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Vermont Public Utility Commission  
12 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05620

RE: Post Moratorium Plan for Burlington Telecom

To Whom It May Concern:


Pursuant to the Order issued by the Public Utility Commission on May 28, 2020 in Case No. 20-0703-PET, Champlain Broadband LLC d/b/a Burlington Telecom (“Burlington Telecom”), by and through their counsel, submits their post moratorium plan for commercial and residential telephone customers.

While continuing to offer state of the art fiber to the home telephone, internet and cable television to the residents and businesses in the City of Burlington, during the pandemic, Burlington Telecom also supported its customers and community in several other ways. It took the FCC’s Keep America Connected Pledge; created and implemented a streamlined and no-cost Remote Learning Program for pre-K through 12 student families. They worked closely with its non-residential customers and offered support by on-boarding phone numbers, account pause strategies, reduced services and associated fees. Burlington Telecom is proud of these efforts and to play an important role in trying to sustain the communication needs of the City of Burlington residents and businesses.

Consequentially, these efforts presented unbudgeted costs to Burlington Telecom and the past due balances in the plan do not reflect these actual costs to assist the residents and businesses of the City of Burlington. Burlington Telecom looks forward to continuing its normal operations post the expiration of the moratorium.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (802) 654-0742.

Sincerely,

  
Amber L. Thibeault, Esq.

Celebrating 40 Years of Service to Our Community

## **CHAMPLAIN BROADBAND LLC, d/b/a BURLINGTON TELECOM**

### **Reinstatement of Telephone Service Disconnection Plan**

#### **Introduction**

This document establishes the plan by which Champlain Broadband, LLC, d/b/a Burlington Telecom (herein “Burlington Telecom”) will reinstate its telephone service disconnection activities post the moratorium (herein referred to as “Plan”). This Plan is submitted at the request of Vermont Public Utility Commission (herein “PUC”) in Order dated May 28, 2020, Case No. 20-0703-PET (herein collectively referred to as “Moratorium”).

#### **Implementation**

Burlington Telecom’s Plan includes both short and long-term objectives. Its short-term objective is to provide a reasonable pathway for its residential and non-residential customers impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic to retain their essential telephone service while repaying their outstanding service balance. The payment arrangements will seek to get customer accounts current within six (6) months following the lifting of the Moratorium. This Plan will apply to customers who were customers of Burlington Telecom during the Moratorium.

The long-term objective is to return to Burlington Telecom’s routine service disconnection activities at the end of the Moratorium for all other customers.

During the Moratorium, Burlington Telecom has reached out to those customers with delinquent balances to both bring awareness to their account status and offer assistance towards a payment arrangement, if needed. Consistent with Burlington Telecom’s customer service approach, these notices were a simple reminder without a standard disconnection notice. Upon lifting of the Moratorium, disconnection notices will be sent to customers with past-due telephone accounts to offer a repayment plan consistent with the following.

#### **Residential Customers**

Burlington Telecom’s residential customers are delivered services in one of two programs: bundled or on a per service basis. The overall approach is to adjust monthly bills to encompass both telephone services and outstanding debt repayment for up to a 6-month period. This is a 100% extension to its routine payment agreement period. Additionally, Burlington Telecom will waive the standard 50% upfront balance payment requirement and not impose any late fees during the payment arrangement. Being customer focused, Burlington Telecom will remain as flexible as possible when making a payment arrangement including allowing the customer to propose options as long as the account can be made whole within 6 months.

To maximize the success of this Plan, an appropriately established payment arrangement may require a balance of interim rates, debt repayment and the opportunity for additional incentives. An example would be a customer in a bundled service program migrating to a per service program to allow for reduced services costs (by choosing a lower service tier, dropping a non-

essential service, etc.), adding a portion of outstanding debt and having the opportunity to earn Goodwill and/or Auto Credit Card Payment credits.

#### Non-residential Customers

Burlington Telecom's non-residential customers are delivered services in one of two programs: bundled or on a per service basis on a contract basis. Our Plan strives to attain a balanced solution with our non-residential customers evaluating payment arrangements that incorporate ongoing service fees and debt repayment.

This class of customer also has access to our incentive programs, Goodwill and Auto Credit Card Payment credits. In addition, Burlington Telecom will consider all non-residential customer requests for creative solutions to assist them getting back to a sustainable operation with the condition that the account must be made whole within 6-months or less. Burlington Telecom will not impose late fees during the Moratorium or payment arrangement periods or require 50% upfront payment of any outstanding balance and is extending the normal payment arrangement period by up to 100%.

#### Goodwill Credit

Goodwill Credits will be used to both ease the burden of our customers impacted by the COVID-19 event and provide incentive to engage in a payment plan. Customers who meet their payment agreement will receive an account credit, which can be used against their outstanding debt balance, commensurate with the amount of original debt.

#### Auto Credit Card Pay Credit

A monthly credit will be applied to any account that is in arrears if the customer signs up for and is approved for automatic credit card payments.

#### Metrics

The comparison below provides the number of residential and non-residential telephone customers that had past-due accounts for the dates indicated.

## Comparison Pre-Moratorium and Moratorium Metrics

<b>Date</b>	<b># of Residential Customers</b>	<b>Past-due Balance Totals</b>	<b># of Non-residential Customers</b>	<b>Past-due Balance Totals</b>
June 6, 2019	16	\$1,084	4	\$515
June 5, 2020	48	\$5,130	23	\$4,770

### Funding

Burlington Telecom is not aware of any outside funds to which they would be eligible to apply to offset any lost revenue or internal labor costs.