

Due to the passage of Senate Bill 48, New Hampshire laws about telephone service changed on August 10, 2012. This new law reduces regulation of telephone service providers. Customers will now rely on competition between telephone providers to promote low prices and reliable service. The bill does not change regulation of wholesale telephone matters, such as access to utility poles and rights to interconnect with other networks.

The most noticeable effects for many residential and business customers may be changes to the terms and conditions of service and the prices that some traditional, or incumbent, telephone companies offer. In the past, such changes could not be made without the review and approval of the Public Utilities Commission. Today, in most cases the Commission will have no authority to approve or reject changes made by telephone utilities. However, a customer may still make complaints to the Commission regarding the provision of basic service.

The law makes FairPoint Communications exempt from most review of prices as well as review of terms and conditions of service. The other incumbent telephone companies in the state (Bretton Woods Telephone, Dixville Telephone, Dunbarton Telephone, Granite State Communications, Northland Telephone, and TDS Telephone) can choose whether to move to this reduced level of regulation.

If you are a FairPoint customer and have telephone service which is not combined with other options, such as Caller ID, voicemail, or DSL, the telephone company cannot raise your rates by more than 10% each year without PUC approval. For customers receiving a discount on their telephone bill through the federally funded Lifeline program, price increases can be no more than 5% each year.

Please feel free to contact us at 1-800-852-3793 if you have any questions.