



TELECOM REGULATION OVERVIEW

WHAT IS THE COMMISSION'S ROLE CONCERNING TELECOMMUNICATIONS?

- The Commission is tasked with promoting a competitive telecommunications marketplace while protecting and maintaining the availability of high-quality telecommunications services, including basic voice services at affordable rates. (§40-15-101 C.R.S.)

WHAT TYPES OF TELECOM SERVICE DOES THE COMMISSION REGULATE?

- The Commission regulates the providers of *intra*state residential and business retail and wholesale voice services, as well as telecom providers of basic emergency services (9-1-1 service). There are different types of telecommunications providers and the Commission's jurisdiction varies by type of provider
 - incumbent local exchange carriers (ILECs)
 - rural local exchange carriers (RLECs)
 - competitive local exchange carriers (CLECs)
 - intra or interlata exchange carriers (IXCs)
 - Basic Emergency Service Providers (BESPs), and
 - toll resellers
- Specific regulated services include, basic residential voice service, up to 5 business voice lines, white pages directory listings, directory assistance listings, operator services, some custom calling features, basic emergency service, switched access, wholesale interconnection, private lines with fewer than 24 channels.

WHAT SPECIFIC FUNCTIONS DOES THE COMMISSION PERFORM?

- The Commission regulates basic voice service providers: the authority to do business; rates, terms and conditions of service; service availability; service quality; and consumer complaints.
- In general the Commission does not regulate wireless companies but may, on a limited basis, regulate the company if it receives state or federal subsidies.
- Regulation regarding broadband services is currently being defined by the FCC. The Commission's role is limited to those situations when providers receive federal subsidies to deploy broadband to unserved areas.
- The Commission regulates local 9-1-1 authority requests for surcharge increases above the statutory limit and is the state numbering administrator.
- The Commission administers these state telecom programs: No-call List; Low Income Telephone Assistance Program; Telephone Relay Services for the deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind, or speech-disabled; Colorado High Cost Support Mechanism which assures affordability of basic service in rural high cost areas.
- The Commission implements regulations delegated to it by the FCC, such as certification for federal universal service funding.



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WHAT IS THE STATUS OF TELECOM SERVICES TODAY?

- The telecommunications industry has experienced significant technological change over the past 20 years. The telecommunications services environment now encompasses a variety of technologies, including wireline, wireless and satellite, voice and data services.
- In the past three decades, the market has evolved from a single provider to competitive long distance service in the 1990s, then to growing competition in the wireline and wireless markets in the 21st Century. This has primarily been due to new technologies, including the widespread deployment of the Internet and Internet Protocol (IP) technology.
- Communications services providers today utilize copper, coaxial cable, fiber, and wireless spectrum, in conjunction with traditional switching, IP, cellular, and Wi-Fi technologies to provide services ranging from basic voice to high speed broadband data from fixed and mobile locations.
- In an effort to balance market competition and growth while simultaneously providing assurance of the continued availability and interoperability of all communications modes, an interrelated set of federal and state regulations governing retail and wholesale telecom operations continues to evolve.

