

12 June 2019

C107067

Kate McIntyre  
[fyi-request-10059-43562063@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-10059-43562063@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Ms McIntyre

Thank you for your email of 11 April 2019, requesting information about prisoner payphones. Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).

Public safety and reducing re-offending are the ultimate goals for Corrections. In accordance with the Corrections Act 2004, we make public safety paramount when managing offenders, and administer all sentences in a safe, secure, humane and effective manner. All prisons are operated in accordance with New Zealand legislation and having regard for other agreements, such as the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners.

The Corrections Act 2004 states that the minimum entitlement is that every prisoner can make at least one phone call of up to five minutes duration per week. New Zealand prisons provide greater access to phone calls than the minimum entitlement. Prisoners are able to make calls from payphones within prisons using calling cards purchased from the canteen system or supplied by their families. Corrections Prison Operations Manual on Prisoner telephone calls is available on our website at: [www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/policy\\_and\\_legislation/Prison-Operations-Manual/Communication/C.html](http://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/policy_and_legislation/Prison-Operations-Manual/Communication/C.html).

Calls can be for up to 15 minutes duration and are recorded for the purposes of telephone monitoring. Recordings of prisoners' telephone calls are subject to random and targeted monitoring in accordance with the Corrections Act 2004, and can be used as evidence against prisoners carrying out harassment, intimidation, threats or other unlawful activities. When a prisoner makes a telephone call, the recipient is played an automated message advising them that the call is being made from within a prison and is recorded to enable them to make an informed decision about accepting the call.

Prisoners have access to call certain Spark and Vodafone free phone numbers at no charge. These include agencies such as Budget advice, Community Law, the Office of the Ombudsman and the Ministry of Social Development. A full list is available on Corrections' website at: [www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/policy\\_and\\_legislation/Prison-Operations-Manual/Public-RL/C.02.Sch.html](http://www.corrections.govt.nz/resources/policy_and_legislation/Prison-Operations-Manual/Public-RL/C.02.Sch.html).

You requested:

1. *The cost of outgoing phone calls on prison payphones, broken down by call type. If this differs from prison to prison, please break this down by prison.*

Corrections negotiated specific call rates with Spark that are lower than their normal rates. Please find enclosed Appendix One - C.02.sch.02 Schedule of phone card rates. For comparison, Spark's normal call rates are available at:

[https://www.spark.co.nz/content/dam/telecomcms/other/TLOC%20Payphone%20Charges\\_Jul\\_2014.pdf](https://www.spark.co.nz/content/dam/telecomcms/other/TLOC%20Payphone%20Charges_Jul_2014.pdf)

2. *The total cost incurred by Corrections for running the payphone system.*

Other than the costs to physically install and repair any damage, Corrections pay Spark an annual amount in support fees to maintain the payphone system. This amount is commercially sensitive and is withheld under section 9(2)(b)(ii) of the OIA as making the information available would be likely to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.

3. *The total revenue gathered by Corrections from the payphone system.*

Corrections does not receive any revenue from the payphone system. Prisoners purchase a Spark phone card that provides the same dollar worth of calling time. For example a phone card purchased for \$20 provides \$20 worth of call time.

I trust the information provided is of assistance. Should you have any concerns with this response, I would encourage you to raise these with Corrections. Alternatively you are advised of your right to also raise any concerns with the Office of the Ombudsman. Contact details are: Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Yours sincerely



Andrew Robertson  
Deputy Chief Executive  
Finance, Property and Technology

## C.02.Sch.02 Schedule of phone card rates

Call Type	New Rate
Local	Flat Rate \$1 for up to 15 minutes (max call time)
National	\$0.25 per minute
Cell Phone	\$0.35 per minute
International	\$0.90 per minute

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