

Preventing PBX International Call Scams

Take Action to Prevent Fraud

There has been a recent increase in the occurrence of scams in which unauthorized users access PBX and key systems and initiate international calls, leaving the PBX owner with fraudulent toll call charges.

As your business partner, we want to share some practices you can employ to help protect your phone system from these types of scams. While FairPoint can provide assistance, the steps you take to secure your PBX are paramount in stopping this fraud.

What Can You Do?

Use high strength passwords

Unauthorized users can gain access to your PBX by breaking password codes. Make sure all of your users change passwords from their default settings, use the maximum amount of characters available and ensure there is enough variation in those passwords.

Use digit dial block

If your organization does not need to make international calls and your PBX has the capability to do digit dial blocking, the administrator can prevent '901' or '9011' from being dialed to access outside lines for international calls. Check the capabilities of your PBX to determine if it supports this feature.

Don't transfer inbound callers

Notify your users not to transfer any callers to an open line, or to any number that begins with your outside line code, normally 9 followed by a 0 or 001.

Disable the remote call out feature

Many systems allow users to connect to an outside line after dialing into their voicemail box. If your organization does not require this functionality, we recommend disabling this feature in your system.

Disconnect your remote maintenance line

Many systems have a phone line into the PBX for remote maintenance. Unauthorized users can use this line to gain access and make international calls. If you have an administrator on-site or don't use remote maintenance, consider disconnecting this line to prevent intrusions.

How Can FairPoint Help?

Have FairPoint turn on international toll block

Upon your request, FairPoint has the ability to block international traffic originating from your main line or trunks. Important aspects of this block include:

- The network block is an "all-or-nothing" block, which prevents any dialing to destinations outside the North American Numbering Plan (the NANP includes Canada, Puerto Rico and part of the Caribbean).
- This block only stops international calls from being made via the FairPoint network; unauthorized users can still use dial-around capabilities to reach other carrier networks and initiate international calls.
- You must request this block be put in place by contacting your FairPoint account representative directly, or by calling at 1.866.984.3001. Please note that this feature is not designed to be frequently turned on and off because of system limitations.

Beware of anyone who calls you to test lines

FairPoint technicians will never call customer extensions or receptionists and request help in testing lines, or ask your users to assist them in transferring to outside lines.

Call us with questions or to report fraudulent call activity

We're here to help. If you have any questions related to fraudulent call activity please contact your FairPoint account representative directly, or call 1.866.984.3001.

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Helping You Prepare

What is PBX fraud?

PBX fraud, or key system fraud, occurs when unauthorized users access your PBX or other phone equipment and initiate international calls, resulting in charges for the PBX owner.

How can I be prepared?

Take the steps noted in this document to prevent unauthorized access to your PBX and other phone equipment. In the event that fraudulent activity occurs, your IT department and facilities group should:

- have an up-to-date and readily available contact information list for the head of telecommunications and direct reports
- contact your PBX vendor directly
- establish a process so vendors can secure access to PBX equipment and perform a shutdown
- create a plan to disable international calling and provide instructions to shut down PBX equipment and make code changes

Who is liable for fraud charges?

The PBX owner is solely responsible for controlling access to, as well as the use of, telecommunications equipment and facilities. Furthermore, the PBX owner is solely liable for all charges incurred for all calls made over the owner's telecommunications equipment and facilities, even if the calls were made fraudulently.

Take Action to Prevent Fraud

At FairPoint, we are passionate about helping people connect. Our communications solutions link our local communities to the world with high-value, reliable services and support at a price that reflects your fiscal responsibility.

Contact your local Account Manager or call 1.866.984.3001 to find out more about how to prevent PBX fraud and other solutions.