

SANDHILL TELEPHONE COOPERATIVE

Network Management - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is network management?

Network management is the reasonable and nondiscriminatory enforcement of network usage policies and the management of bandwidth use and capacity while maintaining the promotion of the dynamic benefits of an open and accessible Internet.

Why does Sandhill manage its network?

Sandhill manages its network in order to provide the ultimate broadband Internet service to its customers. **Sandhill** acknowledges that bandwidth and network resources are not infinite and must be reasonably confined. In order to bring you the best possible broadband Internet experience, **Sandhill** enforces network management policies that limit network congestion and delay while ensuring that all Internet content is treated equally and is not unlawfully blocked or degraded.

The FCC encourages all fixed broadband Internet access providers, such as **Sandhill**, to manage networks with transparency and nondiscrimination.

How does Sandhill manage its network?

Sandhill has policies in place to ensure that customers are able to access the lawful Internet content of their choice, run the Internet applications of their choice and to promote the continued development of the Internet. **Sandhill's** network management practices are nondiscriminatory, application-neutral, and minimally intrusive. **Sandhill** may use one or more of the following to manage its network:

- a. Capping a users bandwidth capacity with monthly usage thresholds per account;
- b. Charging overage fees for the use of bandwidth over the specified capacity;
- c. Application-agnostic, usage consumption-based prioritization of traffic;
- d. Making additions or upgrades to increase network capacity;
- e. Enforcing its Acceptable Use Policy and Terms and Conditions of service against customers abusing the network;
- f. Using security protocols to ensure authentication of customers;
- g. Monitoring the network to identify congestion, security breaches, malware or damage to the network;

- h. Blocking spam;
- i. Preventing viruses from harming the network; and
- j. Thwarting denial of service attacks.

Network management practices are a necessity to guard against harmful threats to the network such as network congestion, security attacks, excessive spam, and viruses. Reasonable network management practices ensure that you will have the best possible broadband Internet experience.

Will Sandhill's network management impact my online experience?

Sandhill uses reasonable network management tools and practices that are minimally intrusive to its customers and are consistent with industry standards. In accordance with **Sandhill's** Terms and Conditions for Service and Broadband Internet Acceptable Use Policy ("AUP"), Customers have agreed to comply with all current bandwidth, data storage, and other limitations on **Sandhill's** Broadband Internet services. Thus, **Sandhill's** tools and practices will generally impact only users that have consumed an excessive amount of bandwidth at any time during a one month period. Users are more likely to experience an impact on online experience during peak periods where congestion is prevalent.

What can I expect if I am in violation of Sandhill's Terms and Conditions of Service, company policies or service contracts?

In addition to being subject to the specific terms of the Terms and Conditions of Service, or individual company policy or service contract, if you, the customer, are using conduct which abuses or threatens harm to the **Sandhill** network at any time, the impact to your online experience may include, but will not necessarily be limited to, any one or all of the following:

- a. notification by **Sandhill** that you are in excess of the monthly bandwidth threshold and provision of a reasonable timeframe in which to take corrective action;
- b. removal or blockage of material that violates **Sandhill's** Terms and Conditions of Service or company policies or service contracts, including but not limited to, illegal content;
- c. suspension or delay of the delivery of email if deemed excessive;
- d. filtering of Internet transmissions; and
- e. suspension or termination of your Broadband Internet service account.

Customers could also experience longer download or upload times or slower web surfing.

Will I be suspended from the network if I use certain applications?

Sandhill's reasonable network management tools and practices do not discriminate between applications. They are application-agnostic. Thus, **Sandhill** will not manage its network congestion or security protocols based on applications being used by its customers with **Sandhill's** broadband Internet service. **Sandhill's** network management is based on current network conditions and the amount of bandwidth being used by individual customers.

What should I do if my account is suspended?

If your account is suspended, you should contact **Sandhill** and follow **Sandhill's** instructions for reinstating service.

When does Sandhill use this method?

Sandhill uses its reasonable network management practices and policies to manage network congestion and network security.

Does Sandhill discriminate against particular types of applications or content?

No. **Sandhill** does not manage its network based on online protocols, activities or applications that a customer uses. Rather, **Sandhill's** network management practices focus on the largest bandwidth volumes being used by individual customers.