

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

DT 20-068

SPRINT COMMUNICATIONS COMPANY L.P.

Request for Rate Adjustment for Telecommunications Relay Services

ORDER OF NOTICE

On May 6, 2020, Sprint Communications Company L.P. (Sprint) filed a request to adjust its rates for a number of Telecommunications Relay Service programs (Relay Services) in New Hampshire by proposing an updated pricing structure and rates for optional new services. Sprint's filing included a motion for confidential treatment requesting that the Commission protect from disclosure the pricing details and certain factual underpinnings for Sprint's pricing proposal.

Relay Service programs provide functionally equivalent access to telecommunications services for individuals with hearing or speech impairments, allowing them to place and receive telephone calls at no cost to the Relay Services user. Consumers without hearing or speech impairments also use Relay Services to communicate with hearing- and speech-impaired consumers. Relay Services, which are available at no cost to both groups, are funded by a per-line fee paid by telephone utilities and carriers on each line in service in the state. They are paid from a trust fund established in 1992 by the incumbent local exchange carriers in New Hampshire (TRS Fund). The incumbent telephone companies selected the Commission to administer the fund at a time when telecommunications were fully regulated and not competitive.

Sprint's filing provides pricing for TRS (Telecommunications Relay Services), which includes services such as TTY, VCO, HCO, and TurboCode, and CapTel (Captioned Telephone Service). CapTel is a hybrid communications method that enables individuals who are hard of

hearing, oral deaf, or late-deafened to speak directly to another party on a telephone call and have the hearing party's spoken conversation displayed in real-time captions on the CapTel telephone. Included with TRS and CapTel are two new service options: intrastate Spanish-to-Spanish Relay Services and automated 711 service, which automatically routes registered users to relay agents with specific skills. Finally, the Sprint filing includes a new, optional Relay Conference Captioning (RCC) service, which facilitates participation in conference calls, webinars, and online training sessions, and includes transcripts of the sessions.

The filing raises, inter alia, issues related to whether the proposed pricing changes for Relay Services, which include transitioning from a per-minute charge structure to a flat monthly rate for TRS and CapTel, as well as proposed charges to provide RCC, will result in safe and adequate service at just and reasonable rates, as required by RSA 374:1 and RSA 374:2; and whether, in light of telephone industry deregulation, the Commission is the appropriate party to administer the TRS Fund, and, if not, then what alternative administrator(s) would be appropriate.

All incumbent local exchange carriers are hereby made mandatory parties to this docket.

Each party has the right to have an attorney represent the party at the party's own expense. Sprint's filing and subsequent docket filings, other than any information for which confidential treatment is requested of or granted by the Commission, will be posted to the Commission's website at <http://www.puc.nh.gov/Regulatory/Docketbk/2020/20-068.html>.

Based upon the foregoing, it is hereby

ORDERED, that, consistent with Governor Christopher T. Sununu's Emergency Order #12, the Commission will hold a web-enabled remote prehearing conference, pursuant to N.H. Admin. R., Puc 203.15, on June 19, 2020, at 10:00 a.m., at which each party will provide a

preliminary statement of its position with regard to the filing and any of the issues set forth in N.H. Admin. R., Puc 203.15. Members of the public who wish to access the hearing may do so by [\[clicking here\]](#). **If you have any difficulty obtaining access to this remote event, please notify the Commission by calling (603) 271-2431 as soon as possible.** Parties will be provided with additional instructions prior to the prehearing conference; and it is

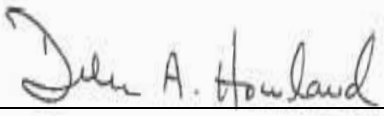
FURTHER ORDERED, that, immediately following the prehearing conference, Sprint, Commission Staff, and any intervenors will hold a web-enabled remote technical session to review Sprint's filing, and to address the question specified above; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that, pursuant to N.H. Admin. R., Puc 203.12, Sprint shall notify all persons desiring to be heard at this hearing by publishing a copy of this order of notice on its website no later than one day after the date of issue. In addition, the Executive Director shall publish this order of notice on the Commission's website no later than one day after the date of issue; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that, consistent with N.H. Admin. R., Puc 203.17 and Puc 203.02, any party seeking to intervene in the proceeding shall file with the Commission a petition to intervene with copies sent to Sprint on or before June 8, 2020, such petition stating the facts demonstrating how its rights, duties, privileges, immunities, or other substantial interests may be affected by the proceeding, consistent with N.H. Admin. R., Puc 203.17. Pursuant to the secretarial letter issued on March 17, 2020, which is posted on the Commission's website at <https://www.puc.nh.gov/Regulatory/Secretarial%20Letters/20200317-SecLtr-Temp-Changes-in-Filing-Requirements.pdf>, any party seeking to intervene may elect to submit its filing in electronic form; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that any party objecting to a petition to intervene shall make said objection on or before June 19, 2020.

By order of the Public Utilities Commission of New Hampshire this twenty-eighth day of May, 2020.



Debra A. Howland
Executive Director

Individuals needing assistance or auxiliary communication aids due to sensory impairment or other disability should contact the Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator, NHPUC, 21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10, Concord, New Hampshire 03301-2429; 603-271-2431; TDD Access: Relay N.H. 1-800-735-2964. Notification of the need for assistance should be made one week prior to the scheduled event.

Service List - Docket Related

Docket# : 20-068

Printed: 5/28/2020

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