

REDACTED - FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION

*Attachments*







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FARMERS MUTUAL TELEPHONE COMPANY (SAC 361389)  
FCC FORM 481  
PROGRESS REPORT ON SERVICE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

LINE 112 – FIVE YEAR PLAN OR PROGRESS REPORT



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<sup>1</sup> Pursuant to Section 54.313(a) of the Commission's Rules "States that desire eligible telecommunications carriers to receive support pursuant to the high-cost program must file an annual certification with the Administrator and the Commission stating that all federal high-cost support provided to such carriers within that State was used in the preceding calendar year and will be used in the coming calendar year only for the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of facilities and services for which the support is intended."

**LINE 113 – MAPS DETAILING PROGRESS TOWARDS MEETING PLAN TARGETS**



**LINE 114 thru 117 UNIVERSAL SERVICE**



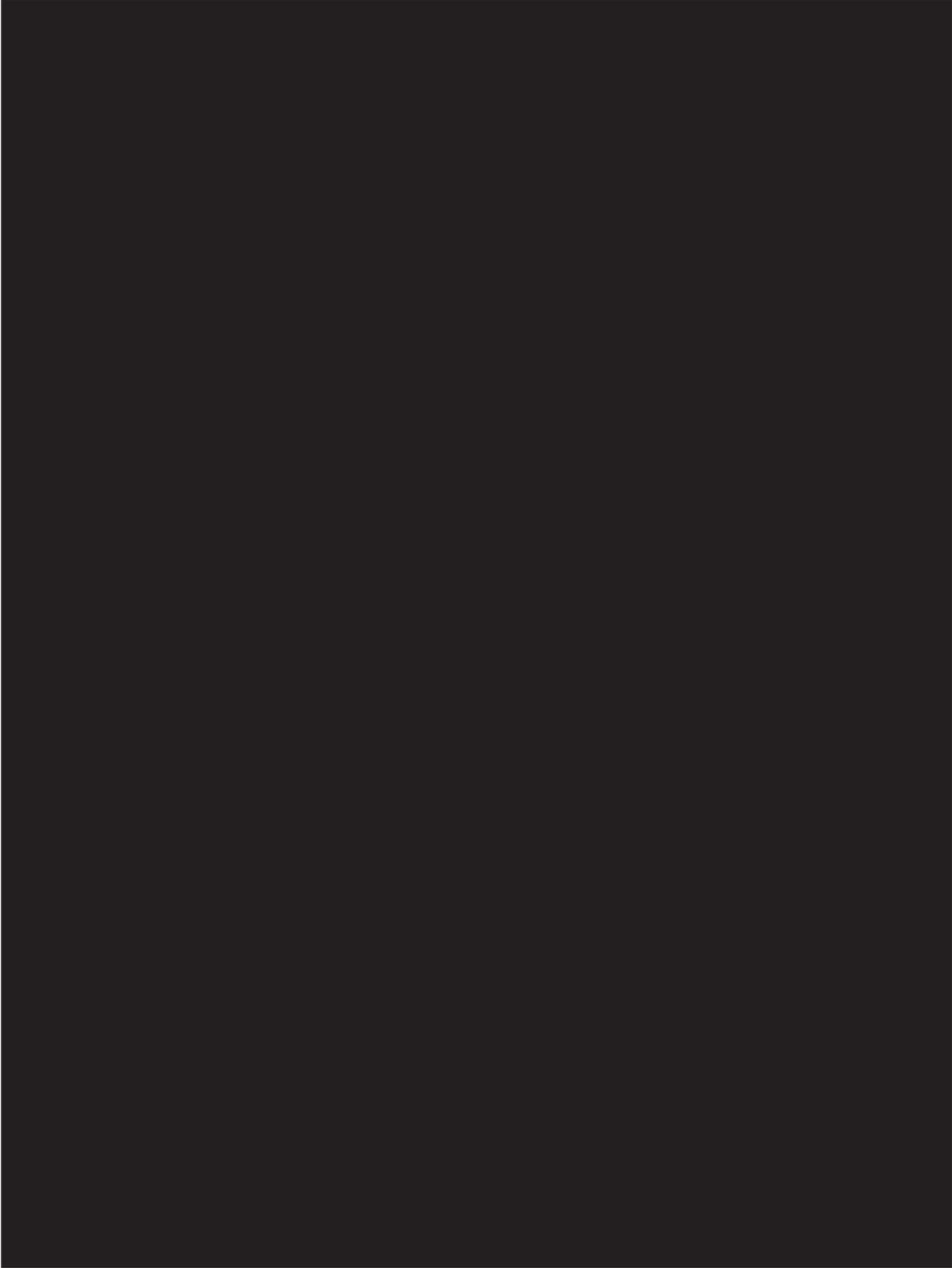
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2 47 U.S.C. § 254(e)  
3 47 C.F.R. § 54.314(b)  
4 *See USF/ICC Transformation Order* at Para. 612.  
5 *Id.*

