Terms and Definitions

911: An emergency services phone number that, when called, dispatches medical, fire or police help to your location.

Anonymous Call Rejection: Blocks incoming calls marked as "anonymous" or "private" on Call ID boxes.

Broadband Connection: A type of high-speed data transmission such as DSL or cable modem.

Call Forwarding: Allows incoming calls to be automatically redirected from your regular phone to a mobile or other phone.

Call ID blocking: Prevents your name and number from appearing on Call ID sets on a per-call or all-call basis.

Call Trace: Allows a trace of the most recent incoming call by dialing a special code immediately after terminating the call. Call Trace information is not reported directly to the consumer.

Call Waiting: If you are on the telephone and receive an incoming call, you can switch to the new call without hanging up on the existing party, and then switch back at your leisure.

End User Blocking: Allows you to block access to local chatlines and pay-per-call numbers.

Enhanced 911 (E911): An emergency services phone number that, when called, dispatches medical, fire or police help to your location. The "E" is for "enhanced," meaning the emergency services operator knows your location if E911 is enabled.

Federal Communications Commission: http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/complaints.html or 1-800-225-5322 (voice) or 1-800-835-5322 (TTY).

Lifeline service: Provides local telephone service to eligible low-income consumers at a reduced monthly charge to allow them to have phone access, especially in case of an emergency.

Medical Emergency Condition: A situation in which the lack of phone service would create a serious medical risk.

New York State Consumer Privacy Policies and Automatic Number Identification Guidelines: Requires companies to educate customers on the degree of privacy they may expect, address the issues of privacy on a regular basis, and absent informed consumer consent, to use acquired information only for providing or billing for requested telephone services.

New York State Consumer Protection Board: www.consumer.state.ny.us/ or 1-800-697-1220.

New York State Public Service Commission: www.dps.state.ny.us/help.html or 1-800-342-3377.

Number Portability: The ability to keep the same telephone number when changing telephone service providers. Number portability is not always possible due to geographic or technical restrictions.

Office of the Attorney General of New York: www.oag.state.ny.us/consumer/consumer_issues.html or 1-800-771-7755.

Relay operator: In order to place a phone call via TRS, you may either dial 711 to connect to certain forms of TRS anywhere in the United States or access this service on the internet at www.ip-relay.com, where you enter your own phone number and a relay operator calls back to handle the call.

Talking Call ID: Makes an audible announcement of the caller's identification prior to answering the call. Additionally, Distinctive Ring-1 Number may be available, which provides a separate number with its own signature ring which allows consumers to distinguish between callers and identify whether an incoming call is a text call or voice.

Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS): A service for people with hearing or speech disabilities that allows them to make and receive phone calls via a text telephone.

Video Relay Services: A mode of communication that allows a person with hearing or speech difficulties to communicate with another party through sign language; the conversation is conducted through a computer or television screen, with an interpreter in between if necessary.

Voicemail: Voicemail is essentially an answering machine, but without the equipment; messages are contained within a computerized system, to which you have access, usually with a numerical password.