



NOTICE

The National Exchange Carrier Association, Inc. (NECA) Access Service Tariff F.C.C. No. 5 on file with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is the official reference for NECA access tariff information. For your convenience, NECA has posted Tariff F.C.C. No. 5 on our website. Although precautions have been taken to insure that this material is identical to the filed version, undetected production errors may cause discrepancies to occur. In the case of any discrepancies, the official tariff on file with the FCC will prevail.

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**This material is being filed on 15 days’
notice under Section 204(a)(3) of the
Communications Act.**

September 16, 2020

Transmittal No. 1616

Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

Attention: Wireline Competition Bureau

The accompanying tariff material, issued on behalf of the National Exchange Carrier Association, Inc. (NECA) bearing Tariff F.C.C. No. 5, Access Service, is sent to you for filing, in compliance with the Communications Act of 1934, as amended.

The filing, to become effective October 1, 2020, consists of tariff pages as indicated on the following check sheet:

Tariff F.C.C. No. 5

919th Revised Page 1

This filing introduces two temporary discount programs for Asymmetric and Symmetric Digital Subscriber Line (A/SDSL) Voice-Data Access Service in Section 17.4.9 (E), Promotional Offerings for Qualifying Students. The proposed revisions allow companies to offer a temporary discount on new A/SDSL service or an upgrade at no additional charge on existing A/SDSL service for customer or subscriber households with a student in grades K through 12 or a technical high school equivalent program who is categorically eligible for a reduced cost or free lunch through the National School Lunch Program.

This promotional offering is intended to benefit low income households with a qualifying student for the purposes of remote schooling due to the national emergency. The projected revenue impact to the special access pool for the remainder of the current test period is de minimis.

In compliance with Section 61.14 of the Commission’s Rules, the transmittal, associated files, required Form 159 and \$960.00 filing fee are being transmitted electronically today via ETFS.

All correspondence and inquiries concerning this filing should be directed to me at the above address or faxed to 973-599-6612.

Jennifer Leonard

Attachments

Tariff Pages (5)

Supporting Documentation

FCC Registration Number for Tariff 5 Participants

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Title Pages 1 to 68 and Pages 1 to 17-197 inclusive of this tariff are effective as of the date shown. Original and revised pages as named below and on Supplement Nos. 23 and 36 contain all changes from the original tariff that are in effect on the date hereof.

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Title 9	68th	Title 38	77th	1.1	150th
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Title 23	99th	Title 56	80th	6	13th
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Title 28	80th			12	2nd
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Title 30	77th				

* New or revised page. Transmittal No. 1616

Issued: September 16, 2020

Effective: October 1, 2020

Senior Director - Access Tariffs & Costs
60 Columbia Road, Bldg. A - 2nd Fl., Morristown, NJ 07960

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17-42.2.1	12th *	17-42.2.6.12	10th	17-42.2.8.8.4	4th
17-42.2.1.1	Original *	17-42.2.6.13	10th	17-42.2.8.8.5	4th
17-42.2.1.2	Original *	17-42.2.6.14	9th	17-42.2.8.9	10th
17-42.2.2	23rd	17-42.2.6.14.1	5th	17-42.2.8.10	10th
17-42.2.2.1	2nd	17-42.2.6.15	8th	17-42.2.8.10.1	2nd
17-42.2.2.2	2nd	17-42.2.6.15.1	6th	17-42.2.8.11	10th
17-42.2.2.3	2nd	17-42.2.6.15.2	6th	17-42.2.8.12	10th
17-42.2.2.4	2nd	17-42.2.6.15.3	6th	17-42.2.8.13	10th
17-42.2.2.5	2nd	17-42.2.6.16	Original	17-42.2.8.14	8th
17-42.2.3	18th	17-42.2.7	27th	17-42.2.8.14.1	5th
17-42.2.3.1	2nd	17-42.2.7.1	3rd	17-42.2.8.15	8th
17-42.2.3.2	2nd	17-42.2.7.2	2nd	17-42.2.8.16	5th
17-42.2.3.3	2nd	17-42.2.7.3	2nd	17-42.2.8.17	5th
17-42.2.3.4	2nd	17-42.2.7.4	2nd	17-42.2.8.18	5th
17-42.2.3.5	2nd	17-42.2.7.5	2nd	17-42.2.9	5th
17-42.2.3.6	2nd	17-42.2.7.6	2nd	17-42.2.10	2nd
17-42.2.3.7	2nd	17-42.2.7.7	2nd	17-42.2.11	2nd
17-42.2.4	15th	17-42.2.7.8	2nd	17-42.2.12	3rd
17-42.2.5	14th	17-42.2.7.9	2nd	17-42.2.13	2nd
17-42.2.6	28th	17-42.2.7.10	2nd	17-42.2.14	3rd
17-42.2.6.1	11th	17-42.2.7.11	2nd	17-42.2.15	6th
17-42.2.6.1.1	7th				
17-42.2.6.1.2	5th				

* New or revised page.