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**FARMERS MUTUAL TELEPHONE COMPANY (SAC 361389)  
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PROGRESS REPORT ON SERVICE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN  
LINE 112 – FIVE YEAR PLAN OR PROGRESS REPORT**

**ATTACHMENT A – LINE 113 NETWORK IMPROVEMENT MAP**

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Farmers Mutual Telephone Co 361389

SAC: 361389

State: MN

Farmers Mutual Tel

Form 481 Line No 510 Compliance with Service Quality Standards and Consumer Protection

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**South Dakota:**

1. Farmers Mutual Tel - MN (Company) will provide service on a timely basis to requesting customers within the Company's designated service area where the Company's network already passes the potential customers premises, and
  
2. The Company will provide service, within a reasonable period of time, if the potential customer is within the Company's designated service area but outside the Company's existing network coverage, if the service can be provided at reasonable cost by:
  - a. Modifying or replacing the requesting customers equipment.
  - b. Adjusting network or customer facilities.

3. Service Quality Standards

The Company:

- Provides voice grade access to the public switched network.
- Provides flat rated local exchange service with no addition charge to end users.
- Provides access to the emergency services provided by local government or other public safety organization, such as 911 and enhanced 911.
- Provides toll blocking and toll limitation services.
- Advertises the availability of its services and the charges using media of general distribution.
- Maintains a business office providing customers with access to a customer service representative either in person or via a local telephone call or toll-free telephone number during normal business hours.
- Directs after hour calls to the Company's help desk.
- Directs trouble reports to the on-call technician.
- Tracks all service orders to ensure they are completed in a timely manner.
- Measures its service connection and service interruption performance on a regular basis.
- Trains employees to:
  - Answer all incoming calls promptly.
  - Respond to all inquiries for information promptly and courteously.
  - Investigate thoroughly all customer complaints.
  - Be knowledgeable about products and service offerings so they can assist the customer with selecting the best service option.
- Has a process for periodic inspection, testing and preventive maintenance of its equipment to permit the rendering of safe, adequate and continuous service at all times.

SAC: 361389

State: MN

Farmers Mutual Tel

Form 481 Line No. 510 Compliance with Service Quality Standards and Consumer Protection

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**South Dakota:** (Cont'd)

4. Consumer Protection Rules

The Company has established operating procedures designed to facilitate compliance with applicable consumer protection rules which include compliance with the Customer Proprietary Network Information (CPNI) rules. The operating procedures include:

- Appointment of a compliance officer.
- A manual detailing the specific procedures for protecting consumer information.
- Employee training on an annual basis.
- A disciplinary process for improper use of consumer information.

