

# Mobile Phones



Most international students are interested in getting a mobile phone, or cell phone, to keep in touch with family & friends during their studies in Rochester. While it is possible to continue using your home service provider, you may be charged additional fees for placing calls while outside your home country. If you are thinking about purchasing an American cell phone, this flyer provides information on different services available among local providers.

## There are two main options for mobile phone service:

- 1) **Service Plans:** Most cell phone companies offer a variety of contract plans that allow you to use selected phone services and then bill you each month. Since these plans are based on your credit, many companies require a U.S. Social Security Number to open a new account.
- 2) **Pay-As-You-Go:** This option allows you to purchase phone minutes before you use them, with no contract for on-going service (no SSN required). Most major providers, as well as many retail & convenience stores, offer Pay-As-You-Go mobile phones and wireless minutes.

### ***Service plan providers:***

- AT&T
- Cricket
- Sprint
- T-Mobile
- Verizon Wireless

### ***Pay-As-You-Go providers:***

- Boostmobile
- Tracfone
- T-Mobile
- Virgin Mobile
- Verizon Wireless

## Where to Go?

AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile, and Verizon stores all have locations in or nearby the Marketplace Mall in Henrietta. Marketplace is accessible by UR shuttle bus on the Green Line.

## What to Consider?

When choosing a provider, it is important to understand the plan & phone capabilities, such as:

- What are the rates and procedures for making international phone calls? These can vary by service provider, phone model, or service plan. Alternatively, international phone cards (with a toll-free access number) may usually be used on any cell phone, regardless of your provider. Such calls will still use your minutes, but will not be charged at international rates.
- What is the service coverage available outside of the Rochester area? This will be important if you want to use your phone in other U.S. cities.
- Will your phone function internationally? If so, what extra charges will you have to pay to use your phone abroad? Many popular phones in the U.S. do not work outside of North America. Most cell phones will work in Canada, but you will likely be charged an additional fee for using your phone outside of the country, if you did not purchase an international plan.
- How long is the contract for service? What are penalties are charged if you decide to cancel your plan before the contract period is expired?
- Are there any discounts available to University of Rochester students?