take their home telephone number with them."

- ▶ The switch between providers may take anywhere from a few hours to one business day to complete. Ask the new provider the length of time it will take for the switch to occur. Small rural carriers may take longer.

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The Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC), the residential utility consumer advocate, represents the interests of 4.5 million households in proceedings before state and federal regulators and in the courts.

The state agency also educates consumers about electric, natural gas, telephone and water issues and resolves complaints from individuals.

To receive utility information, brochures, schedule a presentation or file a utility complaint, residential consumers may call 1-877-PICKOCC (1-877-742-5622) toll free in Ohio or visit the OCC website at www.pickocc.org.



The Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel is an equal opportunity employer and provider of services.



- ▶ When switching between carriers, consumers should remember that they might be subject to early termination fees. Consumers should contact their carrier and review their current agreement to determine if this applies to them. When switching between carriers, consumers may be subject to a switching fee, also known as an installation fee.
- ▶ If consumers switch from a wireline to a wireless provider, their current long-distance carrier will need to be notified and the long-distance service canceled. Most wireless providers have long-distance features built into their plans.
- ▶ Wireless providers usually require consumers to purchase a new wireless phone when signing up for new service. Some wireless phones are only compatible with one specific provider.

“When switching between carriers, consumers may be subject to a switching fee, also known as an installation fee.”

- ▶ A copy of a recent telephone bill from the current company is needed to ensure that the new carrier will have the exact information it needs to make the switch.

OCC can help

For more information about choosing a local or long-distance provider, understanding your telephone bill, choosing a cell phone plan or other utility issues, contact the Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel toll free at 1-877-PICKOCC (1-877-742-5622) or online at www.pickocc.org.