

**Income Protection Plan Benefits  
for  
New England IBEW Associates**

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# Your Income Protection Plan benefits

The Verizon Income Protection Plan (IPP or the Plan) for New England Associates covered by the collective bargaining agreement with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) is a form of employee benefit plan maintained by Verizon Communications Inc. (the Company) and its participating companies to assist Associate employees who separate from service under specific circumstances.

## About this SPD

This document is the summary plan description (SPD) for the Verizon Income Protection Plan for New England Associates represented by the IBEW, a plan subject to federal law under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) and its subsequent amendments. This document meets ERISA's requirements for an SPD and is based on Plan provisions effective June 17, 2016 or as otherwise indicated herein, including legislative and administrative updates and replaces all previous SPDs and other descriptions of the benefits provided by this Plan. The anticipated distribution date of this updated SPD is March 2017.

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information included in this SPD. Copies of Plan documents are available by contacting the Plan administrator in writing at the address provided in the "Administrative Information" subsection, within the "Additional Information" section.

This SPD is divided into the following major sections:

- **Participating in the IPP.** This section explains eligibility for the Plan and when eligibility begins and ends.
- **Receiving Plan benefits.** This section describes the circumstances under which you can receive Plan benefits, the amounts you are eligible to receive and the application process.
- **Additional information.** This section provides additional details about the administrative provisions of the Plan and your legal rights.

**Important note:** Verizon and its claims and appeals administrators have the discretionary authority to interpret the terms of the Plan and this SPD and determine your eligibility for benefits under its terms.

## Getting more information

If you have questions about how the IPP works, call 855.4VzBens (855.489.2367) and select option 8 (voluntary separations). Representatives are available from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Eastern time, Monday through Friday.

If you have questions about how other benefits are affected by the IPP, refer to the SPD for the individual benefit. If you have questions after reading the SPDs, call the Verizon Benefits center at the toll free number above.

## Verizon Benefits Center

The Verizon Benefits Center offers a website called BenefitsConnection ([verizon.com/BenefitsConnection](http://verizon.com/BenefitsConnection)) where you will find tools to help you manage your benefits.

The website makes finding information fast and easy as it guides you through your benefits transactions, including benefits renewals. In addition to enrolling on the website, you can:

- Link to other provider sites
- Review details about your health care, insurance and pension plans
- Verify your Verizon elections that are on file at the Verizon Benefits Center
- Select and update your beneficiary designations
- Change Your BenefitsConnection password
- Give yourself a helpful “hint” in case you forget your password
- Model future pension benefits, if you are eligible for pension benefits

From time to time, additional tools will be added to the BenefitsConnection website to help you better manage your benefits.

Benefits representatives are available should you have questions about your benefits. To reach the Verizon Benefits Center, call 855.4VzBens (855.489.2367). Via this toll-free telephone number, you also can connect with other Verizon benefit providers.

## **Changes to the Plan**

While Verizon expects to continue the Plan indefinitely, Verizon also reserves the right to amend, modify, suspend or terminate the Plan at any time, at its discretion, with or without advance notice to participants, subject to any duty to bargain collectively. The Plan may be amended by publication of any SPD, summary of material modification, enrollment materials or other communication relating to the Plan, as approved by Verizon.

Decisions regarding changes to, or termination of, benefits are made at the highest levels of management. Verizon employees below those levels do not know whether the Company will adopt any particular change and are not in a position to speculate about such changes. Unless and until changes formally are adopted and officially are announced, no one is authorized to assure that any particular change will or will not occur.

## Participating in the IPP Eligibility

You are covered under the IPP if you are a New England associate employed by a participating company (see the “Additional Information” section) and you meet these conditions:

- You are a regular full-time or part-time, non-salaried associate.
- You are covered by an IBEW collective bargaining agreement that provides for your participation in this plan, or you are a non-bargained associate.
- You have at least one year of net credited service (as defined under the provisions of the Verizon Pension Plan for New York and New England Associates).

You are **not** eligible for participation in the Verizon Income Protection Plan for New England IBEW Associates if you are a salaried management employee.

**Note:** If a court, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) or any other enforcement authority or agency finds that an independent contractor or leased employee should be treated as a regular employee of a participating company, for example, for purposes of W-2 income reporting or tax withholding, such individual is nonetheless expressly excluded from the definition of eligible employee and is expressly ineligible for benefits under the Plan.

