

In this brochure you will find answers to the following questions concerning your phone service:

- Can the phone company disconnect my service?
- What are late payment fees?
- Do I have to pay charges that I'm questioning?
- Will I be billed late fees on those charges?
- Will I Be Charged a Deposit?



## Late Payment Fees, Disconnects and Deposits

CALIFORNIA  
PUBLIC  
UTILITIES  
COMMISSION



If you need help with a dispute about your telecommunications service or bill, first contact your phone company. If your issue is not resolved, you can file a complaint online at: [www.calphoneinfo.com](http://www.calphoneinfo.com) or call the **Consumer Affairs Branch and Utility Fraud Hotline** at: 1(800) 649-7570



CPUC



## Late Payment Fees, Disconnects and Deposits

### What are late payment fees?

Late payment fees are applied to your bill if you pay your bill late. The bill should state when a late payment fee may be charged and how much it could be.

## Questions You May Have about Late Fees, Disconnects and Deposits

### Can the phone company disconnect my service?

Your service may be disconnected if you do not pay the basic local service fees on time. You can also be disconnected if you give false information when applying for service or misuse the service, such as use a residential service for a business, or violate the contract. Before disconnecting service, the company must send you a notice warning that service will be disconnected if not paid by the date posted on that notice.

### Do I have to pay charges that I'm questioning? Will I be billed late fees on those charges?

Contact your phone company to discuss the charge. You do not have to pay the charge and cannot be billed a late fee for it while the company

is looking into the dispute. If the company does not adjust the charge, you will have to pay it to avoid late fees. If you are not satisfied with the company's position, you may file a complaint with, and send your payment to the CPUC.

### Will I Be Charged a Deposit?

If you do not have a good payment history, or a good credit rating, you may have to pay a deposit when you begin service. If your phone was disconnected for nonpayment, you may have to pay a deposit before it is turned back on. The deposit is returned after you have paid your bill on time for one year, or if you chose to disconnect service, whichever comes first.



### Emergency 911 Service

Even if your service is disconnected for nonpayment, wireline companies, when possible, must allow you to call 9-1-1 from the disconnected line for 120 days. Wireless phones have no such limitation and only need charged batteries to call 9-1-1.

### Did you know that discounts on phone service are available to low-income customers?

California Lifeline provides discounts and is provided without paying a deposit on telephone service for qualified customers. You may receive a discount on either a home telephone or wireless service, but may not receive a discount on both services at the same time.

To find out more about California Lifeline: Call your local phone company and ask about California Lifeline or go to [www.californialifeline.com](http://www.californialifeline.com)