

VAN BUREN TECHNOLOGIES/VAN BUREN TELEPHONE COMPANY, INC.

Consumer Services Agreement

WE APPRECIATE YOUR USE OF OUR SERVICES.

In this Agreement (Agreement), “you” and “your” mean the customer of **VBT** Services defined below, “**VBT**,” “we,” “our,” and “us” means **VAN BUREN TECHNOLOGIES** and/or **VAN BUREN TELEPHONE COMPANY, INC.**

BY ENROLLMENT IN, USE, OR PAYMENT FOR SERVICES, YOU AGREE TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THIS AGREEMENT. IF YOU DO NOT AGREE TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS, PLEASE CANCEL THE SERVICES IMMEDIATELY BY CALLING THE VBT (319) 293-3187 CUSTOMER CARE NUMBER FOR FURTHER DIRECTIONS.

“Service” or “Services” means: (1) the **VBT** consumer telecommunications services you are enrolled in, use, or pay for that **VBT** provided to you under tariffs filed with the Federal Communications Commission or State Regulatory Body prior to August 1, 2001; and (2) any new or additional **VBT** consumer telecommunications services that you enroll in, use, or pay for, after August 1, 2001.

This Agreement does not cover any local services except for intra-exchange private line service and inter-exchange private network service. The Services covered in this Agreement are subject to billing availability and may not be available at all locations. The **VBT** price sheets are available for inspection at the business office that contain specific prices and charges, service descriptions and other terms and conditions not set forth here that apply to each of your Services. You can review the **VBT** price sheets at the **VBT** Business Office located at 617 First Street, Keosauqua, Iowa 52565-0430.

THIS AGREEMENT INCORPORATES BY REFERENCE THE PRICES, CHARGES, TERMS, AND CONDITIONS WHICH ARE IN THE VBT PRICE SHEETS.

1. CHARGES AND PAYMENTS

a. General. You agree to pay us for the Services at the prices and charges listed in the **VBT** price sheets. The prices and charges for the Services may also include, for example government mandated fees or taxes.

b. Price Changes. We may change the prices and charges for the Services from time to time. We may decrease prices without providing advance notice. Increases to the prices or charges for Services are effective no sooner than seven days after we post them. We will provide notices of increases to the prices and charges for the Services included in the **VBT** price sheets by bill message or other notice. You may also call the **VBT Customer Care Number at (319) 293-3187 for information on current prices.**

c. Payments. You must pay all bills or invoices on time (on or before the due date) and in U.S. money. We do not waive our right to collect the full amount due if you pay late or you pay part of the bill, even if you write the words “Paid in Full” (or similar words) on any correspondence to us. If you make any late payments we may charge you a late fee (1.5% or as allowed by governing law), which we apply to that period’s charges and any outstanding charges and late payment charges that remain unpaid at the time of the next bill. If the state law where you receive the Services requires a different rate, we will apply that rate. If your check, bank draft, or electronic funds transfer is returned for insufficient funds, we may charge you additional charges. These charges may include any reasonable costs we incur, including attorneys’ fees. If the state

law where you receive the Services requires a different fee, we will charge you that amount. When payment is made by credit card, payment will also be subject to terms and conditions required by the credit card issuer.

d. Charges and Billing. Charges accrue through a full billing period. We may prorate or adjust a bill if the billing period covers less than or more than a full month. (For this purpose, each month is considered to have 30 days). You are responsible for preventing the unauthorized use of the Services, and you are responsible for payment for any such unauthorized use.

e. Taxes and Other Charges. You must pay all taxes, fees, surcharges and other charges that we bill you for the Services, unless you can show documentation satisfactory to us that you are exempt. Taxes and surcharges will be in the amounts that federal, state and local authorities require us to bill you. We will not provide advance notice of changes to taxes and surcharges, except as required by applicable law.

