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For Immediate Release

**FCC LOWERS INTERSTATE AND INTERNATIONAL PRISON
PHONE RATES TO HELP FAMILIES STAY CONNECTED**

*Provides Cost Savings for Interstate Calling to Vast Majority of Incarcerated People
and Caps International Calling Rates for the First Time*

WASHINGTON, May 20, 2021—The Federal Communications Commission today acted to lower the interstate and international calling rates for incarcerated people and their families. Access to affordable communications services is critical for everyone in the United States, especially for incarcerated people whose primary or only communications option is to purchase telephone service from providers that typically operate on a monopoly basis.

In today's actions, the Commission adopted an Order lowering the interim rate caps on interstate inmate calling services to \$0.12 per minute for all prisons and \$0.14 for jails with average daily populations of 1,000 or more, providing financial relief to the vast majority of incarcerated people. It also establishes caps on international calling services rates for the first time at all prison and jail facilities. The Order substantially adopts reforms the Commission unanimously [proposed](#) in August 2020 to address egregiously high rates and charges for telephone service that impede incarcerated people's ability to stay connected with family and loved ones.

The Order also eliminates a separate higher rate cap for interstate collect calls, reforms the ancillary charge rules for third-party financial transaction fees, and adopts a new mandatory data collection to gather data to set permanent rates. In addition, the Order reaffirms providers' obligations regarding access for incarcerated people with disabilities.

In a related action today, the Commission adopted an Order denying Global Tel*Link's petition for reconsideration of the August 2020 [Order on Remand](#) and reiterated that the jurisdictional nature of a telephone call for purposes of charging consumers depends on the physical location of the originating and terminating endpoints of the call. Rates or charges for calls not clearly determined to be either intrastate or interstate may not exceed any applicable federally prescribed rates or charges.

Finally, a Further Notice accompanying the Order proposes or seeks comment on a number of reform issues, including the provision of communications services to incarcerated people with disabilities; how best to set permanent rate caps for interstate and international calls at all facilities; future treatment of site commission payments; and potential revisions to the ancillary service charges rules.

Action by the Commission May 20, 2021 by Third Report and Order, Order on Reconsideration, and Fifth Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 21-60). Acting Chairwoman

Rosenworcel, Commissioners Carr, Starks, and Simington approving. Acting Chairwoman Rosenworcel, Commissioners Carr and Starks issuing separate statements.

WC Docket No. 12-375

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).