



Jennifer L. McClellan
Associate General Counsel
Verizon Communications

703 East Grace Street
7th Floor
Richmond, VA 23219
USA

jennifer.l.mcclellan@verizon.com

T 804-772-1512

M 804-922-3013

May 15, 2020

E-FILED

Ms. Brinda Westbrook-Sedgwick
Commission Secretary
Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia
1325 G Street, NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20005

Re: Formal Case GD-2020-01

Dear Ms. Westbrook-Sedgwick:

Enclosed please find Verizon Washington, DC Inc.'s Response to the Office of the People's Counsel COVID Petition in the above referenced proceeding.

If you have any questions regarding this filing, please contact me.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer L. McClellan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Enclosures

cc: All Parties of Record

**BEFORE THE
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

In the Matter of)
The Petition of the Office of the People’s)
Counsel for an Investigation into Options) **GD-2020-01**
Available for Public Utility Consumers to)
Mitigate the Negative Impacts of the)
COVID-19 Public Health Emergency)
When the Emergency Is Lifted

VERIZON WASHINGTON, DC INC.'S RESPONSE TO OPC PETITION

Pursuant to 15 DCMR § 105.1, Verizon Washington, DC Inc. (“Verizon”) hereby answers the Petition of the Office of the People’s Counsel for an Investigation into Options Available for Public Utility Consumers to Mitigate the Negative Impacts of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency When the Emergency is Lifted (“OPC Petition”).

Recognizing the unprecedented nature of the coronavirus crisis, Verizon has been working with customers, first responders, government agencies, schools, and public health organizations to stay connected during this difficult time. As demonstrated by the attachment, Verizon has made many voluntary commitments and worked closely with these groups to ease the burden of this crisis. That's because Verizon cares about its communities, and because it is good business to keep customers happy and connected. Among other things, Verizon signed on to the FCC's "Keep Americans Connected" pledge on March 13, committing that for 60 days it would (i) waive late fees that any residential or small business customers incur because of their economic circumstances related to the coronavirus, and (ii) not terminate service to any residential or small business customers because of their inability to pay their bills due to

disruptions caused by the coronavirus.¹ On April 27, Verizon announced it was extending that commitment through June 30; other companies quickly followed suit, and the FCC extended the pledge date to that same time period several days later. It was Verizon who led on extending that commitment and it was not in response to any regulatory action. Verizon also took the unrequired step of making clear that any Verizon customer who signs up, or has already signed up, for this relief is automatically enrolled in a deferred bill program to make it easier to get back on track paying off balances after June 30, 2020.

Verizon and other communications providers are competing to keep their customers more than ever during this difficult time, and it shows in all of the voluntary commitments being made to those customers. Consequently, communications services should not be part of any investigation if the Commission decides to launch one in response to OPC's request. If, however, the Commission creates a task force regarding the coronavirus that includes communications issues, Verizon (as always) would be happy to participate.

Respectfully submitted,

VERIZON WASHINGTON, DC INC.



Keefe B. Clemons
[Bar ID: 454040]
6 Bowdoin Square, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02114
(212) 519-4716 (telephone)
(857) 415-5189 (facsimile)
keefe.b.clemons@verizon.com

¹ Press Release, 3/13/2020, "Verizon will help consumers and small businesses disrupted by impact of coronavirus," updated 4/27/2020 (available at <https://www.verizon.com/about/news/verizon-help-customers-and-small-businesses>).

Jennifer L. McClellan
703-713 E. Grace Street, 7th Floor
Richmond, VA 23219
(804) 772-1512 (telephone)
(804) 772-2143 (facsimile)
jennifer.l.mcclellan@verizon.com

May 15, 2020

We're here. And we're ready.



New & Notable



Extending our commitment to keep customers connected through June 30. This means we will neither terminate service nor charge late fees to our postpaid wireless, residential, and small business customers that notify us of their inability to pay their bills due to disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic.



Partnering with California Governor Gavin Newsom, committed unlimited internet connectivity to the state at a discounted rate for up to 250,000 underserved students to help bridge the digital divide.



Collaborating with the Ford Motor Company Fund to expand Verizon's "Food for Frontline Workers" initiative to doctors, nurses and medical staff working in downtown Detroit. Local food trucks will provide one meal each day for two weeks to more than 300 medical staff working at the TCF Regional Care Center.



Announced a \$1 million donation to the New Jersey Pandemic Relief Fund to support their mission to organize and coordinate resources for New Jersey's most vulnerable communities, bringing Verizon's total COVID-19 crisis commitment now stands at over \$55 million in contributions and donations to nonprofits around the globe.