## Conditions for IPP benefits eligibility

When the Company notifies the Union in writing that a surplus exists, eligible employees in the affected job titles and work locations may elect (limited to the number of declared surplus) to accept the Company’s offer to separate voluntarily from service with Verizon and receive IPP benefits.

A participating company will accept an eligible employee’s application to separate voluntarily from service in exchange for benefits under this Plan.

In such a case, the participating company will accept only the number of applications that the Company determines is necessary to relieve a declared force surplus condition. Applications will be accepted in seniority order.

## When eligibility ends

Coverage ends under the following circumstances:

- You terminate employment, including retirement.
- You change to an ineligible job status or title; for example, you are assigned to a salaried position.

## **Receiving IPP benefits**

### **When benefits are paid**

If you are covered under the IPP, you are eligible to receive an IPP benefit after your application to volunteer to leave the service of the Company is accepted and you separate from employment with Verizon. You will be notified in advance if the Company determines that business needs warrant a reduction in force or reassignment of jobs that results in the elimination or change in your job.

In all cases, the Company has the sole discretion to determine the following:

- The job titles and work locations where a surplus exists.
- The number of surplus Associates in each job title and location who are considered to meet surplus conditions.

**Important point:** The number of Associates who volunteer and are accepted for separation and receipt of Plan benefits cannot exceed the number of Associates who are determined to warrant a reduction in force.

### **Applying for Plan benefits**

When the Company presents a written offer to voluntarily leave the service of the Company and receive IPP benefits, you must notify the Company in writing of your intent to do so within 15 calendar days of the date the Company makes you the offer. Applications are accepted based on Associate seniority. Your application for benefits – and the Company's offer – cannot be revoked after the 15-day period.

## **How benefits are determined**

### **IPP payments**

IPP payments provide you with a benefit based on your years of net credited service. Depending on the circumstances, the Company may offer you a “regular” allowance, an “enhanced” allowance, or a “special enhanced” allowance:

- Under provisions for a regular allowance, you will receive \$1,100 for each complete year of net credited service you have, up to and including 30 years of service. The maximum benefit is \$33,000.
- Under provisions for an enhanced allowance, you will receive \$2,200 for each year of net credited service – up to and including 30 years of service. The maximum enhanced allowance you can receive is \$66,000.
- Under provisions of a special enhanced allowance, you will receive \$2,200 for each year of net credited service – up to and including 40 years of service. The maximum special enhanced allowance you can receive is \$88,000.

“Net credited service” for purposes of determining IPP benefits is your completed years of service calculated from you adjusted Net Credited Service Date to your termination date. If you are a part-time associate, your years of net credited service are prorated according to the provisions stated in the Verizon Pension Plan for New York and New England Associates.

Also, note that no termination, separation, layoff or similar allowances will be paid to an associate who elects to leave the service of the Company or becomes separated from the payroll and receives IPP payments.

### **Voluntary termination bonus**

Employees who volunteer and are accepted for an IPP or an Enhanced IPP (EIPP) will also receive a voluntary termination bonus of \$10,000, less applicable taxes and withholding. This voluntary termination bonus is separate from the IPP and EIPP provisions.

As a result of the 2016 Collective Bargaining Agreement, employees who volunteer and are accepted for a Special EIPP will receive the voluntary termination bonus of \$10,000 plus a supplemental bonus of \$40,000, less applicable taxes and withholding – all of which shall be subject to the applicable terms of the 2016 Collective Bargaining Agreement relevant to particular associates.

### **Additional pension benefits offered under the Special EIPP**

- Waiver of age-based Pension reductions for Early Commencement: Service Pension eligible associates who leave the service of the Company pursuant to a Special EIPP will not have the age-based reduction for early commencement, if any, applied to the calculation of their pension.
- Acceleration of the next pension band increase: Pension eligible associates who leave the service of the Company pursuant to a Special EIPP will be eligible for the next scheduled pension band increase, to the extent there is another pension band increase scheduled pursuant to the 2016 MOU, in the calculation of their pension.
- Interest rate protection: Regardless of the specific date on which an associate leaves the service of the Company pursuant to a Special EIPP, the determination of the interest rate and

mortality basis used for converting the single life annuity to a lump sum amount will be based on the better of (a) the applicable interest rate and mortality basis as of such associate's elected pension commencement date following his or her actual separation from service or (b) the applicable interest rate and mortality basis as of the earliest possible commencement date under that Special EIPP, provided that such associate's age will be determined based on his or her elected pension commencement date rather than a pension commencement date set to the date referenced in this (b) clause.