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ACCESS SERVICE

17. Rates and Charges (Cont'd)

17.4 Other Services (Cont'd)

17.4.9 Digital Subscriber Line Access Services (Cont'd)

(E) Promotional Offerings for Qualifying Students

(T)

The following temporary discount programs are available from October 1, 2020 until June 30, 2021:

(N)

- Upgrade on existing ADSL or SDSL Voice-Data Service or
- Discount on new ADSL or SDSL Voice-Data Service.

These temporary discounts are limited to a customer or a customer's subscriber household with a student in grades K-12 or a technical high school equivalent program who are categorically eligible for a reduced cost or free lunch through the National School Lunch Program. The Telephone Company must verify the customer or customer's subscriber household contains a qualifying student by obtaining documentation regarding reduced cost or free lunch eligibility.

ADSL and SDSL Voice-Data Access Service at downstream speeds less than 1 Mbps or greater than 100 Mbps are excluded from these promotions.

The Access Order Charge and non-recurring installation charge are waived for these promotional offerings. No minimum service periods or term commitment penalties apply.

Prior to the end of the promotional period, the Telephone Company will provide reasonable notification to the customer of the option to continue the upgraded or new ADSL/SDSL Voice-Data service beyond the promotional period at the non-discounted monthly rates.

At the end of the promotional period, if the customer does not elect to continue the upgraded or new ADSL or SDSL Voice-Data service, the Telephone Company will revert the upgraded service back to the original ADSL or SDSL Voice-Data speed in service prior to the promotion or discontinue new ADSL or SDSL Voice-Data service ordered under this promotion.

(N)

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(N)

17. Rates and Charges (Cont'd)

17.4 Other Services (Cont'd)

17.4.9 Digital Subscriber Line Access Services (Cont'd)

(E) Promotional Offerings for Qualifying Students
(Cont'd)

(1) Temporary Upgrade on existing ADSL and SDSL
Voice-Data Service

Upon request from an existing ADSL or SDSL Voice-Data Access Service customer or a customer's subscriber household with a qualifying student, and where technically feasible, the Telephone Company will provide an upgrade of one speed level, except for current 1/6 Mbps subscribers where the upgrade is two speed levels, from the customer's speed in effect on September 15, 2020, at no additional charge until June 30, 2021 or until the service is discontinued or downgraded to the previous level, whichever comes first.

Existing ADSL Voice-Data Access Service customers can be upgraded to the next highest asymmetric speed level not to exceed 50/100 Mbps. Existing SDSL Voice-Data Access Service customers can be upgraded to the next highest symmetric speed level not to exceed 100/100 Mbps.

Upgrades are available as follows:

<u>Current ADSL Voice-Data speed</u>	<u>Promotional upgrade</u>
1/6 Mbps	3/15 Mbps
1/10 Mbps	3/15 Mbps
3/15 Mbps	3/25 Mbps
3/25 Mbps	25/50 Mbps
25/50 Mbps	50/100 Mbps
<u>Current SDSL Voice-Data speed</u>	<u>Promotional upgrade</u>
10/10 Mbps	50/50 Mbps
50/50 Mbps	100/100 Mbps

(N)

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Senior Director - Access Tariffs & Costs
60 Columbia Road, Bldg. A - 2nd Fl., Morristown, NJ 07960

ACCESS SERVICE

(N)

17. Rates and Charges (Cont'd)

17.4 Other Services (Cont'd)

17.4.9 Digital Subscriber Line Access Services (Cont'd)

(E) Promotional Offerings for Qualifying Students
(Cont'd)

(2) Discount on new ADSL and SDSL Voice-Data Service

Upon request from the customer, the Telephone Company will provide a temporary twenty-five percent discount on new ADSL or SDSL Voice-Data Access Service ordered on or after October 1, 2020 by a customer or a customer's subscriber household with a qualifying student where there was no ADSL or SDSL Voice-Data Access Service for 90 days prior. The discount will be applied to the monthly recurring charges in effect at the time of the subscription and will continue until the promotion expires on June 30, 2021 or until the service is discontinued, whichever comes first.

