

Number Portability





Change your service provider
without having to change your
telephone number
[fixed or landlines only]

General Issues

What is number portability?

Number Portability (NP) means you can keep your current fixed telephone (or landline) number if you decide to change from one service provider (or operator) to another within The Bahamas. In short, it's a process that allows you to change service providers without having to change your telephone number. So, switching between service providers won't mean having to go to the trouble of advising all your friends, family, colleagues, customers and clients that your number has changed – it stays the same.

What is porting?

Porting is the term used by the operators (or service provider) to describe the process which moves your number from one operator to another.

Who is Porting XS?

Porting Access BV, also known as Porting XS, is the company engaged by the fixed telephone operators in The Bahamas to provide the system which makes number portability work. The company provides and manages number portability services in many places, including The Cayman Islands, Panama, Ghana, Kenya, Chanel Islands (Guernsey and Jersey) the Isle of Man, the Netherlands and Gibraltar. You may visit their website at www.portingxs.com. The company's locally based and incorporated subsidiary, Porting Access Bahamas, LLC, is licenced by URCA, to provide and operate the Number Portability Administration Service in The Bahamas.

Will I be able to keep my telephone number if I move to another island?

No, a number may only be ported within a the same island.

When will number portability be available for mobile telephones?

Currently, there is just one mobile telephone service provider in The Bahamas. Future number portability expansion is planned when the market has more than one provider.

Will number portability also mean that I can switch my landline number to my mobile phone service?

No, numbers can only be ported between the same service, so a landline or fixed telephone number can only be ported to another landline service, and similarly, when mobile portability is launched a mobile number will only be able to port to another mobile service.

Where can I get more information about number portability?

URCA has published information on number portability on its website at www.urcabahamas.bs. You may also visit URCA's Facebook page, URCA Bahamas, email info@urcabahamas.bs or telephone URCA at 396-5200, family islands toll free at 1-242-300-URCA (8722) for more information.

Eligibility to 'Port' Your Number

Who will be eligible for the number portability service?

Any landline customer whose number has not been barred or suspended from making outgoing calls.

Can a service provider under any circumstances, refuse to allow me to retain my number?

If your number has been barred or suspended from making outgoing calls for non-payment or any other reason the port will be refused by your current operator. The operator you wish to move your service to will conduct usual credit checks and may require the payment of an appropriate deposit before providing service or, in some circumstances may refuse to provide service to you.

Will number portability also be extended to family island consumers in areas where more than one service provider now exists?

Yes, number portability will be available anywhere in The Bahamas where there is more than one landline service provider. Numbers however can only be ported within a given island and not from one island to another.

What if I have a disputed issue/ balance that I am unable to resolve with my current provider? Can I still be eligible if I am actively trying to resolve the matter?

Provided that your number has not been barred or restricted from making outgoing calls, you are eligible for porting. You will still remain liable to pay any outstanding balance due to your current provider.

The Porting Process

How do I start the process? Do I need permission from my current service provider to switch to another provider? Will I need to cancel my existing telephone service contract before switching to another provider?

1. Go to the retail shop or authorised dealer of your chosen new service provider to request a new telephone service, and tell them that you would like to keep your number. (Please note that porting can only be undertaken by visiting the retail shop or authorised dealer of your chosen new service provider and is not available by telephone or online).
2. The staff will ask you to complete an application form together with a "Porting Request Form".

3. You will be asked to provide:
 - Proof of identity, either a passport or driving licence.
 - A copy of a recent telephone bill from your current service provider. The name on the recent bill must match the name on the corresponding photographic identity document used to authorise the porting request. In the case of business accounts, proof of authorisation to deal with the account by the person submitting the request must be given.
4. You will be asked to make a call from your phone to the special porting number **242-300-PORT (7678)**.
5. You will receive an email or text confirming that your request has been received.
6. Provided your number is not barred or suspended due to non-payment or any other reason, your order will be processed and you will be informed of its progress by email or text.
7. Under normal circumstances your porting will be completed by the fifth working day after you complete your request (i.e. excluding weekends and public holidays). At that time your number will

have been moved to your new service provider and calls to your number will no longer be sent to your existing service provider's line.