## Tax fact

All Plan payments are taxable and subject to withholding taxes.

## How your IPP payments are paid

How and when you can receive your IPP payments (whether it is a regular, enhanced, or special enhanced benefit) depends on the amount you are eligible to receive:

- **If you are eligible to receive \$10,000 or less (prior to any applicable taxes)**, you will automatically receive your payment in a single lump-sum payment within 30 days of leaving the Company.
- **If you are eligible to receive more than \$10,000 (prior to any applicable taxes)**, you will have two options for receiving your payment:
  - **Monthly payments for four years.** Under this option, you receive 48 monthly payments, beginning with the month following the one in which you terminate employment with the Company. There are two exceptions. If you are within forty-eight (48) months of your 67<sup>th</sup> birthday, then the total amount of your monthly IPP payments will be paid to you over the number of months remaining until your 67<sup>th</sup> birthday. If you are age 67 or older, you will receive your IPP payment in one lump sum.

**OR**

- **50% payment immediately and the remainder monthly over four years.** This payment option allows you to receive half of your IPP payment in a single payment within 30 days after you leave the Company. Then, you will receive the remainder of your benefit in 48 monthly payments, (or under the age 67 rule as described above).

If your total allowance is greater than \$10,000, you will make your election of a payment option at the time you agree to accept the Company's offer through a signed agreement that indicates your irrevocable election for payment of your benefits.

## Situations that may affect your benefits

Certain circumstances could affect your benefits under the Plan. Here is a summary of the situations in which your benefits could be affected:

- If you are rehired by Verizon (including any subsidiary or affiliate) or if you are engaged in business with or employed by a business or enterprise that competes directly with Verizon within 48 months, your IPP payments will stop and any unpaid allowances permanently will be forfeited. If you were receiving 48 monthly payments (with no lump sum), no repayment is required. If you received a full lump sum or a partial lump sum and monthly payments, you must repay the

excess of the amount you already received over the amount you would have received as monthly payments. Repayments will be made through payroll deductions in each payroll period at the rate of 10 percent of your basic weekly pay, unless you are employed by a competitor, in which case, repayment is due immediately.

- If you die before receiving all of your payments under the Plan, the balance will be paid in a lump sum to your estate.

## **Continuation of other benefits**

Continuation of other benefits is affected by whether or not you meet one of the age and service requirements under the Verizon Pension Plan for New York and New England Associates at the time of your separation from service (see page 9 of this document). Refer to the appropriate Pension Summary Plan Description (SPD) for additional details.

## **If you are retirement eligible (you meet one of the age and service requirements outlined in page 9 of this document)**

### **Medical**

You and your eligible class I and class II dependents can continue coverage under the Verizon Medical Expense Plan for New York and New England Associates, or the Verizon Alternate Choice Plan, without any contribution from you towards the cost of coverage, for six months. At the end of your six months of company-paid medical coverage, you will be eligible for retiree medical coverage.

### **Dental**

You and your eligible class I and class II dependents can continue coverage under the Verizon Dental Expense Plan for New York and New England Associates without any contribution from you towards the cost of coverage, for six months. At the end of your six months of company-paid dental coverage, you will be eligible for retiree dental coverage.

### **Vision**

Active employee vision plan benefits discontinue at the end of the month in which you separate from service. You and your eligible dependents can continue vision coverage under Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) rules for up to 18 months.

### **Health Care Spending Account**

Your active employee contributions will discontinue with your last paycheck. You can continue to contribute on an after-tax basis under COBRA rules for the remainder of the calendar year. You have until May 31 of the next calendar year to submit eligible expenses for reimbursement.

### **Dependent Care Spending Account**

Your contributions stop with your last paycheck. You have until May 31 of the next calendar year to submit eligible expenses for reimbursement.

### **Health Reimbursement Account**

You may continue to incur and receive reimbursement for eligible medical expenses until your balance is zero, provided that any unused balance in your HRA as of December 31, 2018 will be forfeited.

### **Survivor benefits program**

Basic life insurance coverage continues for your lifetime (subject to annual 10% reductions in coverage starting at age 66 until you reach age 70). The age reduction does not apply if you were hired on or after August 3, 2008. You may choose to continue supplemental life insurance coverage up to age 65. When basic life insurance is reduced or supplemental life insurance ends, you will be eligible to convert coverage to an individual policy without proof of good health. A conversion information package will be provided.