The temporary discount is available on the following ADSL and SDSL Voice-Data speeds:

<u>ADSL</u>	<u>SDSL</u>
1/6 Mbps	10/10 Mbps
1/10 Mbps	50/50 Mbps
3/15 Mbps	100/100 Mbps
3/25 Mbps	
25/50 Mbps	
50/100 Mbps	

New ADSL or SDSL subscribers under this promotional offering are not eligible for the temporary upgrade described in 17.4.9 (E)(1).

ADSL and SDSL lines in-service under this promotional offering may be counted toward the DSL Volume Pricing Plan (VPP) monthly commitment level described in Section 8.5.2 (E) and are eligible for the DSL VPP discount. For customers that meet their monthly DSL VPP commitment level, the DSL VPP discount in Section 17.4.9(H)(2)(c) is applied after the temporary twenty-five percent discount is applied.

(N)

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NATIONAL EXCHANGE CARRIER ASSOCIATION, INC.
REVISIONS TO TARIFF F.C.C. NO. 5
DIGITAL SUBSCRIBER LINE SERVICE
TRANSMITTAL NO. 1616
DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION

1. Introduction

This filing introduces promotional offerings that include two new temporary discount programs for the Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line (ADSL) and Symmetric Digital Subscriber Line (SDSL) Voice-Data Access Service options. The new temporary discount programs will assist qualifying low-income students in:

- Upgrading an existing ADSL and SDSL Voice-Data Access Service speed
- Subscribing to a new ADSL and SDSL Voice-Data Access Service

The new temporary discount programs are being introduced to recognize the needs of students in low-income households for broadband services during the Covid-19 pandemic. The discount programs will facilitate prolonged at-home student learning by helping existing low-income subscriber households to access much needed higher bandwidths and new low-income subscriber households without broadband access to acquire it.

2. Proposed Tariff Provisions

This filing introduces promotional offerings that include two new temporary ADSL and SDSL Voice-Data Access Service discount programs. Both programs will be offered to wholesale customers (e.g. Internet Service Providers) and ILEC subscribers if the ILEC offers a retail service. The effective period of the programs is from the scheduled filing effective date of October 1, 2020 until June 30, 2021. To be eligible for either program, low-income household subscribers must have a student(s) in grades K-12 or a technical high school equivalent program and qualify for either a reduced cost or free lunch from the National School Lunch Program. The Telephone Company must verify the customer or the customer's subscriber household contains a qualifying student by obtaining documentation regarding reduced cost or free lunch eligibility.

Prior to the end of the promotional period of June 30, 2021, the Telephone Company will provide reasonable notification to the customer of the option to continue the upgraded or new ADSL/SDSL Voice-Data service beyond the promotional period. If the customer does not elect to continue the upgraded or new ADSL or SDSL Voice-Data service, then the Telephone Company will revert the upgraded service back to the original ADSL or SDSL Voice-Data speed in service prior to the promotion or discontinue the new ADSL or SDSL Voice-Data service ordered under this promotion.

The discount programs do not apply to speeds lower than 1 Mbps downstream, nor for speeds higher than 100 Mbps downstream. The Access Order Charge and non-recurring installation charge are waived for both of these discount programs. No minimum service periods or term commitment penalties apply.

2.1 Upgrade on existing ADSL and SDSL Voice-Data Access Service

This filing introduces a temporary upgrade of one speed level, except in the case of current ADSL Voice-Data Access Service 1/6 Mbps subscribers where the upgrade is two speed levels, from the subscriber's current speed level in effect as of September 15, 2020 for customers or a customer's subscriber household with a qualifying student.

Existing ADSL Voice-Data Access Service customers or a customer's subscriber household can be upgraded to the next highest asymmetric speed level not to exceed 50/100 Mbps. Existing SDSL Voice-Data Access Service customers or a customer's subscriber household can be upgraded to the next highest symmetric speed level not to exceed 100/100 Mbps.

Upgrades to speed levels are limited to the following:

<u>Current ADSL Voice-Data Access Service speed</u>	<u>Promotional upgrade</u>
1/6 Mbps	3/15 Mbps
1/10 Mbps	3/15 Mbps
3/15 Mbps	3/25 Mbps
3/25 Mbps	25/50 Mbps
25/50 Mbps	50/100 Mbps
<u>Current SDSL Voice-Data Access Service speed</u>	<u>Promotional upgrade</u>
10/10 Mbps	50/50 Mbps
50/50 Mbps	100/100 Mbps

2.2 Discount on new ADSL and SDSL Voice-Data Access Service

This filing introduces a temporary 25 percent discount on new ADSL and SDSL Voice-Data Access Service for customers or a customer's subscriber household with a qualifying student. This offering is for new subscribers only. Customers or a customer's subscriber household must not have had service in the past three months prior to the effective date of this offering.

