



**NEWS FROM THE PENNSYLVANIA OFFICE OF CONSUMER ADVOCATE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**January 9, 2023**

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**The Pennsylvania Office of Consumer Advocate and Pennsylvania Office of Small Business Advocate jointly file a Formal Complaint Against Frontier Communications Commonwealth Telephone Company.**

The Pennsylvania Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) and Office of Small Business Advocate (OSBA) announced the filing of a Joint Complaint with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) against Commonwealth Telephone Company, LLC d/b/a Frontier Communications Commonwealth Telephone Company (Frontier Commonwealth).

Over the past several months, approximately 300 Frontier Commonwealth customers submitted informal complaints to the offices of Representatives Tina Pickett, Clint Owlett, and Martin Causer describing serious and persistent quality of service problems experienced with Frontier Commonwealth's basic telephone service and broadband availability.

These complaints were shared with the OCA. According to Consumer Advocate Patrick Cicero, "the problems brought to our attention through the complaints forwarded by the State Representatives raise serious and fundamental safety concerns for the affected consumers. Without access to a telephone, these Pennsylvanians have been denied the ability to communicate with doctors, their family, and from their homes."

Because some of the complaints involved small businesses, the Consumer Advocate consulted with the Small Business Advocate and forwarded the relevant complaints to the OSBA. "Along with the Small Business Advocate, I look forward to reaching a prompt and comprehensive resolution of these issues before the PUC" continued Consumer Advocate Cicero.

The consumer complaints describe a variety of service quality problems related to their telephone service. Examples of these include, but are not limited to:

- a. Outages that last days, even weeks; and recur
- b. Noise on the line which impairs the quality of a telephone call;
- c. Difficulty in reaching a Company customer service representative;
- d. Difficulty in obtaining a satisfactory response from a Company customer service representative when reporting an outage;
- e. Appointments scheduled for a technician repair visit are made based upon the Company's convenience and resources, not the needs of the consumer;

- f. When a repair or dispatch of a technician is needed, the Company scheduled appointment date is days or even weeks away, leaving the consumer without reliable telephone service in the interim;
- g. Scheduled repair appointments which are not honored;
- h. A lack of notice to the consumer, when a scheduled repair appointment is changed;
- i. Dissatisfaction with Company bills and efforts to obtain an explanation and/or adjustment from a Company customer service representative;
- j. Reports of Company network facilities and wires which are damaged, poorly maintained, or of insufficient capacity;
- k. Service quality which threatens public safety.

Informal complainants include senior citizens and other residents who need reliable access to 911, other first responders, their family, and medical caregivers; residents in rural areas who cannot rely upon a neighbor for prompt access to telephone service, customers who do not have wireless service available in their home. The complaints also include a police department, community organization, and various small businesses. The complaints also raise concerns about broadband internet service availability at statutorily required speeds.

“Small businesses cannot contribute to economic growth if they lack communication capabilities. The failure to provide at least a basic level of service is detrimental to the success of small businesses,” says Small Business Advocate NazAarah Sabree. “As businesses continue to rebuild, quality service is more important than ever. We will work closely with the Consumer Advocate and legislators to ensure that inadequate service is not tolerated.”

A copy of the Joint Complaint against Frontier Communications Commonwealth can be found at the OCA’s website through this [link](#) or at [oca.pa.gov/complaints/](https://oca.pa.gov/complaints/) then “Telephone” and “2023”.

**Contact our office if you have questions:** The OCA has a consumer hotline that can assist households who have questions or issues concerning Frontier Communication Commonwealth. Call 1-800-684-6560 Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. or email us at [consumer@paoca.org](mailto:consumer@paoca.org). Small businesses can contact the OSBA via email at [ra-sba@pa.gov](mailto:ra-sba@pa.gov), or phone 717-787-2525.

**About the PA Office of Consumer Advocate:** The Pennsylvania Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) represents the interests of Pennsylvania utility consumers in cases before the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC), federal agencies and state and federal courts. The OCA uses its resources to help the greatest number of consumers. Attorneys and staff advocate for Pennsylvanians’ access to reliable, safe and affordable utility service.

**About the PA Office of Small Business Advocate:** The Pennsylvania Office of Small Business Advocate (OSBA) is responsible for representing and protecting the rights and interests of Pennsylvania’s small business utility consumers in all legal matters before the Public Utility Commission (PUC), corresponding state and federal regulatory agencies, and in higher courts. OSBA’s clients include small and commercial businesses employing from one to 250 employees.

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<p>Patrick M. Cicero, Consumer Advocate Taylor Doyle, Consumer Liaison I Pennsylvania Office of Consumer Advocate 555 Walnut Street, 5th Floor, Forum Place Harrisburg, PA 17101-1923 717-783-5048 <a href="mailto:consumer@paoca.org">consumer@paoca.org</a></p>	<p>NazAarah Sabree, Small Business Advocate Teresa Wagner, Executive Director Pennsylvania Small Business Advocate 555 Walnut Street, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Forum Place Harrisburg, PA 17101-1925 717-783-2525 <a href="mailto:ra-sba@pa.gov">ra-sba@pa.gov</a></p>
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