

**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of)	
)	
Verizon)	Complaint No. 1550812
)	
Complaint Regarding)	
Unauthorized Change of)	
Subscriber's Telecommunications Carrier)	

ORDER

Adopted: May 30, 2019

Released: May 31, 2019

By the Deputy Chief, Consumer Policy Division, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau:

1. In this Order, we consider the complaint¹ alleging that Verizon changed Complainant's telecommunications service provider without obtaining authorization and verification from Complainant as required by the Commission's rules.² We conclude that Verizon has responded fully to the Complainant's complaint and has taken action to resolve the complaint.

2. Section 258 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended (the Act), prohibits the practice of "slamming," the submission or execution of an unauthorized change in a subscriber's selection of a provider of telephone exchange service or telephone toll service.³ The Commission's implementing rules require, among other things, that a carrier receive individual subscriber consent before a carrier change may occur.⁴ Specifically, a carrier must: (1) obtain the subscriber's written or electronically signed authorization in a format that satisfies our rules; (2) obtain confirmation from the subscriber via a toll-free number provided exclusively for the purpose of confirming orders electronically; or (3) utilize an appropriately qualified independent third party to verify the order.⁵ The Commission also has adopted rules to limit the liability of subscribers when a carrier change occurs, and to require carriers involved in slamming practices to compensate subscribers whose carriers were changed without authorization.⁶

¹See Informal Complaint No. 1550812 filed (Apr. 6, 2017).

²See 47 CFR §§ 64.1100 – 64.1190.

³47 U.S.C. § 258(a).

⁴See 47 CFR § 64.1120.

⁵See *id.* § 64.1120(c). Section 64.1130 details the requirements for letter of agency form and content for written or electronically signed authorizations. *Id.* § 64.1130.

⁶These rules require the carrier to absolve the subscriber where the subscriber has not paid his or her bill. If the subscriber has not already paid charges to the unauthorized carrier, the subscriber is absolved of liability for charges imposed by the unauthorized carrier for service provided during the first 30 days after the unauthorized change. See *id.* §§ 64.1140, 64.1160. Any charges imposed by the unauthorized carrier on the subscriber for service provided after this 30-day period shall be paid by the subscriber to the authorized carrier at the rates the subscriber was paying to the authorized carrier at the time of the unauthorized change. *Id.* Where the subscriber has paid charges to the unauthorized carrier, the Commission's rules require that the unauthorized carrier pay 150 percent of those charges to the authorized carrier, and the authorized carrier shall refund or credit to the subscriber 50 percent of all charges paid by the subscriber to the unauthorized carrier. See *id.* §§ 64.1140, 64.1170.

3. We received Complainant's complaint alleging that Verizon had changed Complainant's telecommunications service provider without Complainant's authorization. Pursuant to our rules,⁷ we notified Verizon of the complaint.⁸ Based on the information provided by Verizon, it appears that Verizon has fully absolved Complainant of all charges assessed by Verizon in a manner consistent with the Commission's liability rules.⁹ We therefore find that the complaint referenced herein has been resolved.

4. Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED that, pursuant to section 258 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. § 258, and sections 0.141, 0.361 and 1.719 of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR §§ 0.141, 0.361, 1.719, the complaint filed against Verizon, IS RESOLVED.

5. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this Order is effective upon release.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION



Nancy Stevenson
Deputy Chief
Consumer Policy Division
Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau

⁷ *Id.* § 1.719 (Commission procedure for informal complaints filed pursuant to section 258 of the Act); *id.* § 64.1150 (procedures for resolution of unauthorized changes in preferred carrier).

⁸ See Verizon's Response to Informal Complaint No. 1550812 filed (Apr. 20, 2017).

⁹ 47 CFR § 64.1160.