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STATE OF VERMONT
PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

Vermont Legal Aid request for moratorium on utility and telecommunications shutoffs during State of Emergency

Case No. 20-0703-PET

EIGHT RLECS' REPORT ON DISCONNECTIONS AND VCAAP FUNDING

Eight Vermont rural local exchange carriers (the “Eight RLECs”)¹ submit this report in compliance with the Order Ending the Temporary Disconnection Moratorium and Ordering Protections for Utility Customers Facing Economic Hardships (the “Order”), which the Public Utility Commission (“Commission”) issued in this proceeding on October 8, 2020.

In its Order, the Commission ended a temporary moratorium on involuntary disconnections from utility services, including, in relevant part, from basic telephone service, which the Commission had put in place on March 18, 2020, as an emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Order, at 1. The Commission’s decision to end the moratorium coincided with the implementation of the Vermont COVID-19 Arrearage Assistance Program (“VCAAP”) by the Department of Public Service (“Department”). *Id.*, at 12.

To assist the Commission’s evaluation of its decision to end the moratorium, the Commission directed the Department to file a report by November 15, 2020, detailing how much money had been distributed through the VCAAP program. The Department submitted its compliance report on November 16, 2020.² The Commission also directed Vermont utilities

¹ Franklin Telephone Company, Inc. (“Franklin”), Ludlow Telephone Company d/b/a TDS Telecom, Northfield Telephone Company d/b/a TDS Telecom, Perkinsville Telephone Company, Inc. d/b/a TDS Telecom (the three foregoing, together, “TDS Telecom”), Shoreham Telephone LLC d/b/a Otelco (“Shoreham”), Topsham Telephone Company, Inc. (“Topsham”), Vermont Telephone Company, Inc. d/b/a VTel (“VTel”), and Waitsfield-Fayston Telephone Company, Inc. d/b/a Waitsfield Telecom, d/b/a Champlain Valley Telecom (“WCVT”).

² Case No. 20-0703-PET, Comments of the Department of Public Service (Nov. 16, 2020).

to file no later than December 15, 2020, a report on (1) how lifting the moratorium has affected their disconnection numbers, (2) how many of their customers have made use of VCAAP funding, and (3) what percentage of their customers who have arrearages are actively participating in or seeking to participate in, discussions about repayment plans.

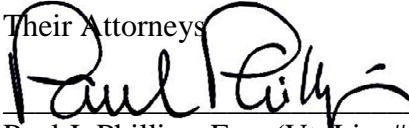
Order, at 14. The Eight RLECs submit the report attached here as **Exhibit RLEC-1** in compliance with the foregoing requirement.

DATED at Burlington, Vermont, this 15th day of December, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

Franklin Telephone Company, Inc., Ludlow Telephone Company, Northfield Telephone Company, Perkinsville Telephone Company, Inc., Shoreham Telephone LLC, Topsham Telephone Company, Inc., Vermont Telephone Company, Inc. d/b/a VTel, and Waitsfield-Fayston Telephone Co., Inc. d/b/a Waitsfield Telecom, d/b/a Champlain Valley Telecom


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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Paul J. Phillips, Esq., certify that on December 15, 2020, I caused electronic copies of the "Eight RLECs' Report on Disconnections and VCAAP Funding" to be delivered to all participants in Case No. 20-0703-PET by means of the ePUC electronic filing system of the Vermont Public Utility Commission.

DATED: December 15, 2020


Paul J. Phillips, Esq.

Case No. 20-0703-PET
Report of the Eight RLECs

Company	Disconnections since October 15, 2020	No. of customers receiving VCAAP payments	# or % of customers with arrearages having or discussing payment plans
Franklin	5 (1 customer who is now reconnected + 4 seasonal customers who departed without paying)	7 (out of 8 applicants)	2 out of 3 (67%)
Shoreham	13	1	0 ¹
TDS Telecom (Ludlow/ Northfield/ Perkinsville)	October: 3 (all now reconnected) November: 24 (12 now reconnected)	3 (out of 5 applicants)	0 ¹
Topsham	0	32	96 (75%)
VTel	October: 9 (4 now reconnected) November: 11 (6 now reconnected)	35	16 out of 32 (50%) ²
WCVT	0 ²	88	0 ³

¹ No customers have requested repayment plans, but the company remains willing to establish a repayment plan at the customer's request.

² Company contacts all account holders with arrearages regarding potential payment plans and generally approves any reasonable payment arrangement.

³ WCVT is not processing disconnections or collections at this time but will restart in January 2021.