

UTILI-FACTS

Keep Your Existing Number

For years consumer with wireline phones have been able to switch from one local carrier to another while at the same



location and without having to change their phone number, but moving phone numbers to or from cell phones was next to impos-



sible. Thanks to recent changes in Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules, this service is now available to wireless or cellu-



lar customers. Under the FCC's wireless "local number portability" rules, you can switch wireless carriers within the same geographic area and keep your existing phone number ("porting").

If you are moving from one geographic area to another, you probably will not be able to keep the same telephone number. In most cases, if you are in the same geographic area, you can keep the same phone number when porting your phone service from:

- A wireline carrier to a wireless carrier
- A wireless carrier to another wireless carrier
- A wireline carrier to another wireline carrier
- A wireless carrier to a wireline carrier.

Making the Switch Easier

- Do not terminate your service with your old carrier before beginning service with the new carrier.
- Contact the new carrier. They will begin the porting, or moving, process by contacting your old carrier.
- You may request service from a new carrier at any time.
- Be aware that you must pay any early termina- tion fees

that you may have under your existing contract and any outstanding balance you owe your old carrier. Review your current contract to learn what fees or charges apply. Once you request service from a new carrier, your old carrier may not refuse to port your number, even if you owe money for an outstanding balance or termination fee.

- Carriers are allowed to charge a fee to cover their porting costs. Carriers may choose to charge a fee, and their fees may vary.

How Long Will it Take?

Your new carrier can usually give you a good estimate of how long it will take to complete your number portability request. Rules set by the FCC require the companies to complete the number portability process within four days. In general:

- For wireless-to-wireless number portability, your phone number should work within a few hours of your request to change wireless providers.
- A wireline-to-wireless transfer may take several days to complete. Ask your new carrier whether you will be able to continue using your current residential number during the porting process. Please note that if you move a wireline phone to a wireless phone, your long distance carrier will not move with you. Your long distance service will generally be provided by your new wireless carrier. You should verify this with the wireless carrier before changing service providers. For wireline-to-wireless porting, there may be a period of "mixed service" when you essentially have two telephones with the same number during the adjustment period.

For additional information on wireless local number portability, please contact the FCC's Consumer Center toll-free at 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322). TTY users please call 1-888-835-5322.

You may also visit the FCC website at www.fcc.gov/cgb/numberportability/.

QUESTIONS:

Call: 1-888-782-8477, in Austin 512-936-7120
(TTY 512-936-7136) (FAX 512-936-7003)

Write: PUC - Consumer Protection Division
P.O. Box 13326, Austin, TX 78711-3326

Online: <http://www.puc.texas.gov/consumer/complaint/Complaint.aspx>

