

			
Traditional Wireline Service	Wireless Service	Cable-Based Service	Internet-Based Service

Definitions and Availability

The world of telecommunications is changing rapidly and innovations in technologies are expanding the way people communicate. Today there are four types of telephone service that may be available to New Yorkers. If there is any question about the availability of a specific type of service, other than the traditional wireline company serving their area, consumers should consult their local directory for service provider listings, call the potential service provider, or view coverage information on its website.

Traditional Wireline Service (also known as landline service)

Traditional wireline service uses in-ground and overhead cables to transmit local and long distance calls. Traditional service is a “fixed” service option which means it cannot be used at any location other than where it is originally installed.

Traditional wireline service is available throughout New York State, provided either by Verizon New York, by any one of approximately 39 independent telephone companies which operate within specific geographic areas in the State, or by numerous competitive telephone companies operating throughout the State.

Wireless Service (also referred to as cellular or mobile)

Wireless telephone service provides many features of landline while permitting the consumer movement over a wide area. Calls are made using a combination of radio waves and landline telephone structure. Wireless telephones are battery operated so they must be charged periodically in order to continue working.

Coverage areas for wireless services can vary widely depending on the number and proximity of transmission facilities (sometimes called “cell sites”) an individual company has in a given area. Typically, such sites are limited in the more rural areas, and therefore, in certain rural or mountainous areas of the State, cell phones may not work. In addition, because wireless service uses radio signals which travel over surface areas, completion of some wireless calls may be affected by weather, mountains, tunnels and buildings, as well as the level of network traffic at a given time; signal obstruction for a variety of reasons could create “dead spots” where service is not available, even in urban or suburban areas. Consumers should consult coverage maps posted on a specific company’s website in order to insure service availability in their area or other areas that may be important to them.

Cable-Based Service

Cable-based telephone service uses a cable company's network to provide telephone service with features similar to those provided by traditional landline companies. Like traditional wireline service, it is considered a "fixed" service in that it is intended to be used within the limits of the original connection location.

Cable-based telephone service is not available everywhere in New York State. Most cable-based telephone companies allow a prospective customer to enter their address or zip code into the company's website to determine whether cable-based telephone service is available in their area.

Internet-Based Service

Internet-based telephone companies generally use broadband connections (also referred to as "high speed", "cable modem" or "DSL" services) to provide telephone service; such service is generally available wherever broadband connections are available.

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