8. When this happens, you will receive an email or text advising you that your porting has been completed.
9. The process is complete.

What happens once the process is initiated? How long will it take?

The process should take five (5) working days (i.e. excluding weekends and public holidays), after the day on which you make the request.

I run a business, will switching mean being without telephone services until the porting process is complete?

The porting process should not result in any noticeable interruption of your service whether for business or individual customers. However, business customers porting multiple telephone lines should discuss the porting process with your proposed new service provider who may formulate a tailored porting process to ensure that your business is not interrupted or inconvenienced.

What will happen to my broadband service during the porting process? Will it be disconnected until the porting process is completed?

The porting process should not result in any noticeable interruption of such services. However, DSL customers porting out their telephone number may either continue their DSL service with their existing provider, or switch their internet services separately to a new provider. If the DSL service is to be continued with the previous provider, that provider will provide you with a new telephone number for the DSL service.

Does porting have to happen at a particular time in the month? For instance does my billing period impact when porting can occur?

No. Porting may happen on any business day.

What if I want to cancel my request to port my number? How and when can I do that? Will there be any costs or penalties attached to cancelling?

Your porting process can be cancelled with no charge before you make the validation call set out in step 4 of the porting process (above). Once that call has been made however, the process cannot be cancelled.

What documents will I need when applying to have my number ported?

Proof of identity, either a passport or driving licence. A copy of a recent fixed telephone bill from your current service provider. The name on the recent bill must match the name on the corresponding photographic identity document used to authorise the porting request. In the case of business accounts, proof of authorisation to deal with the account by the person submitting the request must be given.

What will Number Portability Cost You?

Will I need to 'purchase' my number in order to keep it?

No.

Will this mean additional fees/charges for local calls made between/across operator networks?

The charges applicable to your service after switching will be on the terms and conditions of your new provider, and you will now be on their network. As such, charges may be completely different from those of your previous service provider, including increased charges for making calls from your new network to numbers on your previous network.

Will I incur any penalty costs for leaving a provider?

You will receive a bill for your usage up to the time your number is switched to the new service provider, and your service terminated with your current service provider.

If you have not completed a minimum required term of the contract with your existing service provider you may be required to pay the outstanding balance of monthly rentals due under the contract. You should investigate this carefully with your existing service provider before switching in order to avoid any surprises.

What about refundable installation/set up fees I would have paid to my initial provider? Will I lose them? Will I be able to transfer them? How soon would my initial provider be required to refund those moneys to me?

All contractual arrangements with your previous service provider are based on your service contract with that provider. You should investigate carefully the provisions regarding termination of service. Terminating a contract and porting your number should be treated no differently than termination without portability.

Service Issues

What if I'm not happy with my new service provider? Can I switch back to my old one? Will there be penalty costs to switching multiple times?

If your new service provider fails to meet promised quality of service, then you can reverse the porting (i.e. port back to your previous service provider) within 14 days of your porting having been completed. After that period has elapsed, you may not port the same number again (whether to your previous operator or to any other operator) for sixty (60) days after the port has completed.

Is my former service provider allowed to try to dissuade me after I've decided to switch?

No. Your old service provider is not allowed to contact you during the porting process to try and persuade you to stay with them. Your old service provider is prohibited from contacting you with the intention or effect of encouraging you to return to them for re-sign up for their landline telephone services for a period of sixty (60) days following the completion of the porting process. However, your old service provider can contact you to recover outstanding payments.

What about voicemail and other ancillary services that I have currently? How will porting my number impact these services?

You will lose your old voicemail including messages and ancillary services, and you will need to set these up again with your new service provider.

Who do I contact if I have a problem with switching?

If there is any problem with porting or for any other query during or after the porting process, you should contact your proposed new service provider, who will coordinate the complaints process (even though the problem may not have been caused by that provider).



For more information contact:

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