



PUBLIC UTILITY LAW PROJECT OF NEW YORK, INC.

What to Do as ACP Winds Down

As the Affordable Connectivity Program (“ACP”) approaches its end, it's important to stay informed and proactive to ensure your internet service continues uninterrupted and at the best possible rate. Here are some steps you can take:

- 1. Keep All Correspondence:** Save all written notices and communications from your Internet Service Provider (ISP) regarding your ACP benefits and any changes to your service or billing.
- 2. Compare Prices and Plans:** Use tools like the FCC's Broadband Map (<https://broadbandmap.fcc.gov/home>) or websites like AllConnect (<https://www.allconnect.com/internet>) to compare internet plans and prices available in your area.
- 3. Understand Your Rights:** Remember, your ISP cannot charge you a termination fee if you decide to switch providers or plans, terminate your service for non-payment without a 90-day notice from the payment due date, or prevent you from switching to a different ISP or canceling your service.
- 4. File a Complaint if Necessary:** If you face issues such as being prevented from changing ISPs or being charged fees for canceling service, you can make a complaint to the FCC. Call 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322), ASL: 1-844-432-2275, or visit <https://consumercomplaints.fcc.gov/hc/en-us> to file a complaint online. If you are in NYC, you can file a complaint with 311.
- 5. Consider Other Programs:** Check if you qualify for other subsidy programs like Lifeline. Visit <https://www.lifelinesupport.org/> to learn more and apply. English and Spanish applications are available.
- 6. Seek Local Assistance:** If you need help understanding your options or filing complaints, local community organizations might be able to offer assistance.
- 7. Watch out for introductory offers or hidden fees:** ISPs sometimes offer cheaper promotional offers or add hidden fees onto their plans, so be sure to check the new broadband “nutrition labels” when considering a plan. These new labels are on ISP websites, as well as in stores.

Navigating Questions with Your ISP

When you contact your ISP to discuss your current plan or a new one, here are some important questions to ask:

1. About the Plan:

- Is this plan considered promotional, and what will the cost be after the promotion ends?
- What are the terms and conditions associated with this plan?

2. About Billing:

- How will my bill change once the ACP subsidy ends?
- Are there other discounts or subsidy programs I might qualify for?

3. About Service:

- What happens if I'm unable to pay my bill on time?
- What level of tech support and maintenance can I expect for any devices provided?

4. Regarding Changes:

- Can I change my service plan or switch to a different ISP without penalties?
- What charges apply if I decide to upgrade or downgrade my service?

Tips for Communicating with ISPs

- **Be Clear and Concise:** Clearly state your needs and concerns without getting sidetracked by sales pitches.
- **Document Everything:** Keep records of all interactions with your ISP, including names, dates, and details of conversations.
- **Ask for Clarifications:** Don't hesitate to ask for detailed explanations if you do not understand part of your service agreement or charges.
- **Negotiate:** Remember that many ISPs are willing to offer discounts or better terms to retain customers, especially if you mention considering other providers.

Additional Resources

- **National Digital Inclusion Alliance:** Offers resources on finding affordable internet service and digital literacy programs. Visit <https://www.digitalinclusion.org>.
- **Local Libraries:** Many libraries provide free access to computers and the internet, as well as workshops on digital skills.