SAC: 361389  
 State: MN  
 Farmers Mutual Tel  
 Form 481 Line No. 510 Compliance with Service Quality Standards and Consumer Protection

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**Minnesota:**

In addition to the items noted above for South Dakota, as required by MN. Rule "7812.0700 Minnesota General Service Quality Requirements. Subpart 1" the local services provided by Farmers Mutual Tel are provided under internal company operating procedures and publically available tariffs which are in compliance with applicable Minnesota Public Utility Commission orders and rules including:

7810.0100 DEFINITIONS.  
 7810.0200 SCOPE.  
 7810.0300 STATUTORY AUTHORITY.

**RECORDS AND REPORTS**

7810.0400 RETENTION OF RECORDS.  
 7810.0500 DATA TO BE FILED WITH THE COMMISSION.  
 7810.0600 REPORT TO COMMISSION ON SERVICE DISRUPTION.  
 7810.0900 LOCATION OF RECORDS.

**CUSTOMER RELATIONS**

7810.1000 INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO CUSTOMER AND PUBLIC.  
 7810.1100 COMPLAINT PROCEDURES.  
 7810.1200 RECORD OF COMPLAINT.

**CUSTOMER BILLING; DEPOSIT AND GUARANTEE REQUIREMENTS**

7810.1400 CUSTOMER BILLING.  
 7810.1500 DEPOSIT AND GUARANTEE REQUIREMENTS.  
 7810.1600 DEPOSIT.  
 7810.1700 GUARANTEE OF PAYMENT.

**DISCONNECTION OF SERVICE; SERVICE DELAY**

7810.1800 PERMISSIBLE SERVICE DISCONNECTIONS WITH NOTICE.  
 7810.1900 PERMISSIBLE SERVICE DISCONNECTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.  
 7810.2000 NONPERMISSIBLE REASONS TO DISCONNECT SERVICE.  
 7810.2100 MANNER OF DISCONNECTION.  
 7810.2200 RECONNECTION OF SERVICE.  
 7810.2300 NOTICE REQUIREMENTS.  
 7810.2400 BILL DISPUTES.  
 7810.2500 ESCROW PAYMENTS.  
 7810.2600 WAIVING RIGHT TO DISCONNECT; EMERGENCY STATUS.  
 7810.2800 DELAY IN INITIAL SERVICE OR UPGRADE.

**DIRECTORIES**

7810.2900 CONTENT OF DIRECTORIES.  
 7810.3000 DIRECTORY ASSISTANCE.  
 7810.3100 CHANGES OR ERROR OF LISTED NUMBER.

**ENGINEERING**

7810.3200 CONSTRUCTION OF TELEPHONE PLANT.  
 7810.3300 MAINTENANCE OF PLANT AND EQUIPMENT.  
 7810.3900 EMERGENCY OPERATIONS.

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Form 481 Line No. 510 Compliance with Service Quality Standards and Consumer Protection

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**Minnesota:** (cont'd)

**INSPECTIONS, TESTS, SERVICE REQUIREMENTS**

7810.4100 ACCESS TO TEST FACILITIES.

7810.4300 ACCURACY REQUIREMENTS.

7810.4900 ADEQUACY OF SERVICE.

7810.5000 UTILITY OBLIGATIONS.

7810.5100 TELEPHONE OPERATORS.

7810.5200 ANSWERING TIME.

7810.5300 DIAL SERVICE REQUIREMENTS.

7810.5400 INTEROFFICE TRUNKS.

7810.5500 TRANSMISSION REQUIREMENTS.

7810.5800 INTERRUPTIONS OF SERVICE.

7810.5900 CUSTOMER TROUBLE REPORTS.

7810.6000 PROTECTIVE MEASURES.

7810.6100 SAFETY PROGRAM.

Farmers Mutual Tel is in compliance with CPNI rules, Red Flag Rules, and other Federal and State requirements governing the protection of Customer's privacy.