Dependent life insurance also may be continued for your spouse until he or she reaches age 65 and for eligible children up to age 19, or age 25 while a full-time student.

If you were hired before January 1, 1987, you currently have sickness death benefit coverage equal to your annual base pay as of December 31, 1986, plus the differential paid in the prior 12 months. This coverage continues and a benefit is payable to your qualified mandatory or discretionary beneficiary when you die.

Special accident, accident death benefit coverage and accidental death and dismemberment insurance ends on the last day of the month in which you separate from the Company payroll. No conversion to an individual policy is available.

## **Disability benefits**

If you are receiving disability benefits under the Verizon Sickness and Accident Disability Benefit Plan for New England Associates on the IPP off-payroll date, your disability benefits will continue until you are no longer disabled or you exhaust disability benefits, whichever occurs first.

If you are receiving short term sickness disability benefits and have 15 or more years of net credited service, you may be eligible for a disability pension from the Verizon Pension Plan for New York and New England Associates.

## **Pension plan**

You can begin receiving your service pension on or about the first of the month following your retirement date. An early retirement reduction applies if you have less than 30 years of net credited service, are pension eligible, retire and start receiving your benefit before age 55.

You are service pension (retirement) eligible if you meet these requirements:

- Any age with 30 years or more of net credited service
- At least age 50 with 25 years or more of net credited service
- At least age 55 with 20 years or more of net credited service
- At least age 60 with 15 years or more of net credited service
- Age 65 or older with 10 years or more of net credited service

Payment options will be explained at the time you retire.

## **Savings plan**

Employee and Company contributions to your Savings Plan account stop with your last paycheck. At retirement, you are fully vested in your entire account balance and are eligible to receive full distribution of your account. Payment options will be explained at the time you retire. Note that if you have an outstanding loan balance and defer distribution of your account, you can continue to repay your loan monthly by requesting a coupon repayment booklet from the benefits administrator. If you elect distribution of your plan account and do not repay your outstanding loan, any remaining balance becomes a taxable event and is satisfied as part of your distribution.

In addition, special tax rules apply. You will receive additional information at the time you become eligible to receive payment.

If you die before receiving your vested account value, your beneficiary will receive the remaining value.

For more information on your Savings Plan, contact the Fidelity Service Center at 888.457.9333.

## **Tuition assistance**

If you are taking a pre-approved course at the time of your separation from service, you will continue to be eligible for reimbursement of expenses based on the Verizon Tuition Assistance Plan for New York and New England Associates.

## **Concession telephone service**

You receive a reimbursement or credit for your monthly service charge, and up to a limit, reimbursement or credit for Intra-Lata toll calls.

## **If you are not retirement eligible**

(you do not meet one of the age and service requirements outlined in page 9 of this document)

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### **Medical**

You and your eligible class I and class II dependents can continue coverage for a period of time under the Verizon Medical Expense Plan for New York and New England Associates, or the Alternate Choice Plan, without any contribution from you, for six months. At the end of this time you and your eligible dependents can continue medical coverage based on COBRA rules for up to 18 months, including the company- paid time period.

If you do not elect COBRA continuation, your coverage stops at the end of the Company-paid continuation period.

### **Dental**

Active employee dental coverage stops at the end of the month in which you separate from service. You and your eligible dependents can continue coverage under the Verizon Dental Expense Plan for New York and New England Associates based on COBRA rules for up to 18 months.

### **Vision**

Active employee vision coverage stops at the end of the month in which you separate from service. You and your eligible dependents can continue vision coverage based on COBRA rules for up to 18 months.

### **Health Care Spending Account**

Your active employee contributions will discontinue with your last paycheck. You can continue to contribute on an after-tax basis under COBRA rules for the remainder of the calendar year. You have until May 31 of the next calendar year to submit eligible expenses for reimbursement.

### **Dependent Care Account**

Your contributions stop with your last paycheck. You have until May 31 of the next calendar year to submit eligible expenses for reimbursement.

### **Health Reimbursement Account**

You can submit any claims incurred for eligible medical expenses before your separation for 3 months following separation. Any remaining balance after the 3 month period will be forfeited unless you elect to continue coverage under COBRA. In all cases, any unused balance in your HRA as of December 31, 2018 will be forfeited.