f. Credit Check and Deposits. You give us permission to obtain your credit information from consumer credit reporting agencies at any time. If we determine that you may be a credit risk due to: (1) unsatisfactory credit rating; (2) insufficient credit history; (3) fraudulent or abusive use of any **VB**T services within the last five years; or (4) late payments for current or prior bills, we may require a deposit to ensure payment for the Services. The amount of the deposit will be not more than any estimated one-time charges required for the Services, plus three months of the estimated average per-minute charges and/or monthly fees for the Services. We will pay simple interest at the annual rate of 1% on the deposit, subject to the state law where you receive the Services. If you fail to pay for the Services when due, we may use the deposit without giving notice to you. If you pay undisputed bills by the due date for twelve consecutive billing months, we will credit deposit to your account. If a credit balance remains on your account, we will refund or credit that amount.

g. Credit Limits. We may set a credit limit based on your payment history or your credit score from consumer credit reporting agencies. If we do this, we will notify you of your initial credit limit and all changes to your credit limit. If you exceed your credit limit, we may restrict your access to the Services. If you fail to make timely payments, we may also lower your credit limit.

2. SUSPENDING AND CANCELLING THE SERVICES.

a. Fraudulent Use. You agree not to use the Services for any unlawful, abusive, or fraudulent purpose, including, but not limited to, using the Services in a way that (1) interferes with our ability to provide Services to you or other customers; or (2) avoids your obligation to pay for the Services. If **VB**T has reason to believe that you or someone else is abusing the Services or using them fraudulently or unlawfully, we can immediately suspend, restrict, or cancel the Services without advance notice.

b. Your Cancellation of the Services. If you use more than one Service, you may change or cancel individual Services by calling the **VB**T customer care number on your **VB**T bill, subject to the applicable terms and conditions in the **VB**T price sheets. This Agreement remains in effect for any Services that you continue to be enrolled in, use, or pay for. If you want to cancel all or some of the Services, please discontinue your use of those Services and call us toll free at the **VB**T CUSTOMER CARE NUMBER at (319) 293-3187 for further instructions.

c. Outstanding Charges. If Services are suspended, restricted, or cancelled, any charges will accrue through the date that **VB**T fully processes the suspension, restriction or cancellation. You must pay all outstanding charges for these Services, including payment of any bills that remain

due after the date of cancellation. Subject to Section 7, you must reimburse us for any reasonable costs we incur, including attorney's fees, to collect charges owed to us. If you want us to renew the Services, we may require that you pay a deposit.

d. Other. VBT may from time to time discontinue certain Services, subject to applicable law and regulation.

e. Failure to Pay. Upon advance notice, we may suspend, restrict, or cancel the Services and this Agreement, if you do not make payments for current or prior bills by the required due date, including payments for late fees or any other required additional charges.

3. INDEMNIFICATION. You agree that we will not be responsible for any third-party claims against us that arise from your use of the Services. Further, you agree to reimburse us for all costs and expenses related to the defense of any such claims, including attorneys' fees, unless such claims are based on our willful misconduct or gross negligence. This provision will continue to apply after the agreement ends.

4. LIMITATIONS OF LIABILITY. This section describes the full extent of our responsibility for any claims you make for damages caused by the failure of the Services, or any other claims in connection with the Services or this agreement. If our negligence causes damage to person or property, we will be liable for no more than the amount of direct damages to the person or property. For any other claims, we will not be liable for more than the amount of our charges for the Services during the affected period. For all claims, we will not be liable for indirect or consequential damages, including but not limited to lost profits or revenue or increased costs of operation. We also will not be liable for punitive, reliance, or special damages. These limitations apply even if the damages were foreseeable or we were told they were possible, and they apply whether the claim is based on contract, tort, statute, fraud, misrepresentation, or any other legal or equitable theory. We will not be liable for any damages if Services are interrupted, or there is a problem with the interconnection of our Services with the Services or equipment of some other party. This section will continue to apply after the agreement ends.

5. WARRANTIES. Except as this agreement expressly states, we make no express warranty regarding the Services and disclaim any implied warranty, including any warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose. We also make no warranty that the Services will be uninterrupted or error free. **WE DO NOT AUTHORIZE ANYONE, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, VBT EMPLOYEES, AGENTS OR REPRESENTATIVES, TO MAKE A WARRANTY OF ANY KIND ON OUR BEHALF AND YOU SHOULD NOT RELY ON ANY SUCH STATEMENT.**

6. CREDIT ALLOWANCES FOR INTERRUPTIONS. If an interruption or failure of Services is caused solely by VBT and not by you or a third party or other causes beyond our reasonable control, you may be entitled to a credit allowance as specified in the applicable VBT price sheets.

