



Consumer Protections During the ACP Wind-Down

What's happening with the ACP?

The \$14.2 billion Congress initially made available for the ACP is running out. Due to the lack of additional funding for the ACP, the Commission has announced that April 2024 will be the last month ACP households will receive the *full* ACP discount, as they have received in prior months. ACP households may receive a *partial* discount in May 2024. After May 2024, unless Congress provides additional funding, ACP households will no longer receive the ACP benefit and the ACP will end. As a result, the FCC has begun taking steps to wind-down the ACP. For more information about the wind-down, visit: www.fcc.gov/acp.

Notifications to ACP Households about the Wind-Down

During the wind-down period, internet companies are required to send ACP households three (3) separate notices about the ACP ending and its impact on household internet bills and service. The first two notices should have been received by late January and by mid-March informing ACP households that the ACP is ending and the impact on their service and bill. The final (third) notice will be included as part of the last bill or billing cycle in which the full ACP discount is applied.

Consumer Protections

During the ACP wind-down, ACP internet companies are still responsible for following the consumer protection requirements in the ACP rules. Some will continue even after the ACP has ended. The ACP consumer protection rules include, but are not limited to:

- *Transferring ACP discount:* During the ACP wind-down, households can continue to transfer their ACP discount to other participating internet companies who continue to accept ACP transfers.
- *Terminating Service:* ACP internet companies cannot terminate an eligible ACP household's ACP-supported internet service for failure to pay for the service until 90 days has passed since the bill payment due date. However, ACP internet companies can switch the household to a lower-cost plan with advance notice if the household enters a delinquent status after the bill due date. This rule will be in place for as long as the household continues to receive the ACP discount.
- *Early Termination Fees:* If a household entered into a service plan with a service contract and applied their ACP discount to that service plan, the internet company cannot charge the household an early termination fee for terminating that service contract early, even after the ACP ends.

Determining How to Continue Internet Service

During the ACP Wind-Down:

ACP households are not required to stay with their internet company or continue to receive the same internet service after the end of the ACP.

- Households can decide to opt out (no longer continue their internet service after the ACP ends) by contacting their internet company and telling them they would like to drop their internet service.

If a household wishes to continue to receive internet service, they can:

- Select another, lower cost internet plan from the same internet company, or
- Start an internet service with a different internet company.

After the ACP ends:

ACP households may have been asked by their internet company if they wish to continue service (opt in) after the ACP has ended. ACP households may have been asked this when they signed up to receive the ACP discount with their internet company or more recently.

ACP households will continue to receive internet service after the ACP ends if they:

- Previously agreed to continue internet service from their internet company.
- Paid for internet service from their internet company BEFORE they started receiving the ACP discount.
- Currently contribute to the cost of their internet service even with the ACP discount applied.
 - This includes households that contribute to the cost of any portion of bundled services (such as those offering voice, internet, and texting or video and internet) that include ACP-supported internet service.

ACP households will NOT continue to receive internet service after the ACP ends, if they:

- DID NOT previously agree to continue internet service after the end of ACP.
- Have not paid their internet company for service.

If a household is not sure if they previously opted in or opted out to receiving service from their internet company after the ACP has ended, the household should contact their internet company and discuss their options.

Stay Informed

To prepare for the end of the ACP, households are strongly encouraged to:

- Consistently check their emails, text messages, and mail for notices from their internet company about the ACP ending and how it will impact their internet bill.
- Contact their internet company and ask if they have a lower cost plan and/or a low-income program. When calling their internet company, have account and billing verification information.
- Contact Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) for questions about the wind-down. Consumers can call the ACP Support Center at 877-384-2575 or go to AffordableConnectivity.gov for information about the status of the program.
- Consumers can also file a complaint through the FCC's Consumer Complaint Center at <https://consumercomplaints.fcc.gov> about ACP billing and service issues.