

Federal Communications Commission

§ 64.2401

the carrier that provides telephone exchange service assigns the classification or if a tariff or State requirement obligates the carrier to provide yellow pages listings as part of telephone exchange service to businesses.

Subpart Y—Truth-in-Billing Requirements for Common Carriers; Billing for Unauthorized Charges

SOURCE: 64 FR 34497, June 25, 1999, unless otherwise noted.

§ 64.2400 Purpose and scope.

(a) The purpose of these rules is to reduce slamming and other telecommunications fraud by setting standards for bills for telecommunications service. These rules are also intended to aid customers in understanding their telecommunications bills, and to provide them with the tools they need to make informed choices in the market for telecommunications service.

(b) These rules shall apply to all telecommunications common carriers and to all bills containing charges for intrastate or interstate services, except as follows:

(1) Sections 64.2401(a)(2), 64.2401(a)(3), 64.2401(c), and 64.2401(f) shall not apply to providers of Commercial Mobile Radio Service as defined in §20.9 of this chapter, or to other providers of mobile service as defined in §20.7 of this chapter, unless the Commission determines otherwise in a further rulemaking.

(2) Sections 64.2401(a)(3) and 64.2401(f) shall not apply to bills containing charges only for intrastate services.

(c) *Preemptive effect of rules.* The requirements contained in this subpart are not intended to preempt the adoption or enforcement of consistent truth-in-billing requirements by the states.

[64 FR 34497, June 25, 1999; 64 FR 56177, Oct. 18, 1999; 65 FR 36637, June 9, 2000, as amended at 65 FR 43258, July 13, 2000; 69 FR 34950, June 23, 2004; 70 FR 29983, May 25, 2005; 77 FR 30919, May 24, 2012]

§ 64.2401 Truth-in-Billing Requirements.

(a) *Bill organization.* Telephone bills shall be clearly organized, and must comply with the following requirements:

(1) The name of the service provider associated with each charge must be clearly and conspicuously identified on the telephone bill.

(2) Where charges for two or more carriers appear on the same telephone bill, the charges must be separated by service provider.

(3) Carriers that place on their telephone bills charges from third parties for non-telecommunications services must place those charges in a distinct section of the bill separate from all carrier charges. Charges in each distinct section of the bill must be separately subtotaled. These separate subtotals for carrier and non-carrier charges also must be clearly and conspicuously displayed along with the bill total on the payment page of a paper bill or equivalent location on an electronic bill. For purposes of this subparagraph “equivalent location on an electronic bill” shall mean any location on an electronic bill where the bill total is displayed and any location where the bill total is displayed before the bill recipient accesses the complete electronic bill, such as in an electronic mail message notifying the bill recipient of the bill and an electronic link or notice on a Web site or electronic payment portal.

(4) The telephone bill must clearly and conspicuously identify any change in service provider, including identification of charges from any new service provider. For purpose of this subparagraph “new service provider” means a service provider that did not bill the subscriber for service during the service provider’s last billing cycle. This definition shall include only providers that have continuing relationships with the subscriber that will result in periodic charges on the subscriber’s bill, unless the service is subsequently canceled.

(b) *Descriptions of billed charges.* Charges contained on telephone bills must be accompanied by a brief, clear,

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non-misleading, plain language description of the service or services rendered. The description must be sufficiently clear in presentation and specific enough in content so that customers can accurately assess that the services for which they are billed correspond to those that they have requested and received, and that the costs assessed for those services conform to their understanding of the price charged.

(c) “Deniable” and “Non-Deniable” Charges. Where a bill contains charges for basic local service, in addition to other charges, the bill must distinguish between charges for which non-payment will result in disconnection of basic, local service, and charges for which non-payment will not result in such disconnection. The carrier must explain this distinction to the customer, and must clearly and conspicuously identify on the bill those charges for which non-payment will not result in disconnection of basic, local service. Carriers may also elect to devise other methods of informing consumers on the bill that they may contest charges prior to payment.

(d) *Clear and conspicuous disclosure of inquiry contacts.* Telephone bills must contain clear and conspicuous disclosure of any information that the subscriber may need to make inquiries about, or contest, charges on the bill. Common carriers must prominently display on each bill a toll-free number or numbers by which subscribers may inquire or dispute any charges on the bill. A carrier may list a toll-free number for a billing agent, clearinghouse, or other third party, provided such party possesses sufficient information to answer questions concerning the subscriber’s account and is fully authorized to resolve the consumer’s complaints on the carrier’s behalf. Where the subscriber does not receive a paper copy of his or her telephone bill, but instead accesses that bill only by e-mail or internet, the carrier may comply with this requirement by providing on the bill an e-mail or web site address. Each carrier must make a business address available upon request from a consumer.

(e) *Definition of clear and conspicuous.* For purposes of this section, “clear and

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conspicuous” means notice that would be apparent to the reasonable consumer.

(f) *Blocking of third-party charges.* (1) Carriers that offer subscribers the option to block third-party charges from appearing on telephone bills must clearly and conspicuously notify subscribers of this option at the point of sale and on each carrier’s Web site.

(2) Carriers that offer subscribers the option to block third-party charges from appearing on telephone bills must clearly and conspicuously notify subscribers of this option on each telephone bill.

[64 FR 34497, June 25, 1999, as amended at 65 FR 43258, July 13, 2000; 76 FR 63563, Oct. 13, 2011; 77 FR 30919, May 24, 2012; 77 FR 71354, Nov. 30, 2012]

Subpart Z—Prohibition on Exclusive Telecommunications Contracts

SOURCE: 66 FR 2334, Jan. 11, 2001, unless otherwise noted.

§ 64.2500 Prohibited agreements.

(a) No common carrier shall enter into any contract, written or oral, that would in any way restrict the right of any commercial multiunit premises owner, or any agent or representative thereof, to permit any other common carrier to access and serve commercial tenants on that premises.

(b) No common carrier shall enter into or enforce any contract, written or oral, that would in any way restrict the right of any residential multiunit premises owner, or any agent or representative thereof, to permit any other common carrier to access and serve residential tenants on that premises.

[73 FR 28057, May 15, 2008]

§ 64.2501 Scope of limitation.

For the purposes of this subpart, a multiunit premises is any contiguous area under common ownership or control that contains two or more distinct units. A commercial multiunit premises is any multiunit premises that is predominantly used for non-residential purposes, including for-profit, non-