

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/>)