

# Telecommunications in Maryland

## Who Regulates Telecommunications Services?

- **Federal:** Interstate and international telecommunications
  - Interstate and international public switched telephone service
  - Voice over Internet Protocol Service (VOIP)
  - Cellular telephone service
  - Internet
- **State:** Intrastate and local telecommunications within Maryland\*
  - Intrastate/local public switched telephone service
  - Telegraph service\*Commission-regulated
- **Local:** Rights of way authority over where infrastructure like poles and towers can go
  - Federal government can supersede

## Technology

- **Copper:** traditional copper wires that transmit data with electrical pulses (electrons).
- **Fiber:** newer optical fibers or glass wires that transmit data with infrared laser light (photons).

## Maryland Policies

- **Maryland Lifeline:** local telephone companies with more than 10,000 subscribers are required to offer qualifying low-income consumers reduced-cost service.
  - More detail are available in [Section 8-201 of the Public Utilities Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland](#).
- **9-1-1 System:** emergency telephone system operated by the counties (police, fire fighting, and ambulance).
  - More details are available in [Section 1-304 of the Public Safety Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland](#).

## Federal Policies

- **FCC Lifeline:** Program for reduced-cost cell phone or internet service
  - Universal Service Administrative Company administers (<https://www.usac.org/lifeline/>)