

Telephone Rates F.A.Q.

Why is my current bill more (or less) than it was before?

The previous chargeback model was based on usage. Since usage is a small percentage of the total annual costs (operations, maintenance and usage), the resulting chargeback was not an accurate indicator of cost nor was it fair across departments. In July 2008, the chargeback was modified to more accurately reflect actual costs. This modification means that departments that had a significant amount of usage (and were thus paying more than their share of total costs) will get lower bills and those with little to no usage will pay more (i.e. A department with 100 phones but no usage previously paid nothing)

What makes up the costs paid by departments?

Departments are charged a line rate that pays for the operations, maintenance and domestic use. They also pay a device charge for the phones that cover replacement parts and a phone refresh which, as currently planned, would occur every 5 years. International calls will be billed to departments at cost. Wiring changes or non-standard requests will be charged at a time and materials (T&M) rate.

What costs are paid centrally?

The capital acquisition and replacement costs for the phone system are being paid centrally as are all emergency phones. All phones in centrally supported/scheduled classrooms and those classrooms designated by STLT are also covered. Departments, schools or colleges who have special use labs and classrooms will be responsible for paying for phones in areas. In addition, all campus telephony infrastructure, network operations and network maintenance are covered centrally.

Will there be additional charges when the new phone system is installed?

The device rate will not be assessed to departments until the new phone devices are deployed. At this time billing for the new phone devices is scheduled to begin with the August '09 telephone bill. If a department wishes to put phones where no wiring currently exists, new wiring will be charged back at a T&M rate.

What can I do to reduce my cost?

The best way to reduce costs is to use existing wiring and only deploy phones where phones are required.

Why is my bill incorrect?

The previous chargeback model did not have any charges for phones with no usage. Over the last 20 years phones have been moved around or disconnected without proper tracking for billing purposes. Assessing line charges for each phone line is raising awareness about inactive and incorrectly billed lines.

When will my bill be corrected?

We are in the process of validating the data as part of the new phone system design that is expected to be completed in April 2009. The corrected data will go into our billing system between April and June 2009 and credits will be issued before the end of the fiscal year. Credits for the entire FY08/09 year will be issued for any lines disconnected or charged in error.

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Will the rates stay the same?

There is a built-in review of the chargeback rates on an annual basis. As part of that review, rates are validated against actual costs. Adjustments will be made on an annual basis and approved by the University Chargeback Committee. For example, if the line charge was determined to be \$0.50 too high, the charge in the following fiscal year would be \$1.00 less to pass back the surplus to departments.

When will my account be credited for errors and disconnects?

Credits will be issued automatically based on the information from the Design Coordinators. These credits will be issued before the end of fiscal year FY08/09.

How can I budget for telephone costs for FY09/10?

Before March, your Design Coordinators will receive a validated list of phone lines, virtual lines and phone devices. Multiply these numbers by their applicable rates to get a total estimate for FY09/10. If your department historically used significant international calling, you can estimate an amount by using the published international rates from AT&T.

What are you doing to prevent future errors from impacting my phone costs?

We have worked and continue to work at improving our internal processes. Our new system uses a database to track changes rather than the paper records used previously.

What have you done to reduce costs given the current budget situation?

We have revised the schedule and limited the scope of the project to stretch our limited fiscal resources across two fiscal years and more accurately match expected cash flow. The revised schedule has us completing the design in April and beginning implementation in June with completion in August. To contain costs, the initial installation will only reproduce the current phone system functionality. We are also working with departments to reduce the number of phone devices and lines required across the campus.

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If the costs go down, when will I see that in my bill?

Each year the Chargeback Committee will review the chargeback rates. As part of that review, rates are validated with actual costs. Adjustments will be made to under or over recover surplus or deficit costs in the following year. For example, if the line charge was determined to be \$0.50 too high, the charge in the following fiscal year would be \$1.00 less to pass back the surplus to departments.

When will the data from my Design Coordinator be reflected in my bill?

The Design Coordinators will receive a validated list before June. We will use this list to make adjustments to your phone bill retroactively to July 2008 and these credits will be issued by the end of June 2009. If you must make changes to your phones after the Design Coordinator has validated their list these changes will be reflected in future bills retroactive to the date of the change.

Should I submit work orders to remove numbers from my bill?

No work orders should be submitted for changes that are part of the list submitted by your Design Coordinator. The list from the Design Coordinators will be used to deactivate or transfer lines to appropriate departments. Notification of completed work will be sent out to the Design Coordinators and retroactively appear in your bill before the end of June 2009. Work orders should be submitted for any changes not reflected in the Design Coordinator's list.

How do the new telephone rates compare with cellular and land line services?

At \$11 per month (per phone) for unlimited local and long distance calling, the cost for service being offered through the Bulldog Calling project is very reasonable. For a comparable plan, traditional home phone service-providers are charging from \$25.00 to \$49.99. Cellular carriers are charging \$30 to \$99 per month if you agree to a two-year contract.

How much are the monthly line charges?

Monthly Recurring Charges (State)

Charge	Current Rates
Line	\$8.65
Line Reservation and Virtual Line	\$1.73
Device – Large	\$6.07
Device – Medium	\$4.99
Device – Small	\$2.62
Analog	\$0.55
Labor Rate (time and materials per hour)	\$37.91