### **Survivor benefits programs**

If you have one or more years of net credited service, basic life insurance coverage continues for six months after your separation from service. You may choose to continue supplemental life insurance and/or dependent life insurance coverage during this period as well by continuing to pay the premiums. After six months, coverage stops but your basic life insurance, supplemental life insurance and dependent life insurance coverage can be converted to an individual policy.

Accidental death and dismemberment insurance, special accident insurance and accident death benefit coverage ends on the last day of the month in which you separate from the Company payroll. If you were an active employee on December 31, 1986, and remained continuously employed,

sickness death benefit coverage ends on the last day of employment. These coverages cannot be converted to individual policies.

If you have less than one year of net credited service, all life insurance coverage ends on the last day of the month in which you separate from the Company payroll, but your basic life insurance, supplemental life insurance, and dependent life insurance coverage can be converted to an individual policy.

## **Disability benefits**

If you are receiving disability benefits under the Verizon Sickness and Accident Disability Benefit Plan for New England Associates on the IPP off-payroll date, your disability benefits will continue until you are no longer disabled or you exhaust disability benefits, whichever occurs first.

If you are receiving short term sickness disability benefits and have 15 or more years of net credited service, you may be eligible for a disability pension from the Verizon Pension Plan for New York and New England Associates.

## **Pension plan**

If you have five or more years of ERISA service after age 18 or have attained Normal Retirement Age when your employment ends, you are vested in your pension plan benefit. Contact the pension plan benefits administrator for information about payment options (see your Important Benefits Contacts insert for the telephone number).

**Note:** If the lump-sum value of your benefit is \$3,500 or less, it automatically will be paid as a lump sum.

## **Savings plan**

Employee and Company contributions to your savings plan account stop with your last paycheck:

- If your vested account balance is \$3,500 or less, it automatically will be distributed to you in a lump sum, including the value of Company contributions to your account.
- If your vested account balance is more than \$3,500, you can choose to receive payment as soon as administratively possible or defer payment to a later date up to age 70-1/2. In either case, you will receive the full value of your account, including the value of Company contributions. You will receive additional information regarding distribution options at the time your employment ends.

Note that if you have an outstanding loan balance and defer distribution of your account, you can continue to repay your loan monthly by requesting a coupon repayment booklet from the benefits administrator. If you elect distribution of your plan account and do not repay your outstanding loan, any remaining balance becomes a taxable event and is satisfied as part of your distribution.

Also, special tax rules apply. You will receive additional information at the time you become eligible to receive payment.

If you die before receiving your vested account value, your beneficiary will receive the remaining value.

For more information on your Savings Plan, contact the Fidelity Service Center at 888.457.9333.

## **Tuition assistance**

If you are taking a pre-approved course at the time of your separation from service, you will continue to be eligible for reimbursement of expenses based on the Verizon Tuition Assistance Plan for New York and New England Associates.

## **Concession telephone service**

Concession telephone service ends as of the last day of the month in which you separate from the payroll.

## **Additional information**

### **Claims and appeals procedures**

You may file a written claim regarding your benefits at any time. If your claim for benefits is denied, you will have an opportunity to appeal. The claims administrator is appointed by the chairperson of the Verizon Claims Review Committee (VCRC). The appeals administrator for the Plan is the VCRC or a successor appeals administrator that may in the future be appointed by the VCRC (see “Filing an Appeal” below for the address).

The claims and appeals administrators have discretionary authority to:

- Interpret the Plan based on its provisions and applicable law and make factual determinations about claims arising under the Plan
- Determine whether a claimant is eligible for benefits
- Decide the amount, form and timing of benefits
- Resolve any other matter under the Plan that is raised by a participant or a beneficiary, or that is identified by either the claims or appeals administrator

The claims and appeals administrators have sole discretionary authority to decide claims under the Plan and review and resolve any appeal of a denied claim. In case of an appeal, the claims and appeals administrators’ decisions are final and binding on all parties to the full extent permitted under applicable law, unless the participant later proves that a claims or appeals administrator’s decision was an abuse of administrator discretion.

### **Filing a claim**

You have the right under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) and its subsequent amendments to file a claim if you believe you are entitled to benefits and benefits have been denied or incorrectly determined under the Plan.

To submit a claim, put your concern in writing, explaining in your own words your understanding of your benefit issue and provide any supporting information in writing to the claims administrator at the address shown in the “Administrative Information” section.

