

## **Offender Phone System Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) – Transition from GTL to VAC, January 2012**

**Question: Who is the current contractor with the State of Oklahoma Department of Corrections (DOC) for offender telephone services?**

**Answer:** Value Added Communications (VAC) was awarded the contract for an offender phone system with new rates effective January 1, 2012.

**Question: If Value Added Communications (VAC) is the contractor for offender phones in the State of Oklahoma, why is Global Tel Link (GTL) still involved with the offender phone system?**

**Answer:** GTL purchased VAC in a stock acquisition that was effective August 1, 2011. VAC remains a legal operating entity under the GTL umbrella. However, the acquisition opens all VAC customers, to the entire portfolio of product and service offerings that GTL provides. Pursuant to the contract awarded by the State of Oklahoma, the VAC phone platform/software will be utilized for the DOC phone system. However, there will be some other elements of the system or service offerings utilized by the State of Oklahoma that carry the GTL name. For example, the automated phone messages heard by family and friends will announce that GTL is providing the service and the current GTL website will continue to be utilized by families and friends for phone system information, customer service, and pre-paid account information.

**Question: Will the equipment be changed out at all locations?**

**Answer:** No. The current phone instruments will continue to be repaired and replaced as needed going forward with the new contract. The call processing equipment will be changed but this should be a transparent to both the offender and family and friends.

**Question: Can I receive a collect call from an offender?**

**Answer:** Collect calls can be received from offenders if you utilize a local telephone company that will agree to bill you for the call. For example, AT&T is one company that will process collect call billing for customers who are in good standing. The phone company will charge the customer a per month billing fee for this service. The billing fee charged by the phone company is a fixed monthly fee, regardless of the number of calls made, and is not associated with the contract phone rates charged by VAC. When you receive a collect call you will be asked if you want to accept the call prior to being connected to the offender and you will be given the opportunity for positive call acceptance.

**Question: Is there a limit on collect phone calls that can be made to a phone number?**

**Answer:** Yes. To limit bad debt there is a limit of \$150 within a 90 day period for collect calls processed and billed by your local telephone company (e.g. AT&T).

**Question: Can I set up an account to prepay for calls?**

**Answer:** The system does give family and friends the ability to set up an account to prepay for calls. The name of the pre-pay account program is AdvancePay. An AdvancePay account can be set up through the Offender Connect System online at <https://www.offenderconnect.com> or by phone at (800) 483-8314, where self-service options are available 24/7 or customer service representatives are available during normal working hours. There are several ways that a new AdvancePay account can be set up or deposits can be made to an existing AdvancePay account. See table below:

PAYMENT MECHANISM	OPTIONS	PAYMENT TYPE	AMOUNT LIMITS PER TRANSACTION/DEPOSIT	VAC FEE CHARGED TO THE FRIEND OR FAMILY
Online at <a href="https://www.offenderconnect.com">https://www.offenderconnect.com</a> with credit or debit card	Account Setup or Deposit	Credit or Debit Card	Each transaction limited to \$25 or \$50	\$4.75 per transaction fee
By phone at (800)483-8314 using the automated self-service system or at (866)230-7761 or (877)650-4249 using a live customer service representative during normal working hours	Account Setup or Deposit		Each transaction limited to \$25 or \$50 if using the automated self-service system; or, any \$\$ amount between \$25 to \$100 if using a live customer service representative.	\$4.75 per transaction fee
By mail to:  GTL AdvancePay Service Dept. Department 1722 Denver, CO 80291-1722	Deposits to pre-existing accounts	Cashier's check, money order	any \$\$ amount, but will take several days for mail transport time and fund clearance before being credited into account. Deposits must include the account number.	\$0.00 per transaction fee
Through CASHMate at Western Union, MoneyGram, Dolex, IPC or many other cash locations.	Deposits to pre-existing accounts	Wire Transfer	any \$\$ amount \$25 to \$100, must know account number.	\$0.00 per transaction fee, (NOTE: no fee is charged by VAC, individual making the deposit will be charged a fee by the 3 <sup>rd</sup> party CASHMate provider)

For additional information, family and friends may go to the GTL corporate website at <http://www.gtl.net> and you will have two available selections. The first section will take you to <https://www.offenderconnect.com> for an account creation and/or deposit. The second section is the directory, <http://www.gtl.net/familyandfriends/index.shtml> and this is where you can find contact information for customer service (via phone or online) to the current inmate phone provider, FAQ's and brochures.

**Question:** Who can I call about billing inquiries?

**Answer:** You can call either (866)230-7761 or (877)650-4249.

**Question:** Can I use a cell phone to receive calls from an offender?

**Answer:** Yes, you may add a cell phone number to your AdvancePay account through the Offender Connect website at <https://www.offenderconnect.com>. However, there are no refunds for lost or dropped calls made to cell phones due to poor reception or a bad line.

**Question:** Are all calls monitored?

**Answer:** No. Calls to the offender's attorney of record are not monitored. The phone number for the attorney must be identified in advance so it can be placed on the do not monitor list.

**Question:** Are some phones better than others for receiving calls?

**Answer:** The quality of the phone and receiving system do affect the operation of the offender phone system. A low quality telephone connection can result in termination of the phone call. Landline phones are best for receiving phone calls from the offender phone system. Cell phones can also be used but because of the variance in cell phone reception a good connection cannot be guaranteed. We have seen disconnects of phone calls because of the low quality of the cell phone connection. Internet phone services (Vonage, Magic Jack, etc.) are discouraged from being used for receiving calls. These systems encounter delays and poor quality that result in the call not being connected or after being connected, disconnected.