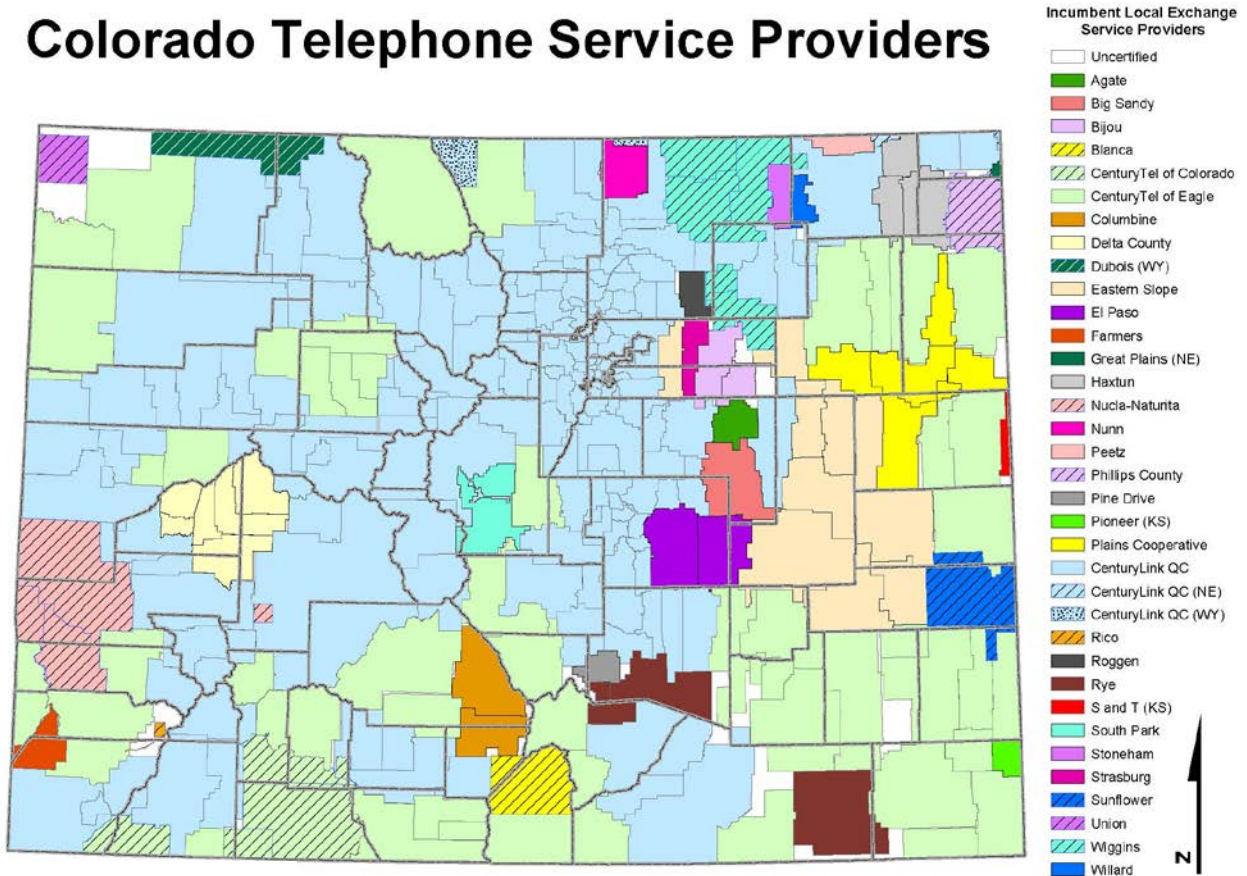
WHAT IS THE STATUS OF THE TELECOM MARKET IN COLORADO?

- There are several hundred wireline and wireless telecommunications companies that serve Colorado today. In order to ensure that customers of different companies, the Commission regulates certain aspects of each of these types of companies.



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**Incumbent
Colorado Telephone Service Providers**



map by Mid-States Consultants for Colorado Telecommunications Association (CTA)

- The map above depicts the voice service territories for the **incumbent** provider CenturyLink and the other 29 rural incumbent carriers. Incumbent carriers were those companies providing service in an area when the Telecommunications Act of 1996 came into effect.
- There are considerably more telecommunications providers in urban areas of the state than rural.
- Competitive providers include AT&T, Comcast, Verizon, Sprint, Level 3, Zayo, NE Colorado Cellular, XO Communications, and Windstream.
- All of the telecom companies have a regulatory obligation to provide basic voice services throughout their entire territory.
- Within each of these areas, one or more competitive wireline and wireless carrier may serve customers, as well as generally operate with limited or no regulatory oversight by the Commission, if they are regulated by the FCC.