Once you have documented your claim and submitted any further information that you believe should be taken into account by the claims administrator, the claims administrator has 90 days (except as discussed below) to process your claim after receiving it.

If the claims administrator needs additional information from you in order to process your claim, you will be given 180 days to supply the needed information. In that case, the claims administrator will have not less than 45 days from the date you supply the additional information or your 180-day period expires to make a decision on your claim.

If there are special circumstances requiring longer review, the claims administrator may take up to an additional 90 days to make a decision on your claim. The claims administrator will notify you in writing if more time is needed and of the final decision.

## **If your claim is denied**

If your claim completely or partially is denied, a written notice of denial will tell you the specific reasons for the decision, the Plan provisions used to support the decision, a description of any outstanding materials needed to approve the claim and how you can appeal the decision.

## **Filing an appeal**

You may file an appeal if:

- You receive no reply to your original claim within the initial 90 days.
- The time for a decision on your original claim was extended for an additional 90 days, and you receive no reply after the additional 90 days.
- You receive written denial of all or part of the claim, and you want to appeal the denial.

You may appeal by submitting in writing a letter requesting an appeal and stating your concerns and any related facts to the following address:

Verizon Claims Review Committee  
c/o Verizon Benefits Center  
P.O. Box 8998  
Norfolk, VA 23501-8998

Your appeal letter must be received within 60 days after you receive the denial of your claim or fail to receive timely notice of the decision.

If you submit an appeal, you have the right to:

- Review pertinent Plan documents, which you can obtain as described in the “Your rights under ERISA” section.
- Send a written statement of the issues and any other documents in support of your claim to the appeals administrator.
- Request copies of written documents that are relevant to the appeal. There typically will be a reasonable charge per page.

## **Review of your appeal**

The VCRC, as appeals administrator, will review your appeal of the denied claim and will make a decision within 60 days after receiving your written request for review. Your appeal will be decided by a different committee than the committee that decided your initial claim. Your appeal will be decided within 60 days after being received by the appeals administrator. However, if there are special circumstances that require additional time, the appeals administrator may extend the review by an additional 60 days (for a total of 120 days from receiving your appeal).

Normally, the appeals administrator will notify you of the decision in writing. However, if you do not receive a decision or notification within the appropriate time span, you should consider the appeal denied.

In case of an appeal, the appeals administrator's decision is final, conclusive and binding on all parties to the full extent permitted under applicable law, unless the participant or a beneficiary successfully proves that the appeals administrator's decision was an abuse of discretion under the Plan. However, as a Plan participant, you may have further rights under ERISA after you have exhausted the claims and appeals process, as described in the next section.

Benefits under the Plan will be paid only if the claims and appeals administrators decide in their discretion that the participant or beneficiary is entitled to them.

## **Your rights under ERISA**

As a participant in the Plan, you are entitled to certain rights and protections under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) and its subsequent amendments. ERISA provides that all Plan participants shall be entitled to the following:

### **Receiving information about your plan and benefits**

- Examine, without charge at the Plan administrator's office and at other specified locations, such as worksites and union halls, all documents governing the Plan, including insurance contracts and collective bargaining agreements, and a copy of the latest annual report (Form 5500 Series) filed by the Plan with the U.S. Department of Labor and available at the Public Disclosure Room of the Employee Benefits Security Administration.
- Obtain, upon written request to the Plan administrator, copies of documents governing the operation of the Plan, including insurance contracts and collective bargaining agreements, and copies of the latest annual report (Form 5500 Series) and updated summary plan description (SPD). The administrator may make a reasonable charge for the copies.
- Receive a summary of the Plan's annual financial reports. The Plan administrator is required by law to furnish you with a copy of this summary annual report.

### **Prudent actions by plan fiduciaries**

In addition to creating rights for Plan participants, ERISA imposes duties upon the persons who are responsible for the operation of the employee benefit plans. The people who operate your Plan, called "fiduciaries" of the Plan, have a duty to do so prudently and in the interest of you and other Plan participants and beneficiaries.

No one, including your employer, your union or any other person, may fire you or otherwise discriminate against you in any way to prevent you from obtaining a benefit or exercising your rights under ERISA.

### **Enforce your rights**

If your claim for a benefit is denied or ignored in whole or in part, you have the right to know why this was done, to obtain copies of documents relating to the decision without charge and to appeal any denial, all within certain time schedules.

