



MEDIA RELEASE:

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The Regulatory Authority Issues Emergency General Determination during COVID-19

March 24, 2020. Hamilton, Bermuda: Due to the economic uncertainty regarding COVID-19, the RA provided strong direction to providers of electronic communications and electricity services, to take the appropriate actions to ensure there is no loss of service as a result of COVID-19. Further, to ensure clarity, the Regulatory Authority (the “RA”) implemented an [Emergency General Determination \(“EGD”\)](#) with feedback from the sectoral providers **to enforce the following prohibitions:**

- **Making *any* changes to tariffs** without the prior written approval from the RA including increasing tariffs to Consumers and Small Businesses during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The disconnection or discontinuance of services for non-payment by a ‘**Relevant Person**’. **(Relevant persons are defined as a consumer or small business that demonstrates a recent loss of employment or significant income due to the COVID-19 pandemic); and**
- Charging of penalties or other fees for non-payment to ‘Relevant Persons’. **NOTE: This does not apply to penalties for breach of handset or other device contracts** associated with switching service providers.

The RA strongly encourages Relevant Persons to monitor their data usage patterns, as monthly usage and charges for over-usage will still be applicable once the COVID-19 pandemic period is over.

William G. Francis, Chairman of the RA stated, “As one of the principle functions of the RA is to promote the development of the local economy and protect consumers, we are naturally concerned about the potential detrimental effects of the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Consumers and Small Businesses of Bermuda. We consider the prevention of widespread loss of electronic communications and electricity services to be urgent and in the public interest. We are pleased that sectoral providers have followed the direction as indicated by the RA.”

As a result of COVID-19, the RA has also extended the timetable for public feedback on [the Principles of Consumer Protection](#) from March 23, 2020 to April 13, 2020.

For more information about the [Emergency General Determination](#) and the [Principles of Consumer Protection](#), visit www.ra.bm