SAC: 361389

State: MN

Farmers Mutual Tel

Form 481 Line No. 610 Description of Functionality in Emergency Situations

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Farmers Mutual Tel:

- Established reasonable provisions to meet emergencies resulting from failures of lighting or power service, sudden and prolonged increases in traffic, illness of operators or from fire, storm, or acts of God including provisions for emergency power that meet or exceed the rule requirement to provide:
  - A minimum of four hours of battery service in each central office.
  - A permanently installed power unit in exchanges exceeding 5000 lines.
  - Mobile power units that can be delivered on short notice and which can be readily connected in offices without installed emergency power facilities.
  
- Has informed employees as to the procedures to be followed, including reasonable rerouting of traffic around damaged facilities and the deployment of emergency power, in the event of emergency in order to prevent or mitigate interruption or impairment of telecommunications service.

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SAC: 361389

State: MN

Farmers Mutual Tel

Form 481 Line No. 1010 Descriptive document for Voice Services Rate Comparability

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Line 1010 – Description of Voice Services Rate Comparability: Provide a detailed description of how your pricing of fixed voice services is no more than two standard deviations above the applicable national average urban rate for voice service, as published annually by the Wireline Competition Bureau, as required in 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(10).

On April 5, 2016 the Wireline Competition Bureau announced results of the Urban Rate Survey for Voice Services as part of FCC Public Notice DA 16-362. Referenced in this public notice are the results required to meet the rate comparability as noted:

“Based on the survey results, the reasonable comparability benchmark for voice services is \$41.07.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Id. at 17694, para. 84.”

As required Farmers Mutual Tel hereby certifies that its current fixed voice services for residential subscribers as defined in the USF/ICC Transformation Order is below \$41.07.

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SAC: 361389

State: MN

Farmers Mutual Tel

Form 481 Line No. 1030 Descriptive document for Broadband Service Rate Comparability

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Line 1030 – Description of Broadband Service Rate Comparability: Provide a detailed description of how your pricing of a Broadband service meeting the Commission’s Public Interest Obligations is no more than the applicable benchmark, as published annually by the Wireline Competition Bureau, pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(12).

On April 5, 2016 the Wireline Competition Bureau announced the results of the Urban Rate Survey for Broadband Service as part of FCC Public Notice DA 16-362. Referenced in this public notice are the results required to meet the rate comparability as noted:

“Based on the survey results, the reasonable comparability benchmark calculations for broadband services can be calculated at <http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/urban=rate-survey-data>.”

As required Farmers Mutual Tel hereby certifies that it offers a Broadband service to residential subscribers at pricing that is no more than the applicable benchmark rate.

SAC: 361389  
 State: MN  
 Farmers Mutual Tel  
 Form 481 Line No. 1210 Lifeline Plans Terms and Conditions

**Lifeline Terms and Conditions**

1. Farmers Mutual Tel (Company) offers lifeline program-supported service to qualified low-income residential consumers for one telephone line per eligible household. The lifeline program provides discounts to eligible low-income consumers to help them establish and maintain telephone service. Lifeline assistance lowers the cost of basic, monthly local telephone service. Eligible consumers can receive \$9.25 per month in discounts. In addition, the Federal Universal Service Charge is not assessed to consumers participating in Lifeline. Toll Blocking prevents the placement of all long distance calls for which a subscriber would be charged. Toll Blocking is available to eligible consumers at no cost. Also, by choosing the option, consumers are usually not charged a deposit.

**Lifeline Program Eligibility Information**

**Program Based Eligibility**

Consumers are eligible for Lifeline if they, one of their dependents or their household participate in one of the following qualifying assistance programs:

- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Medicaid
- National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and receives lunch through the program
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

Lifeline applicant must present documentation demonstrating eligibility either through participation in one of the qualifying federal assistance programs or through income-based means.

Acceptable documentation of program-based eligibility includes: current or prior year's statement of benefits from a qualifying program; notice letter of participation in a qualifying program; program participation documents; or another official document evidencing the consumer's participation in a qualifying program.

**Income Based Eligibility**

In addition, consumers are eligible for Lifeline if their household income is at or below 135% of the federal poverty guidelines.