Participating in the American Express 'Stand for Small' program, which is a coalition of more than 40 companies across media, technology, consumer goods and professional services, and many other industries, that have come together to provide meaningful support to small businesses as they navigate the impacts of COVID-19.



Donating an additional \$2.5 million to Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), a national nonprofit that invests in economic opportunity for people and communities across America, as part of the launch of Verizon's Pay It Forward Live, a weekly streaming entertainment series in support of small businesses affected by COVID-19. This is in addition to an initial \$2.5 million investment. Over the course of the series, all viewers will be encouraged to tag their favorite local businesses and make advance purchases for when the businesses reopen. As consumers engage, Verizon will unlock an additional \$2.5 million in funds, bringing the total donation to a potential \$7.5 million.



Introducing "Touchless Retail" to reduce the number of physical touchpoints in stores while streamlining the customer shopping experience.



Offering new and existing customers free months of service on its fleet management platform, intelligent video solution, and field management solution for small and medium businesses to easily track and monitor vehicles, assets, employees and the work being done for end-customers.



Working with iHeartMedia to donate tens of thousands of smartphone chargers to hospitals across the nation in cities hardest hit by the coronavirus and aid in COVID-19 relief efforts.



Assisted virtual basic training graduation at Fort Jackson by supplying a Satellite PicoCell on a Trailer (SPOT) to provide the coverage needed for three commercial grade video cameras to film graduations and allow people to view them via a Facebook live stream.

Verizon is prepared to serve customers during COVID-19 crisis



Meeting the shifting demands of customers by ensuring our fiber optic and wireless networks continue to perform well.



Waiving internet and voice service charges for current Lifeline customers for two billing cycles.



Adding 15GB of data for no charge to the plans of wireless and small business customers on metered plans, 15GB of 4G LTE hotspot data to wireless customers on unlimited plans, and 15GB of data to Jetpack plans through May 31.



Expanding our best wireless unlimited pricing to nurses and teachers. They join active-duty military, veterans and people who work as first responders who already benefit from this ongoing pricing for their personal accounts and for their families.



Introduced the Care Smart watch, a new wearable that provides safety and well-being for seniors and creates a simple way to keep families connected with loved ones.



Expanding “Home on Us” to include more entertaining ways to virtually connect with others or play popular games and platforms like Pokémon GO, Roblox and Sago Mini World. This is in addition to free learning tools from Quizlet, Epic! and Chegg Study, as well as free access to dozens of news channels, sports replays of classic NBA and NHL games, and entertainment channels such as SHOWTIME, Epix, HBO, Cinemax, and Starz.



Continuing our long-standing practice of placing no data caps on Verizon home broadband and home voice services.



Offering unlimited domestic calling to wireless customers on limited-minute plans.



Announced #WeKeepPlaying with Yahoo Sports and the Women’s Sports Foundation – a first of its kind live event bringing together some of the most iconic women in professional sports to inspire young athletes during the COVID-19 crisis.



Created a coronavirus hub page, <https://news.yahoo.com/coronavirus/>, across the Yahoo ecosystem that aggregates trusted and reliable news and content.

Verizon is partnering with first responders, governments, schools, and public health agencies to deliver on critical missions



Partnering with the Los Angeles Unified School District to provide internet connectivity for up to 100,000 students.



Partnering with the New York Times to provide 14 million students and teachers in high schools within the U.S. free digital access to [NYTimes.com](https://www.nytimes.com).



Tripled the data allowance for Verizon Innovative Learning schools.



Giving first responders priority access to our networks.



Preparing free meals seven days a week to feed healthcare workers through a program that brings together multiple New York City restaurants with six area hospitals to help both the restaurants' workers and hospital staff on the front lines throughout April.



Deploying portable cell sites to add network capacity to crisis centers nationwide. The Verizon Response Team (VRT) is active on a nationwide basis, with more than 270 engagements at pop-up healthcare facilities and drive-thru coronavirus testing sites, quarantine facilities on military bases and airports as well as support for medical and emergency operation centers.



Delivered connectivity for the USNS Comfort, a US Navy medical treatment facility that includes 1,000 hospital beds, 12 operating rooms, radiology capabilities and a pharmacy. The USNS Comfort was docked in NYC where it was sent to help relieve the pressure on the city's hospitals that are overwhelmed during the coronavirus crisis.



Supporting industry-specific telehealth apps to help healthcare agencies care for patients and enable testing with connected technologies.



Enabled thousands of conference lines for federal, state, local and healthcare organizations to facilitate new, secure work-from-home strategies.



Launched new interactive voice response services (IVRs) to help both healthcare and public sector agencies prioritize and more effectively route incoming coronavirus-related calls.



