

Consumer Connections

Brought to you by the Consumer Affairs and Outreach Division
Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau, FCC

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Tips for Avoiding Coronavirus Scams:

- Do not respond to calls or texts from unknown numbers.
- Do not click on any links in text messages.
- Never share your personal or financial information via text messages, emails, or over the phone.
- Be cautious if you're being pressured to share any information or make a payment immediately.
- Always check on a charity before donating.

[Learn more and hear audio from scam calls.](#)

Consumer Education Materials to Share

Download PDF's of the FCC's [tip cards and posters](#) to share. Tip cards are available in Spanish, Korean, Tagalog, Traditional Chinese and Vietnamese upon request.

Sanitizing Your Phone and Other Devices

5 TIPS TO SANITIZE YOUR PHONE AND YOUR OTHER DEVICES

For good phone hygiene, health experts suggest cleaning your device at least once a day.

- 01 SAFETY FIRST**
Unplug before cleaning.
- 02 WHAT TO USE**
A lint-free cloth dampened with soap and water, or alcohol wipes.
- 03 HOW TO CLEAN**
Don't spray cleaners onto the device.
- 04 SAFE PRODUCTS**
Avoid bleach products or abrasive cleaners.
- 05 PROTECT YOUR DEVICES**
Keep liquid & moisture away from openings.

FCC

Mobile phones keep us connected to the outside world and are likely the items we touch most throughout the day. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Americans are focusing more on their health and safety. Phone hygiene is a growing concern. According to health experts, cleaning your phone at least once a day is a good preventative measure. Before cleaning your device, review the manufacturer's guidance on how to clean your device. Apple and a number of Android device manufactures offer similar recommendations:

- Unplug the device before cleaning.
- Use a lint-free cloth that is slightly dampened with soap and water.
- Don't spray cleaners directly onto the device.
- Avoid aerosol sprays and cleaning solutions that contain bleach or abrasives.
- Keep liquids and moisture away from any openings on the device.
- Keep in mind that while it is safe to use disinfectant wipes on many devices, wipes that contain alcohol, bleach or vinegar may wear down the protective coating on a smartphone's screen.

If no instructions are available from the device manufacturer, the CDC suggests using alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70 percent alcohol to disinfect touch screens.

Additional steps that can minimize your mobile device's exposure to germs include:

- Keeping your phone in your pocket, purse or car.
- Writing down your shopping list instead of creating one on your phone.
- Making purchases using a credit card - preferably a contactless one - and not the mobile pay option on your smartphone.
- Touching your phone only after you have washed or sanitized your hands or removed gloves you have worn.
- Using a hands-free device when making calls so that your phone is not pressed against your face or face mask.

Events

Join us for our Monthly Consumer Information Call!

July 14, 2020
2:00 p.m. EDT

To RSVP and for more
info email
outreach@fcc.gov

Open Commission Meetings

[June 9, 2020](#)

10:30 am - 12:30 pm EST

[July 16, 2020](#)

10:30 am - 12:30 pm EST

[All FCC Events](#)

Broadcast Transition Information

Did you know that some TV stations may be changing frequencies in your market? If you watch TV with an antenna, remember to rescan! [More info.](#)

Phase 10, the final phase, began on 5/2/2020 and ends 7/3/2020.

Connect with the FCC:

[Facebook](#)
[Twitter](#)
[YouTube](#)

Contact CAOD:

Inquiries and information request can be sent to
outreach@fcc.gov
fcc.gov/outreach

Lifeline

As the Nation continues to address the COVID-19 pandemic, the FCC has made temporary changes to an important program that keeps many Americans connected, Lifeline.

Lifeline is an FCC Universal Service Fund program, administered by the [Universal Service Administrative Company \(USAC\)](#), that provides qualifying low-income consumers with monthly discounts on Internet or phone service (up to \$9.25 or up to \$34.25 for those residing on Tribal lands). Consumers qualify for Lifeline if: (1) they participate in certain federal benefits programs (such as Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Federal Public Housing, or the Veterans Pension and Survivor's Benefit); or (2) their household income is at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines. The Lifeline discount is limited to one benefit per household.

To help keep Americans connected during the coronavirus pandemic, the FCC has temporarily waived usage requirements, recertification and reverification de-enrollment procedures, and general de-enrollment procedures, and has extended those waivers until August 31, 2020. Four FCC orders, released on [March 17](#), [March 30](#), [April 29](#), and [June 1](#) will help ensure that no current Lifeline subscribers are involuntarily removed from the Lifeline program during this time of national crisis. The orders also direct the [Lifeline program administrator](#) to pause any involuntary de-enrollment of existing subscribers until that date.

The FCC has also made it easier for individuals who have lost their employment during the coronavirus pandemic and who qualify for Lifeline benefits to enroll in the Lifeline program. The FCC [temporarily waived the requirement](#) that consumers seeking to qualify for the program based on their income must provide at least three consecutive months of income documentation. Through August 31, consumers applying for the Lifeline program based on their income will only need to provide a document that provides current proof of income. This includes an unemployment benefits notice or successful submission of unemployment insurance application. The FCC also streamlined Lifeline service enrollment [for consumers living in rural Tribal areas](#).

The Lifeline program continues to ensure that all Americans have the opportunities and security that phone service brings, including being able to connect to jobs, family and emergency services.

Improving Your Home Network

Public health guidelines regarding social distancing have suddenly made staying at home the new normal for tens of millions of Americans. With kids home from school, parents teleworking full-time, and everyone needing Internet access, it's important to optimize the performance of your home network.

The FCC has several [tips that can help optimize your network's performance](#). These include:

- Checking your plan. What speed of service do you subscribe to? Is it enough to meet any new demands?
- Testing your speed. If your speeds are slower than expected, you should contact your Internet service provider to find out if they offer troubleshooting tips, or if there is an outage or service disruption in your area that may be affecting your speeds.
- In-Home connectivity. The majority of households with home Internet service use the Wi-Fi (wireless) service on their home router. Make use of direct wired connections and router settings to help ease congestion.
- Creating an Internet use schedule. Set guidelines with your family members and discuss daily schedules to avoid performance issues and prioritize usage.