7. DISPUTE RESOLUTION. It is important that you read this entire section carefully. This section provides for resolution of disputes through final and binding arbitration before a neutral arbitrator instead of in a court by a judge or jury or through a class action. You continue to have certain rights to obtain relief from a federal or state regulatory agency. **DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURES SHALL NOT BE CONSIDERED AN EXCUSE TO DELAY OR WITHHOLD PAYMENTS OF ANY PART OF MONTHLY BILLINGS.**

THE CUSTOMER IS REQUIRED TO PAY BOTH THE DISPUTED AND UNDISPUTED PORTIONS OF THE BILL BY THE DUE DATE.

a. Binding Arbitration. The arbitration process established by this section is governed by the Federal Arbitration Act (FAA), 9 U.S.C. §§1-16. You have the right to take any dispute that qualifies to small claims court rather than arbitration. All other disputes arising out of or related to this Agreement (whether based in contract, tort, statute, fraud, misrepresentation or any other legal or equitable theory) must be resolved by final and binding arbitration. This includes any dispute based on any product, Service or advertising having a connection with this Agreement and any dispute not finally resolved by a small claims court. The arbitration will be conducted by one arbitrator using the procedures described in Section 7. If any portion of this Dispute Resolution Section is determined to be unenforceable, then the remainder shall be given full force and effect.

The arbitration of any dispute involving \$10,000 or less shall be conducted in accordance with the Consumer Arbitration Rules of the American Arbitration Association (AAA), as modified by this Agreement, which are in effect on the date a dispute is submitted to the AAA. The AAA's Commercial Arbitration Rules and fee schedules will apply to any disputes in excess of \$10,000. You have the right to be represented by counsel in arbitration. In conducting the arbitration and making any award, the arbitrator shall be bound by and strictly enforce the terms of this Agreement and may not limit, expand, or otherwise modify its terms.

NO DISPUTE MAY BE JOINED WITH ANOTHER LAWSUIT, OR IN AN ARBITRATION WITH A DISPUTE OF ANY OTHER PERSON, OR RESOLVED ON A CLASS-WIDE BASIS. THE ARBITRATOR MAY NOT AWARD DAMAGES THAT ARE NOT EXPRESSLY AUTHORIZED BY THIS AGREEMENT AND MAY NOT AWARD PUNITIVE DAMAGES OR ATTORNEYS' FEES UNLESS SUCH DAMAGES ARE EXPRESSLY AUTHORIZED BY A STATUTE. YOU AND VBT BOTH WAIVE ANY CLAIMS FOR AN AWARD OF DAMAGES THAT ARE EXCLUDED UNDER THIS AGREEMENT.

b. Arbitration Information and Filing Procedures. Before you take a dispute to arbitration or to small claims court, you must first contact our customer account representatives at the Customer Care number on your **VBT** bill for your Services, or write to us at the **VBT** Business Office at 617 First Street, Keosauqua, Iowa 52565-0430, and give us an opportunity to resolve the dispute. Similarly, before **VBT** takes a dispute to arbitration, we must first attempt to resolve it by contacting you. If the dispute cannot be satisfactorily resolved within sixty days from the date you or **VBT** are notified by the other of a dispute, then either party may then contact AAA in writing at AAA Service Center, 134555 Noel Road, Suite 1750, Dallas, TX 75240-6620 and request arbitration of the dispute. Information about the arbitration process and the AAA's Arbitration Rules and its fees are available from the AAA on the Internet at www.adr.org, or by contacting us at the **VBT** Business Office at 617 First Street, Keosauqua, Iowa 52565-0430. The arbitration will be based only on the written submissions of the parties and the documents submitted to the AAA relating to the dispute. No arbitration other than desk arbitration is available. The Arbitrator does not have the authority to: direct or allow introduction of outside witnesses, authorize discovery, order document production, issue subpoenas or allow depositions. Any arbitration shall remain confidential. Neither you nor **VBT** may disclose the existence, content or results of any arbitration or award, except as may be required by law, or to confirm and enforce an award.