2014 Federal Poverty Guidelines – 135%

<u>Household Size</u>	<u>48 Contiguous States and D.C.</u>
1	\$ 15,755
2	21,236
3	26,717
4	32,198
5	37,679
6	43,160
7	48,641
8	54,122
For Each Additional Person, Add	5,481

Acceptable documentation of income eligibility includes: prior year's state, federal or Tribal tax return; current income statement from an employer or paycheck stub; social security statement of benefits; Veterans Administration statement of benefits; retirement/pension statement of benefits; unemployment/workmen's compensation statement of benefits; federal or Tribal notice of letter participating in General Assistance; or a divorce decree or child support award or other official document containing income information.

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**Lifeline Terms and Conditions (Continued)**

**Lifeline Terms and Conditions (Continued)**

**Lifeline Program Eligibility Information (Continued)**

**Recertification of Lifeline Eligibility**

Lifeline recipients are required to recertify their eligibility annually. Failure to properly recertify a recipient's continued eligibility for the Lifeline program will result in termination of the Lifeline recipient's monthly Lifeline discount and de-enrollment from the Lifeline Program.

**Additional Lifeline Program Information**

The Lifeline program is limited to one benefit per household, consisting of either wireline or wireless service. A household is defined, for purposes of the Lifeline Program, as an individual or group of individuals who live together at the same address and share income and expenses. Lifeline is government benefit program, and consumers who willfully make false statements in order to obtain the benefit can be punished by fine or imprisonment or can be barred from the program.

2. The Company's flat rate plans include unlimited local exchange calling including usage to designated nearby local exchange areas. The flat rate plans do not include any toll usage. The rates for any toll usage are determined by the rate plans of the Toll Provider(s) that are selected by lifeline end users.
3. The Company has met and will meet the requirements of eligible telecommunications carrier advertising. This includes:
  - a. A full description of available services in the Company's Official telephone directory, including the process to be used by customers to qualify for lifeline and link-up service.
  - b. Advertising of the available universal service in media of general circulation in the Company's designated service area. Availability may be advertised in newspapers, company newsletters, company or civic internet sites, bill stuffer, direct mailings, or other means intended to convey availability throughout the designated service area.
4. The specific Company terms and conditions for the Companies Lifeline Plans are set forth in pages included in Exhibit 1, attached.



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Exhibit 1

SAC: 361389  
State: MN  
Farmers Mutual Tel  
Form 481 Line No. 1210 Lifeline Plans Terms and Conditions

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FARMERS MUTUAL TELEPHONE COMPANY  
BELLINGHAM, MINNESOTA

Section 4  
Page 1

## LOCAL EXCHANGE SERVICE

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The rates for Local Exchange Service are subject to the conditions set forth herein and the General Regulations governing provision of service. The General Regulations are set forth in Section 2 of this tariff book.

### Local Exchange Service

- A. The Local Exchange Service Rates in this section are for service only and do not include any terminal equipment beyond the point of demarcation.
- B. The rates applicable to Local Exchange Service are composed of a Line Access Rate component plus (where applicable) an Extended Area Service component.
- C. Service Upgrades
  - 1) All services have been upgraded to business individual line and residence individual line service.
  - 2) The rates shown on the rate schedule will be applied.
- D. Extended Area Service
  - 1) Establishment and discontinuance of EAS will be contingent upon Commission authorization.
  - 2) Extended Area Service rate component.
    - a) EAS is a premium-type service offering made by the Company to certain exchanges, under specific conditions.
    - b) The Extended Area Service rate component, where applicable, is included in the Local Exchange Service Rate.
- E. Taxes
  - 1) Applicable taxes levied by state, county and local taxing authorities are in addition to the rates set forth in this tariff. (See also General Regulations, Section 2).