Under ERISA, there are steps you can take to enforce the above rights.

For instance, if you request a copy of Plan documents or the latest annual report from the Plan and do not receive them within 30 days, you may file suit in a federal court. In such a case, the court may require the Plan administrator to provide the materials and pay you up to \$110 a day until you receive the materials, unless the materials were not sent because of reasons beyond the control of the Plan administrator.

If you have a claim for benefits that is denied or ignored, in whole or in part, you may file suit in a state or federal court.

If it should happen that Plan fiduciaries misuse the Plan's money or if you are discriminated against for asserting your rights, you may seek assistance from the U.S. Department of Labor or you may file suit in a federal court. The court will decide who should pay court costs and legal fees. If you are successful, the court may order the person you have sued to pay these costs and fees. If you lose, the court may order you to pay these costs and fees (for example, if it finds your claim to be frivolous).

## **Assistance with your questions**

If you have any questions about your Plan, you should contact the Plan administrator. If you have any questions about this statement or about your rights under ERISA, or if you need assistance in obtaining documents from the Plan administrator, you should contact the nearest office of the Employee Benefits Security Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, listed in your telephone directory, or write to:

Division of Technical Assistance and Inquiries  
Employee Benefits Security Administration  
U.S. Department of Labor  
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20210

You also may obtain certain publications about your rights and responsibilities under ERISA by calling the publication hotline of the Employee Benefits Security Administration.

## **Administrative information**

Administrative information about the Plan is provided in this section.

## **Important telephone numbers**

See your Important Benefits Contacts insert for information.

## **Plan sponsor/employer**

The Plan sponsor/employer is:

Verizon Communications Inc.  
One Verizon Way  
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920

## **Plan administrator**

The Plan administrator is:

Chairperson of the VEBC  
c/o Verizon Benefits Center  
P.O. Box 8998  
Norfolk, VA 23501-8998

You may communicate with the Plan administrator in writing at the address above. But, for questions about Plan benefits, you should write or call the claims administrator (see your Important Benefits Contacts insert for the telephone number). The claims administrator administers benefits and handles participant questions, requests and certain benefits claims, but is not the Plan administrator.

Telephone number: 855.4VzBens (855.489.2367) and follow the instructions to reach the Verizon Benefits Center.

The Plan administrator or a person delegated by the administrator has the full and final discretionary authority to publish the Plan document and benefit plan communications, to prepare reports and make filings for the Plan and to otherwise oversee the administration of the Plan.

Do not send any benefit claims to the Plan administrator or to the Verizon legal department. Instead, submit it to the claims administrator (see below for the address).

## **Claims and appeals administrators**

The claims administrator is:

VCRC  
c/o Verizon Benefits Center  
P.O. Box 8998  
Norfolk, VA 23501-8998

The appeals administrator is:

VCRC  
c/o Verizon Benefits Center  
P.O. Box 8998  
Norfolk, VA 23501-8998

## **Plan funding**

The claims and appeals administrators listed above do not insure or guarantee Plan benefits. Verizon pays all benefits and approved claims out of the general assets of the Company.

## **Plan identification**

The Plan is a welfare plan, listed with the Department of Labor under two numbers: The Employer Identification Number (EIN) is 23-2259884 and the Plan Number (PN) is 571.

## **Plan year**

Plan records are kept on a plan-year basis, which is the same as the calendar-year basis.

## **Agent for service of legal process**

The agent for service of legal process is the Plan administrator. Legal process must be served in writing to the Plan administrator at the address stated above for the Plan administrator.

In addition, a copy of the legal process involving this Plan should be delivered to:

Verizon Legal Department  
c/o Marc Schoenecker, Esq.  
600 Hidden Ridge, HQE03H12  
Irving, Texas 75038

## **Official Plan document**

This summary plan description (SPD) is a summary of the official Plan documents.

## **Collective bargaining agreements**

The terms of your benefits may also be governed by a collective bargaining agreement between Verizon and your union. You and your beneficiaries may review the collective bargaining agreement at your location, and you also can request a copy by writing to the Plan administrator.

## **Participating companies**

The following is a list of participating companies as of January 1, 2016. The list may change from time-to-time.

- Verizon Advanced Data Inc.
- Verizon New England Inc.
- Verizon Corporate Services Corp
- Verizon Services Corp
- Verizon Avenue Corp.