Working with government agencies to stand up additional call centers and work-from-home solutions to keep employees safe while expanding their ability to respond to public needs during the crisis.

Verizon is investing in the U.S. economy and has announced \$55 million to date in contributions and donations to critical organizations nationally and internationally



Investing more in our economy by increasing our capital guidance range from \$17 - \$18 billion to \$17.5 - \$18.5 billion in 2020.



Supporting our communities through a combined \$15 million donation to nonprofits directed at supporting students and healthcare first responders, including No Kid Hungry, the American Red Cross, the Center for Disaster Philanthropy (CDP) COVID-19 Response Fund, Direct Relief, and the COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund in support of the World Health Organization (WHO)'s global response.



Donated \$10 million in advertising inventory through Verizon Media to support mental and public health response efforts to the Child Mind Institute, Crisis Text Line, Empower Work, Mental Health Foundation, and the Trevor Project. The inventory will be used to raise awareness and mobilize resources, deepening Verizon Media's longstanding commitment to supporting the health of the global community at large. As part of its well-being initiative, the company also launched Yahoo Life, a site focused on news, resources and content dedicated to wellbeing.



Cofounded "People + Work Connect" with Accenture, Lincoln Financial Group, and ServiceNow to help people get back to work. This employer-to-employer initiative brings together companies laying off or furloughing people with companies in urgent need of workers.

Verizon is supporting its dedicated employees



Offering enhanced pay to mission-critical employees who must deploy outside their homes to meet critical customer needs and provide essential services.



Deployed a new virtual assistant tool to serve residential and small business customers who need repairs for their wireline voice, data or video services that enables technicians to assist customers without entering residences or premise



Allowing more than a third of our installation and maintenance technicians to keep their work vehicles at their homes to support social distancing.



Preparing to re-train and re-deploy thousands of retail employees to work-from-home functions as part of a massive employee transition plan.



Implemented a comprehensive coronavirus leave of absence policy. Those who contract the virus are eligible for up to 26 weeks paid leave. For employees caring for someone who's been infected, for employees directed to stay home due to an underlying medical condition and for employees who have trouble finding childcare at this time, Verizon provides eight weeks of pay at full pay and, if needed, an additional six weeks with 60% of their base wage.



Keeping our employees informed with a new employee resource page and through a daily broadcast called Up To Speed Live open to anyone via twitter: <https://twitter.com/VZUpToSpeed> and on the company's website: <https://www.verizon.com/about/news/speed-uts-live>.



Providing paid leave of absence support for employees who are unable to work-from-home for health, childcare, or other reasons.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on this 15th day of May, 2020, a copy of Verizon Washington, DC Inc.'s Response to the Office of the People's Counsel COVID Petition, was electronically served to the parties listed below.

Ms. Brinda Westbrook-Sedgwick
Commission Secretary
Public Service Commission
of the District of Columbia
1325 G Street, N.W.
Suite 800
Washington, DC 20005
psc-commissionsecretary@psc.dc.gov

Mr. Christopher Lipscombe
General Counsel
Public Service Commission
of the District of Columbia
1325 G Street, N.W.
Suite 800
Washington, DC 20005
clipscombe@psc.dc.gov

Honorable Willie L. Phillips
Chair
Public Service Commission
of the District of Columbia
1325 G Street, NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20005
wphillips@psc.dc.gov

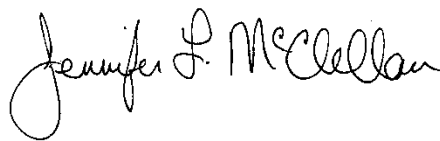
Cathy Thurston-Seignious, Esq.
Supervisor, Administrative &
Associate General Counsel
Washington Gas
1000 Maine Avenue, SW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20024
Cthurston-seignious@washgas.com

Sandra Mattavous-Frye, Esq.
Anjali Patel, Esq.
Travis Smith, Esq.
People's Counsel
Office of the People's Counsel
1133 15th Street, NW, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20005
apatel@opc-dc.gov
smfrye@opc-dc.gov
tsmith@opc-dc.gov

Brian Caldwell, Esq.
Assistant Attorney General
DC Government
441 4th Street, NW Suite 600-S
Washington, DC 20001
brian.caldwell@dc.gov

Honorable Richard Beverly
Commissioner
Public Service Commission
of the District of Columbia
1325 G Street, NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20005
rbeverly@psc.dc.gov

Kim F. Hassan
Associate General Counsel
Potomac Electric Power Company
701 Ninth Street, N.W.
Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20068
Kim.hassan@exeloncorp.com



Jennifer L. McClellan