



# CUBFacts<sup>Telecom</sup>

## The \$20 Pioneer Credit

CUB has won a \$20 credit for consumers who switch to a low-cost long-distance plan offered by Pioneer Telephone.

CUB's extensive analysis of Illinois' long-distance market has found that Pioneer Telephone's "Rate Buster" plan is the best deal for most consumers. When combined with savings on local bills offered under a legal settlement between CUB and AT&T, average consumers can cut their calling costs by almost \$25 per month or \$300 a year.

### How do I get my \$20 credit?

To obtain the \$20 bill credit from Pioneer, consumers must sign up for long-distance service with the company by calling 1-877-492-6878 and requesting the CUB discount. The discount will be paid as an automatic \$20 bill credit. Note: AT&T will charge a fee of around \$9 to make the switch to a new long-distance carrier.

### What are Pioneer Telephone's rates?

"Rate Buster" Plan for Illinois AT&T and Verizon customers	
Calls to other states	2.7 cents/min.
Calls to other parts of IL	1.9 cents/min.
*With a billing increment of 1 minute	

### Does Pioneer charge a monthly fee?

It depends. Customers have the choice of either a separate paper bill or online billing. Online billing is offered free of charge no matter how many or how few calls are made that month. However, customers who wish to be sent a paper bill will have to pay a 99-cent fee, but only in months they make less than \$15 worth of calls.

### Why is Pioneer offering this credit?

When the Maine-based telephone company discovered

### Two Ways to Sign Up:

1. Call Pioneer: **1-877-492-6878**
2. Go to "Get \$20 off your long-distance bill," at **www.CitizensUtilityBoard.org**.

**Note:** Unless you have "slamming protection," you don't have to call your local and/or long-distance phone provider. Just call Pioneer and it will do the switch for you. Questions? Call CUB, at **1-866-688-4282**.

that CUB's long-distance analysis was leading to many new customers from Illinois, the company notified CUB that it was eligible for compensation. CUB declined the offer and proposed the money be given directly to consumers instead.

Now Pioneer offers the \$20 credit to any customer who requests the CUB discount. Pioneer Telephone also agreed not to raise rates as long as the price of its wholesale service, which is provided by AT&T, does not go up.

### Will my phone service be affected by switching long-distance carriers?

No. Pioneer Telephone's service operates over the phone lines owned by your local company. The quality of the service is the same.

### If I live outside of AT&T and Verizon territory, can I still sign up?

Yes. Consumers living in Illinois but not in either AT&T or Verizon phone territory can sign up for Pioneer Telephone's Rate Buster plan, at slightly different rates. A call to another state is 3.3 cents/minute and 4.9 cents/minute for a long-distance call to a location within Illinois. Although these rates are slightly higher, they're still among the best in the long-distance market.