ANY CLAIM OR DISPUTE ARISING OUT OF OR RELATING TO THIS AGREEMENT MUST BE BROUGHT WITHIN TWO YEARS AFTER THE DATE THE BASIS FOR THE CLAIM OR DISPUTE FIRST ARISES.

c. Fees and Expenses of Arbitration. You must pay the applicable AAA filing fee when you submit your written request for arbitration to the AAA. The AAA's filing fee and administrative expenses for a document arbitration will be allocated according to the AAA's Rules, except that for claims of less than \$1,000, you will only be obligated to pay a filing fee of \$20 and we will pay all of the AAA's other costs and fees. Unless applicable substantive law provides otherwise, each party will pay its own expenses to participate in the arbitration, including attorneys' fees and expenses.

8. MISCELLANEOUS.

a. Severability. If any part of this Agreement is found invalid, the rest of the Agreement will remain valid and enforceable.

b. Assignment. We can assign all or part of our rights or duties under this Agreement without notifying you. If we do that, we have no further obligations to you. You may not assign this Agreement or the Services without prior written consent.

c. Acts Beyond Our Control. Neither you nor we will be responsible to the other for any delay, failure in performance, loss or damage due to fire, explosion, power blackout, earthquake, volcanic action, flood, the weather elements, strike, embargo, labor disputes, civil or military authority, war, acts of God, acts or omissions of carriers or suppliers, acts of regulatory or governmental agencies, or other causes beyond our reasonable control, except that you must pay for any Services used.

d. Entire Agreement. This Agreement (which incorporates by reference the **VB**T price sheets) constitutes the entire agreement between us and supersedes all prior agreements, understandings, statements or proposals, and representations, whether written or oral. This Agreement can be amended only as provided in Section 9 below. No written or oral statement, advertisement, or service description not expressly contained in the Agreement will be allowed to contradict, explain, or supplement it. Neither you nor **VB**T is relying on any representations or statements by the other party or any other person that are not included in this Agreement.

e. No Third Party Rights. This Agreement does not provide any third party with a remedy, claim, or right of reimbursement.

f. Governing Law. This Agreement will be governed by the law of the State of Iowa, except that the arbitration provisions in Section 7 will be governed by the Federal Arbitration Act. This governing law provision applies no matter where you reside, or where you use or pay for the Services.

g. Notices. Notices from you to **VB**T must be provided as specified in this Agreement. Notice from you to **VB**T made by calling **VB**T is effective as of the date that our records show that we received your call. **VB**T's notice to you under this Agreement will be provided by one or more of the following: bill message, bill insert, newspaper ad, postcard, letter, call to your billed telephone number, or e-mail to an address provided by you.

9. CHANGES TO THIS AGREEMENT.

This Agreement may only be changed in the manner provided for in this Section 9. We may change this Agreement, including the incorporated **VB**T, from time to time. If we make any changes to the prices or charges, we will comply with our notice commitments described in Section 1 of this Agreement. All other changes to this Agreement will be effective no sooner

than seven days after we post them. **IF YOU CONTINUE TO BE ENROLLED IN, USE, OR PAY FOR THE SERVICES AFTER ANY CHANGES IN THE PRICES, CHARGES, TERMS OR CONDITIONS, YOU AGREE TO THE CHANGES.**

10. ENROLLMENT IN ANOTHER VBT SERVICE.

To enroll in an additional Service, or to switch from your existing Service to a different Service, you must notify us by: (1) returning an enrollment form provided by **VBT** marketing; (2) calling the **VBT** Customer Care number on your **VBT** bill; (3) calling the **VBT** marketing materials; or (4) going to our website at <http://www.vanburentelco.com> and following any further instructions provided. The terms and conditions of this Agreement, including those in the incorporated **VBT** price sheets, will apply to the new or additional **VBT** Service.

BY ENROLLING IN, USING, OR PAYING FOR THESE NEW OR ADDITIONAL SERVICES, YOU AGREE TO THE PRICES, CHARGES, TERMS AND CONDITIONS IN THIS AGREEMENT.