

Telephone Service for Those at Significant Risk of Domestic Violence

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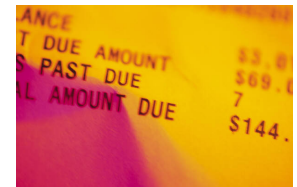
Victims of domestic violence and others at significant risk now have a new option that allows them to make time payment agreements to avoid having their telephone service disconnected if they fall behind on paying their bill.



the process that regulated phone companies will follow. You need to make sure your phone company is covered by this program.

The 2005 law applies to survivors of elder abuse, stalking, sexual assault or the disabled who are protected by no contact orders, protective orders or other court orders prohibiting contact.

The law applies to the four major telephone companies-- Qwest, Sprint, Verizon and CenturyTel as well as a majority of smaller regulated companies. It is optional for cooperative phone companies.



Senate Bill 983 directed the Oregon Public Utility Commission to establish rules that spell out



The PUC worked with telephone companies to establish procedures for receiving copies of court orders and affidavits from customers who are in danger of having their telephones disconnected.

Customers are not excused from paying their telephone bill. However, they are provided a process for entering into a reasonable payment plan with their

telephone company, if they are in jeopardy of having their telephone service disconnected.

The plan is modeled after a medical certification program that telephone companies provide through the Commission.

After you receive a past due notice from your telephone company, call your phone company about the new program. You should call **prior** to having your telephone service disconnected.

Your telephone company will contact you within 10 days with instructions how to establish a time payment agreement.

You will be instructed to provide the telephone company with a copy of a court order, which restrains someone from contact with an at-risk person in the household. You must also provide an affidavit.

What is an affidavit?



An affidavit is a form you submit to the telephone company stating someone in the household is at significant risk. It **must** be attached to a copy of the court order.

The affidavit must include:

- ◆ Name of the person to whom court order applies
- ◆ Relationship to the customer
- ◆ Expiration date of the order

It's important that the affidavit be notarized by a notary public.

The law does not excuse a customer from paying their overdue bill. However, the law does entitle you to enter into a reasonable payment agreement for past due amounts.



At a minimum, Time Payment Agreements must include the following terms:

- ◆ Initial down of \$10 or 25% (whichever is greater) of balance owed.
- ◆ Full payment of overdue balance within 90 days of agreement.
- ◆ Customer agreement to keep bills current.
- ◆ Payments to be made on monthly basis.

If you have questions about this program, call the Oregon Public Utility Commission, Consumer Section at:

1-800-522-2404