The temporary discount is limited to the following speeds:

<u>ADSL</u>	<u>SDSL</u>
1/6 Mbps	10/10 Mbps
1/10 Mbps	50/50 Mbps
3/15 Mbps	100/100 Mbps
3/25 Mbps	
25/50 Mbps	
50/100 Mbps	

New subscribers under this promotion are not eligible for a promotional upgrade to their ADSL or SDSL Voice-Data Access Service once they have subscribed to this offering. The DSL Volume Pricing Plan (VPP) discount applies to this offering. ADSL and SDSL lines in-service under this promotion may be counted toward the DSL VPP monthly commitment level. For customers that meet their monthly DSL VPP commitment level, the DSL VPP discount is applied after the temporary 25 percent discount is applied.

3. Revenue, Cost and Demand Support

NECA used previous Rate Development Task Group (RDTG)¹ surveys to estimate the monthly incremental unit costs for possible migrations to all upgrade speed options from existing voice-data speed options.

In developing estimates of DSL lines that would be eligible for the two promotions, NECA used the percentage of households with children and the percentage of students eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch, which are published by the U.S. Department of Education-National Center For Education Statistics.² For the ADSL/SDSL Voice-Data upgrade promotion, which is available to current subscribers using the speeds listed above, NECA estimated about 17,500 voice-data lines would be eligible. There would be no revenue impact because the promotion only affects the broadband speed available to the subscriber. As subscribers move to a higher speed level, NECA expects additional transport costs would be reported to the traffic sensitive pool. As documented in the *2020 Annual Filing*, the transport cost is approximately \$.009 per Mbps per DSL

¹ The Rate Development Task Group (RDTG) is a group of selected participants in the NECA Traffic Sensitive (TS) and Common Line (CL) Pools. Other companies may participate as associates to the RDTG on an ad hoc basis. NECA uses the RDTG to develop cost characteristics representative of pooling companies and to facilitate the rate development process and provide supporting information for NECA tariff filings.

² Based on the Dept. of Education - National Center for Educational Statistics, 2014-18, NECA assumed that 31% of households have K-12 students. Among those households with K-12 students, 52% of households have students participating in the National School Lunch Program.

subscriber.³ NECA expects less than \$40,000 of additional unit costs to be reported for the nine-month period of the promotion, a *de minimis* amount.

For the 25 percent discount promotion, NECA used the following approach. Based on NECA's latest data collections for the Common Line and USF Loops⁴, NECA estimated that there are currently about 56,000 residential lines without broadband service in the study areas of NECA's DSL tariff participants. NECA narrowed it down to about 9,200 voice-data lines meeting the criteria for the low-income population described above. NECA expects that the proposed promotion with a 25 percent discount could help up to 4,600 households (or 50 percent of those low-income households) subscribe to a broadband service for their children.

NECA used the *2020 Annual Filing* data to estimate the monthly incremental costs for a new low-income household subscriber. NECA used average revenue requirement projection per voice-data line as an incremental cost incurred by the pool to support each new voice-data subscriber line with a 25 percent promotion discount. NECA estimated an average of \$28.04 incremental cost per line to support each voice-data subscriber line for new low-income households.

For new voice-data lines for low-income households, NECA assumed that most new subscriber lines will use the ADSL 3/25 Mbps speed option. With a 25 percent promotion discount, NECA estimated the member companies would bill an average of \$19.24 per line under the three-year term plan with a 10 percent volume discount.

NECA estimated \$8.81 as the net revenue loss (or \$19.24 - \$28.04) for each low-income household. Assuming the 50 percent subscription rate mentioned above, this amounts to a net revenue loss of \$364,000 for the remaining nine months of the test period. NECA estimated this net revenue loss as -0.4% of total DSL voice-data revenue or -0.2% of total special access revenue projections for the remaining months of the test period. Overall, NECA estimated the pool impact by the proposed discount promotion for low-income households would be *de minimis*.

³ See National Exchange Carrier Association, Inc. Transmittal No. 1607, filed June 16, 2020 (*2020 Annual Filing*). Volume 5, Exhibit 8, Workpaper 1 documents DSL unit investments and costs.

⁴ Based on NECA's December 2019 data collection (CL Pool) and 2019 USF Loops (Aug. 2020 view).