



WHAT HAPPENS IF TELEPHONE SERVICE IS NOT AVAILABLE WHEN I REQUEST IT?

The Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC) defines “held orders” as requests for basic local telephone service that are not met within a certain time period. For customers of Qwest, that time period is within 10 days of the customer’s application (unless the customer specifically asks for a later service date). For customers of rural telephone providers, the time period is within 30 days of a customer’s application.

Although more than 95 percent of customer requests for service are generally met within these time frames, there may be situations where a local telephone provider is unable to meet the requested service date. When that happens, customers are entitled to certain remedies, depending on the type of service they are requesting and the geographic area of the state in which they reside.

BACKGROUND

PUC Rule 2310 addresses the obligations of telephone companies to provide service in a timely manner. The held order rules do not apply in areas where the PUC has found basic local service to be effectively competitive. (Rule 2310(f)). Those areas include all of the Denver metro area (from Longmont on the north to Parker on the south) and most of Colorado Springs (except for Black Forest, Manitou, Green Mountain Falls and Woodland Park).

Requests for service in other areas of the state, where there is less competition, are covered by the PUC’s held order rules. The rules apply to all applications for service for the primary (first) residential and primary (first) business lines at a residential location and the first two lines at a business location. However, the rules apply only to basic local wire line telephone service, and not to requests for premium or unregulated services like wireless, DSL or Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP).

TIME FRAMES FOR PROVISION OF SERVICE

Telephone providers, except for rural companies, are required to provide 95 percent of their customers with basic service no later than 10 days from the date of the customer’s application for service (unless the customer requests a later date). Service to the remaining 5 percent of customers must be provided within 30 days of the date of the application. Failure to meet these percentages is a violation of PUC rules.

To reach PUC Consumer Affairs:

1560 Broadway, Suite 250, Denver, CO 80202
303-894-2070 (local); 1-800-456-0858 (toll-free)
dora_puc_complaints@state.co.us

If construction of new facilities is required, the local exchange carrier can take up to 90 days from the date of the customer's application to provide service. (If construction is required during the months of October through May, or when a county moratorium on construction is in place, the local exchange provider can take up to 150 days to provide service.)

REMEDIES TO CUSTOMERS NOT RECEIVING BASIC SERVICE WITHIN 30 DAYS

If a telephone company fails to provide basic local exchange service within 30 days, it must offer the following remedies to customers until service is provided:

- A credit applied to the customer's account equal to the pro rata monthly local exchange service charge for each day after 30 days that service is not provided.
- A monthly credit up to \$40 to reimburse the cost of a temporary alternative to basic local exchange service, such as wireless service or remote voice mail.
- Waiver of the installation charge once service is provided.

NOTICE TO CUSTOMERS

To help ensure that accurate information is given, all customers who are not supplied service within 10 days of their application date must be provided a written notice by the telephone company that includes an order number, the general status of the order, and a phone number to call with questions. This notice must be postmarked on or before the 15th day after the date of application.

Customers who have questions about the PUC's held order rules, or who want to know whether they qualify for remedies under the rules, should contact the PUC Consumer Affairs office for assistance.