

UTILI-FACTS

Telephone Slamming

You've been slammed if your local or long distance telephone carrier is switched without authorization.



Slamming is Illegal

Texas law requires the slamming company to pay the cost of switching customers back to their original carrier and to provide billing records to the original carrier. Customers are not required to pay for any charges incurred in the first 30 days after being slammed. After the first 30 days, customers are only required to pay the amount they would have paid to their original carrier had they not been slammed.



Additionally, customers are entitled to receive all the benefits (for example, frequent flier miles) they would have received if they had not been slammed.



If You Have Been Slammed:

Contact your original carrier immediately. Tell them that you did not request a change in your service. Ask them to notify the alleged unauthorized phone company of the incident. Request the unauthorized charges to be removed from your bill and that you be reconnected to your original carrier. Contact the unauthorized phone company. Request informa-

tion on how service was switched and to listen to any recording of the authorization or to receive a copy of any signed agreement.

Report it to the Public Utility Commission (PUC) toll-free at 1-888-782-8477.

How to Prevent Slamming:

- Ask your local phone company for a Primary Interexchange Carrier (PIC) freeze. This will prevent a change in long distance service without a written request.
- Read your phone bill carefully each month and report unfamiliar charges to your local phone company.
- Contact your local telephone company to confirm your preferred long distance carrier.
- Make sure that everyone in your household knows who is really authorized to make any changes to your phone service.
- Never sign anything without reading it thoroughly.
- If you receive a call or notice to "verify" a change in service that you did not authorize, notify the company immediately that you do not want to change.
- If you do not know who your long distance carrier is or if you want to confirm that it is still the same company, call 1-700-555-4141 from your home number. A recording will state which long distance carrier is connected to your phone line. You can also get this information from your local phone company.

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>

