



CUSTOMER FACTS



Texas Universal Service Fund (TUSF)

In 1987, the Texas Legislature established TUSF, the Texas equivalent of the Federal Universal Service Fund (FUSF). The current Public Utility Commission of Texas' rules governing Universal Service follow the Federal Universal Service rules. You may have noticed a charge labeled "TX USF Charge" on your phone bill. This charge first appeared on customer bills in January 1999. Prior to 1999, TUSF charges were hidden in long distance costs. Today, it is assessed on all Texas local, long distance, pager, wireless, and other telecommunications services.

The purpose of the TUSF, as mandated by PURA, is to implement a competitively neutral mechanism that enables all residents of the state to obtain the basic telecommunications services needed to communicate with other residents, businesses, and governmental entities.

What Programs are Supported in Texas?

- Texas High Cost Universal Service Plan
- Small and Rural Incumbent Local Exchange Company Universal Service Plan
- Implementation of the Public Utility Regulatory Act
- Additional Financial Assistance
- Universal Service Fund for Reimbursement for certain IntraLATA Service
- Lifeline Program
- Telecommunications Relay Service
- Specialized Telecommunications Assistance Program
- Audio Newspaper Program

What is the Rate?

Effective January 1, 2009, the TUSF surcharge will be 3.4% (from 4.4%) of intrastate telecommunication services receipts and applies to every retail customer's bill, except Lifeline and Link-Up services. Telecommunications providers are allowed to pass the costs of the TUSF through to residential and business customers on their monthly bills.

How is the Charge Calculated?

The charge is calculated by multiplying the amount of your total bill by the percentage rate (3.4%) minus the 9-1-1 service fee.

Who is Exempt?

- Texas state agencies
- political subdivisions
- non-profit schools (tax-exempt entities)
- long-distance telecom services that are not both originated from and billed to a telephone number or billing or service address within Texas
- access to a local exchange telephone company's network by a regulated provider of telecommunications services
- broadcasts (other than cable television service) by commercial radio or television stations licensed or regulated by the Federal Communications Commission
- Lifeline, Link-Up America, and Tel-Assistance customers

Let Us Assist You

QUESTIONS:

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

Visit: www.puc.state.tx.us

Email: customer@puc.state.tx.us

COMPLAINTS:

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

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

Fax: 1-512-936-7003 **Online:** www.puc.state.tx.us/ocp 5/09