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FARMERS MUTUAL TELEPHONE COMPANY  
 BELLINGHAM, MINNESOTA

Section 4  
 Page 2  
 Revision 3

## LOCAL EXCHANGE SERVICE

### Rates

Class of Service	Monthly Charges		
	Access Line Charge	EAS Additive	Total
<u>Bellingham and Marietta Exchanges</u>			
Business:			
One Party - Access	\$ 16.00		\$ 16.00 (l)
Key System Line - Access	16.00		16.00 (l)
Basic Coin Telephone Service	16.00		16.00 (l)
Residence:			
One Party - Access	\$ 16.00		\$ 16.00 (l)
School Classroom Service: *			
One Party - Access	\$ 16.00		\$ 16.00 (l)
<u>Cerro Gordo Exchange</u>			
Business:			
One Party - Access	\$ 16.00	\$ 3.16	19.16 (l)
Key System Line - Access	16.00	3.16	19.16 (l)
Basic Coin Telephone Service	16.00	3.16	19.16 (l)
Residence:			
One Party - Access	\$ 16.00	\$ 3.16	\$ 19.16 (l)
School Classroom Service: *			
One Party - Access	\$ 16.00	\$ 3.16	\$ 19.16 (l)
<u>EAS Additive:</u>			
Facility Cost	\$ 1.16	\$ 1.16	\$ 1.16
Lost Access Revenue	2.00	2.00	2.00
Total	<u>\$ 3.16</u>	<u>\$ 3.16</u>	<u>\$ 3.16</u>

\* School classroom service is one party flat rate local exchange access line service offered to public schools that conduct classes within the range of kindergarten through 12th grade pursuant to Minnesota Statute Section 237.065. This additional service is available to ensure access to telephone service from each classroom and other areas within the school, as determined by the school board. Existing service provided to all areas of the school prior to the effective date of this tariff will be billed at the current rates. Upon approval by the school board, this service must be installed in all remaining classrooms within the school and other areas within the school, as determined by the school board, within the time period specified by the company. This service is not available in areas within the school where telephone service is used for business administrative purposes of the schools.

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FARMERS MUTUAL TELEPHONE COMPANY  
BELLINGHAM, MINNESOTA

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## LOCAL EXCHANGE SERVICE

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### Extended Area Service (EAS)

#### Exchange

Bellingham  
Bellingham  
Bellingham  
Cerro Gordo  
Cerro Gordo  
Marietta  
Marietta

#### EAS to Exchange

Cerro Gordo  
Marietta  
Odessa  
Bellingham  
Marietta  
Bellingham  
Cerro Gordo

### School District Extended Area Service (EAS)

Cerro Gordo  
Cerro Gordo  
Boyd (Citizens)  
Dawson (Frontier)

Boyd (Citizens)  
Dawson (Frontier)  
Cerro Gordo  
Cerro Gordo

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Farmers Mutual Tel

Form 481 Line No. 1210 Lifeline Plans Terms and Conditions

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Farmers Mutual Tel offers service to customers in South Dakota in the Marietta Exchange at the same rates as referenced in the MN Tariff pages included in this filing.

Residential Local Service - \$16.00

Business Local Service - \$16.00

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SAC: 361389

State: MN

Farmers Mutual Tel

Response to Line 3010 – Milestone Certification (47 CFR §54.313(f)(1)(i))

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Farmers Mutual Tel hereby certifies that throughout 2015, it took reasonable steps to provide upon reasonable request broadband service at actual speeds of at least 4 Mbps downstream/1 Mbps upstream, and currently, it is taking reasonable steps to provide upon reasonable request actual speeds of at least 10 Mbps downstream/1 Mbps upstream broadband service at with latency suitable for real-time applications, including Voice over Internet Protocol, and usage capacity that is reasonably comparable to comparable offerings in urban areas as determined in an annual survey, and that requests for such service are met within a reasonable amount of time.

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SAC: 361389

State: MN

Farmers Mutual Tel

Form 481 Line No. 3017 RUS Annual Report

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**ATTACHMENT REDACTED IN ENTIRETY**