

Cellphone Users Now to Retain Original Number When Switching Operators

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The government will simplify the procedure for switching cell operators. **Igor Tabakov**

Cellphone subscribers will now be able retain their current numbers when switching operators provided they don't switch more than once in six months, according to a draft of changes published by the Communications Ministry on its website yesterday.

In a Vedomosti report, sources at two cellphone operators explained that the process would be quite simple, with subscribers required to first settle all debts with the original operator and verify that the number is registered in the same region where it will be used. They will also have to pay a fee of 100 rubles or less.

The subscriber must complete an application requesting the change, sign a contract with the new operator and receive a new SIM-card. The operator is obligated to complete the transfer within five days, during which time the subscriber will be issued a temporary phone number. Once the transfer takes effect, the same SIM-card will be automatically

programmed with the subscriber's original number.

Users with corporate phone numbers might have a harder time switching to a new operator. The employee must first obtain consent from their employer to have the number withdrawn from the corporate contract and assigned to the worker personally. Only after that can the number be transferred to a new operator.

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