



# Telecommunications Bulletin

## Customer Service Center (CSC)

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### Are you going to replace your pagers? Please evaluate your agency's paging needs by August 19, 2011

The current USA Mobility statewide paging contract expires June 30, 2012, with no renewal options and the CSC does not plan to replace this contract. Under its terms, third party paging services may (or may not) be available after towers are decommissioned. When available, the current monthly cost for third party pagers are \$11.00 for numeric and \$17.50 for alphanumeric service. Going forward, there is absolutely no guarantee that any paging coverage, at any cost, will be available in many areas throughout the state; thus, the CSC does not recommend any continued reliance on paging service.

The best option for replacing pagers is a cell phone. A flat rate plan is \$7.00 per month and \$.08/minute for airtime. If desired, most devices can be programmed to disallow outbound calls or be restricted to call only numbers in the contacts list. Text packages and push-to-talk are also available and vary by carrier and size of package. In considering alternative wireless solutions, the CSC can assist with testing the cellular coverage in multiple locations both inside and outside building locations.

In order to implement alternative solutions, you must carefully evaluate your existing wireless needs and develop a plan to migrate current paging users to other devices. The CSC can provide paging usage reports to help in the evaluation process and pricing of proposed alternative services. Consider and answer these questions.

1. How many pagers are currently in use?
2. Does each user have a genuine "critical" need for a mobile device?
3. Which alternate technology will meet each user's needs?

In some areas, the vendors may need to conduct further coverage testing and, where cost permits, make needed facility modifications. If a building modification is not feasible, Betty Russell will work with a coordinator on a case-by-case basis to develop other, creative solutions. All testing requires advance planning and facility modifications require contracts and time to implement; thus the earlier your needs are identified, the sooner we can assist you in solidifying plans and implementing solutions to meet your needs.

Please email Betty by August 19, 2011 with your agency's plan. CMS will need to know:

- 1) Are you planning to disconnect the pagers and not replace them with alternative communication devices? (include an approximate date you plan to send the TSR to complete this transaction).

**OR**

- 2) Are you planning to replace the pagers with alternative communications devices? If so, please include your preferred date of transition and what you plan to transition to. If you are planning to transition to cell phones, also indicate if you have tested coverage in those areas needed and it is adequate for your needs or if you need assistance with this process.

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