

# New Inmate Telephone System Provider

## History

In July 2010 the Contracts Management Bureau, Montana Department of Corrections (MDOC), with the assistance of the State Procurement Bureau, Department of Administration, released a Request for Proposal (RFP) for an Inmate Telephone System provider.

Upon final scoring of the responses Telmate, LLC out of Ontario, Oregon was selected as the highest scoring offeror.

By statute, all commissions made from the Inmate Telephone System must be deposited directly into the Inmate Welfare Fund. It was determined that \$23,000 per month was necessary to keep the inmate welfare fund sufficiently supported. The RFP was written with the requirement that the commissions only generate enough to maintain the inmate welfare fund. This allowed the vendors responding to the RFP to focus on the rate of the call and not how much money could be generated by commissions. However, if total commissions exceed \$23,000, Corrections will receive an appropriate percentage over and above the \$23,000 guarantee.

## Rates

Telmate's proposal offered rates of \$0.24 connect fee and \$0.12 per minute. For a 30 minute call this equates to only \$3.84 for any call placed within the United States (both collect and prepaid). By comparison, the same call would have cost \$30.65 in 2004 (Qwest), and \$8.75 in 2010 (PCS). **These are outstanding rates!**

## Installation & System Features

Installation of the new system is to take place February 21-25, 2011. All four facilities (MSP, MWP, PHYCF, and RYCF) transition should be completed within these five days. Minimum disruption of the phones is expected during this time.

Inmates will also have their own inmate telephone account to hold money instead of making payments to an individual destination number (called number).

The Telmate system also has the ability to integrate with an inmate's trust account via CACTAS. An inmate will be able to dial 411 from the inmate phone and follow voice prompts to request the transfer. This technology is new to both Corrections and Telmate and is planned for implementation along with system installation or shortly thereafter. Friends and family will also be able to post payments to the inmates telephone account via a portal on the Telmate website <https://pay.intelmate.com/shop> or by calling the toll free customer service line at 866-516-0115 after February 16, 2011 (**this date is estimated and may change**).

Once the new system is installed an inmate will be able to report inmate telephone related problems directly to Telmate. Inmates will now dial 211 and leave a voicemail for Telmate's customer service. Telmate will then use a scripted response back to the inmate using the voicemail system.

All numbers for 'attorneys of record' have been transferred to the new provider (Telmate) and will not be recorded as with the previous provider. Instructions for calling the Crime Tip Line and PREA hot line will be distributed when the new phones are installed.

Called parties will hear a new voice prompt introduction when an inmate calls. The automated voice will say "You have a (free, prepaid, collect) call from (inmate's name) at the (name of institution), press 1 or \* to accept this call, press 2 to reject this call, press 3 to block all future calls, or press 4 for rate quotes.

## Prepaid Accounts

When the RFP was written it was a mandatory requirement that all respondents to the RFP waive any fees related to prepaid accounts. With the PCS system in place from 2006 to present families and friends were charged up to \$8.00 per credit card transaction to fund a prepaid account. Telmate agreed to waive such fees as prepaid account set up fee, prepaid account funding fee, refund fee, account maintenance fee, inactive account fee, regulatory cost recovery fee, universal service fund administrative fee, etc. Telmate is a customer service driven company where they view an inmate, friends, family and Corrections as their customer.

Friends and family may begin setting up prepaid accounts with Telmate after February 16, 2011 (**this date is estimated and may change**). Telmate's customer service 866-516-0115. Payments can be made with a debit/credit card, and e-check. There is a \$30.00 minimum deposit for credit/debit card and e-check payments.

Western Union/Money Gram payments no longer need to be mailed. Once a Western Union/Money Gram has been purchased, friends and family will call in the payment to Telmate's customer service 866-516-0115. Telmate will verify the payment via a confirmation number by Western Union/Money Gram and post the money to the appropriate prepaid account.

Friends and family may also purchase Greendot prepaid Visa/MasterCard's at locations such as Walmart, Safeway, Walgreens, Kmart, CVS Pharmacy, Albertsons etc. to fund a prepaid account. Visit [www.greendotonline.com](http://www.greendotonline.com) to view locations near you.

Inmates, friends, and family should try to use up whatever funds are in their PCS (now GTL) prepaid accounts before February 23<sup>rd</sup>. MDOC is working with PCS and Telmate towards a seamless account balance transfer from PCS to Telmate, any money left on a PCS account on February 25<sup>th</sup> will be automatically transferred to Telmate. Telmate expects to have all account balances available for use on February 26<sup>th</sup>. Look for further announcements on this issue if anything changes.

Friends and family that do not want their account balance transferred to Telmate must request a refund from PCS. Refunds will be issued **only** to destination number (called number) account holders. There is a \$4.95 refund fee. Refunds can take up to 10 days for a credit card refund and 6 weeks for a refund by check. Please call PCS 1-888-288-9879 for more information on refunds.

**Inmates with questions should speak directly with the appropriate facility staff.**

**Questions on PCS prepaid account balances should call 888-288-9879.**

**Telmate's customer service 866-516-0115.**