



## **BEK Communications Takes Precautionary Measures in Response to COVID-19**

**March 26, 2020** -- Due to the uncertainty created by the coronavirus pandemic, and to ensure the continued health and safety of our employees, members and customers, BEK Communications has established the following precautionary measures.

### ***Offices with Restricted Access to the Public and Vendors***

- BEK has restricted public and vendor access to all lobbies and offices.
- We have several convenient options for payments:
  - Payment Drop-Off Box outside Steele and Valley City locations
  - Online payment at <https://bek.smarthub.coop>
  - Pay-By Phone by calling 1-844-252-5273

### ***Separating Employees***

- BEK has encouraged, and is facilitating, employee work-from-home options where possible.
- Technicians now report from their vehicles and home garages, reducing group interaction at field offices and warehouses.
- Additional office space (*created by remote workers or closed public areas*) is being utilized to socially distance employees and help ensure redundancy of staff resources in the event of illness.
- Employees are required to quarantine at-home for 14 days upon return from out-of-state travel or travel where large groups have congregated.

### ***Technician Site Visits***

- As a critical utility, BEK technicians continue to conduct site visits for emergent services.
- Prior to scheduling, a BEK employee calls to ask if any household/business member is sick, quarantined, has recently traveled or has been in contact with anyone showing symptoms of, or being diagnosed with, COVID-19.
- Upon arrival, our technicians are encouraged to “Reconfirm, Request Spacing, and Reschedule”
  - Reconfirm that no one is sick or has been quarantined.
  - Request that customers and technicians maintain a safe distance (minimum of 6 ft.) from each other.
  - Reschedule (14+ days later) if the customer has traveled outside of the area, has flown or attended a gathering of more than 10 people.
- BEK technicians are authorized to postpone work if it is in the best interest of either employee or customer.
  - With evidence of an unmanageable risk, our technician must contact their supervisor, may refuse to enter the premises and may postpone/reschedule the appointment.



**Remote & Non-Emergency Troubleshooting**

- Increased focus has been placed on remote troubleshooting. BEK service staff will exhaust all efforts to troubleshoot via phone before a technician is dispatched.
- In some cases, BEK can leave equipment on the doorstep with instructions for self-installation.

**New Installations**

- BEK technicians are continuing with new installations *for households in need of internet access for education, telemedicine and work from home.*
- BEK has temporarily discontinued all non-essential installations such as “upgrade” and TV-only installations.

**School District Partnerships**

- BEK is coordinating with our school districts to connect students with internet service. In many cases, the connection requests are coming directly from the school district. New internet connections carry no installation fee and will be complimentary for four (4) months or through the end of the school year.

**Potential Need for Mutual Aid**

- BEK is in contact with neighboring broadband providers for mutual aid and employee-sharing in the event of staff illness in order to maintain essential services.

**Hardship Program**

- BEK has committed to not terminate broadband or telephone connectivity to any customers because of their inability to pay due to the disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic.
- All late, reconnection and vacation fees are being waived for a period of four (4) months for our customers, in an effort to alleviate concern over economic circumstances related COVID-19.

We appreciate our customer and member’s patience and understanding as we follow the guidance of the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and public health officials. We care about you, our team members and communities, and we’re here to help in any way possible.

For more information about COVID-19, please visit the CDC’s website at <https://www.cdc.gov/>.

To contact BEK Communications:

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