



# Learn about “detariffing” of local toll telephone rates

Rules by the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) dealing with the retail aspects of providing competitive telephone service have “detariffed” some services.

Tariffs are sets of rates, practices and procedures that are filed by utilities and approved by the PUCO. Typically, tariffs cover the terms and conditions of the utility service, including the rates they charge customers.



calling plan, many calls may be “local toll” and billed at a per-minute rate. Customers may select the same or a different provider for handling the local toll portion of their telephone service. Each telephone company’s tariffs include the rates and other information about the local toll service provided to customers.

A map of Ohio’s LATAs can be accessed through the Web at [www.puc.state.oh.us/pucogis/statemap/lata.pdf](http://www.puc.state.oh.us/pucogis/statemap/lata.pdf)

## Consumer Protections

Customers should carefully read any materials

provided by their telephone company about the detariffing process.

The OCC’s “Choosing a long-distance provider” fact sheet contains important information to review before selecting a local toll service.

Consumers may want to explore answers to the following questions when shopping for a long-distance provider:

- Is there a fee to sign up for long-distance service?
- For what length of time is the agreement?
- What happens if I decide to move before the agreement expires?
- Is there an early termination or cancellation fee if I decide to choose a different provider during the term of the agreement?
- How much will I pay (the rate) for local toll calls?
- Am I being asked to switch all my long-distance services (including state-to-state) or just local toll service?

## What is detariffing?

Detariffing occurs when a telephone company is no longer required to file tariffs for services. It also means that consumers will need to enter into an agreement with their provider of those services. For residential consumers, local toll is the only service that is detariffed. Similar detariffing occurred several years ago at the Federal Communications Commission with respect to consumers’ other long-distance services.

## Understanding local toll service

In the 1980s, the U.S. was divided into calling areas within each state. Ohio contains nine calling areas, also called Local Access and Transport Areas or LATAs. For the purposes of regulation, the Federal Communications Commission oversees calling between the areas, while state regulators oversee calling within an area. While some calls within a given area are included as part of a customer’s flat rate local

*continued on the other side...*

...continued from other side

- At the end of my agreement, will it automatically renew?
- Will I receive a separate local toll bill, or will my charges be consolidated with those for my local service?
- If I have a billing problem, whom should I contact?
- When will my local toll service begin?

Be sure to look for important terms and conditions before entering an agreement. Also, obtain and keep a copy of any agreements to which you enter. Depending on the area of the state in which you reside, choices may be available for your local toll service. The OCC wants to ensure that you make a well-informed, educated decision after comparing the available offers.

The Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC), the residential utility consumer advocate, represents the interests of 4.5 million households in proceedings before state and federal regulators and in the courts. The state agency provides information and responds to consumers' questions about their electric, natural gas, telephone and water services. To receive utility information, request brochures or schedule a presentation, residential consumers may call 1-877-PICKOCC 1-877-742-5622) toll free in Ohio or visit the OCC Web site at [www.pickocc.org](http://www.pickocc.org).

*The Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel is an equal opportunity employer and provider of services.*

**For additional information from the Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel:**

**Call: 1-877-PICKOCC (1-877-742-5622) toll free or (614) 466-8574**  
**Write: 10 West Broad Street, Suite 1800, Columbus, Ohio 43215-3485**  
**E-mail: [occ@occ.state.oh.us](mailto:occ@occ.state.oh.us) • Internet Address: <http://www.pickocc.org>**