

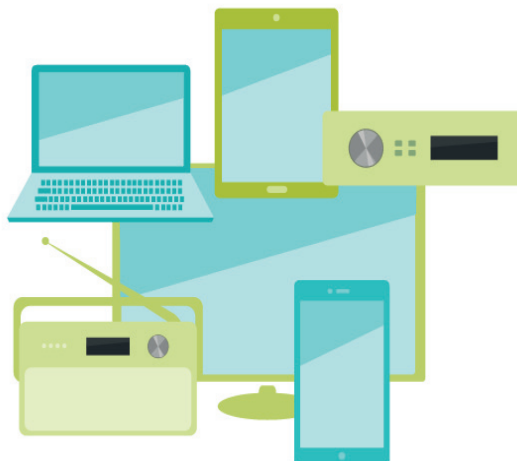


The new universal radio and television fee

A contribution to the public service of electronic media

The new universal radio and television fee is being introduced on 1 January 2019. It amounts to CHF 365 per year per household. Collective households (e.g. old people's homes and care homes, institutions for young people or the disabled) pay their fee for all their residents. For businesses the level of the fee depends on turnover: if this is below half a million francs, they pay nothing.

The fee revenue is used to finance the SSR SRG as well as local radio and regional television stations in all of Switzerland's language regions.





Private and collective households: an overview of the most important changes

	Old system	New system
Amount per year	CHF 286 for TV CHF 165 for radio Total: CHF 451	CHF 365 (fixed amount for radio and television)
Collection agency	Billag	Serafe
Charge/fee liability for households	Dependent on the possession of a receiver	Independent of the possession of a receiver
Exemption from the charge/fee	Recipients of annual supplementary benefits relating to old age and surviving dependants' benefits/disability benefits; no retroactive exemption	Recipients of annual supplementary benefits relating to old age and surviving dependants' benefits/ disability benefits (retroactive exemption up to five years possible), households of deaf-blind persons
Collective households	Each resident pays him- or herself	The collective household pays for everyone
Data of persons liable for the fee	Registration/ de-registration and notification of changes to Billag	Data from the registers of residents



The fee for private households

For most households the new fee is cheaper than the previous reception charge: each private household pays now CHF 365 per year instead of the previous CHF 451. There is only one uniform fee and therefore no longer any distinction is made between a fee for radio and/or television reception. In addition, the obligation to pay the fee no longer depends on whether equipment which can receive radio or television programme services (radios or TV sets, smartphones, tablets, car radios or computers with internet access) is present.

Exemption from the fee:

- **Recipients of annual supplementary benefits (SB) relating to old age and surviving dependants' benefits / disability benefits**

Persons who receive supplementary benefits relating to old-age and survivor's insurance (OASI) can apply to Serafe for an exemption. This is quite simple: they must merely provide Serafe with a copy of the legally valid confirmation of the benefit.



This exempts all household members from the obligation to pay the fee. Exemption is also possible retroactively up to 1 January 2019. From 2024 onwards retroactive exemption will be limited to five years.

- **Households of deaf-blind persons**

Households in which only deaf-blind persons live do not have to pay the fee. In such cases an application must be made to Serafe, with a copy of the medical certificate.

- **Households without reception equipment**

Households which have no possibility of receiving radio or television programme services (no radio or television set, no computer with internet access, no smartphone or tablet, no car radio, etc.), can be exempted from the fee. They must complete the application form which is published on the SERAFE AG website (www.serafe.ch/optingout) or which is available from the collection agency. If the household purchases such equipment, it must notify Serafe immediately of this. Exemption ("opting out") is limited to five years.

Foreign diplomatic personnel are automatically exempt from the fee. Recipients of social welfare assistance must pay the fee, as it is taken into account in the social welfare assistance. Discounts or waivers cannot be granted.



The fee for collective households

A collective household pays the fee for all of its residents. The annual bill amounts to CHF 730.

Collective households are defined as follows:

- Old people's homes and nursing homes
- Residential and correction homes for children and young people
- Boarding schools and student hostels
- Institutions for people with disabilities
- Hospitals, sanatoria and similar institutions in the healthcare sector
- Institutions for the enforcement of sentences and measures
- Community accommodation for asylum seekers
- Monasteries and other accommodation of religious groups.



Collective households may be additionally liable for the fee charged to businesses. In this case they will be informed by the Federal Tax Administration (FTA).

Billing for private and collective households

From 2019 Serafe collects the new household fee and therefore replaces Billag. Since Serafe obtains the data directly from the cantons and

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municipalities, households no longer have to register and de-register. Nor have changes in household composition or changes of domicile to be notified to the collection agency.

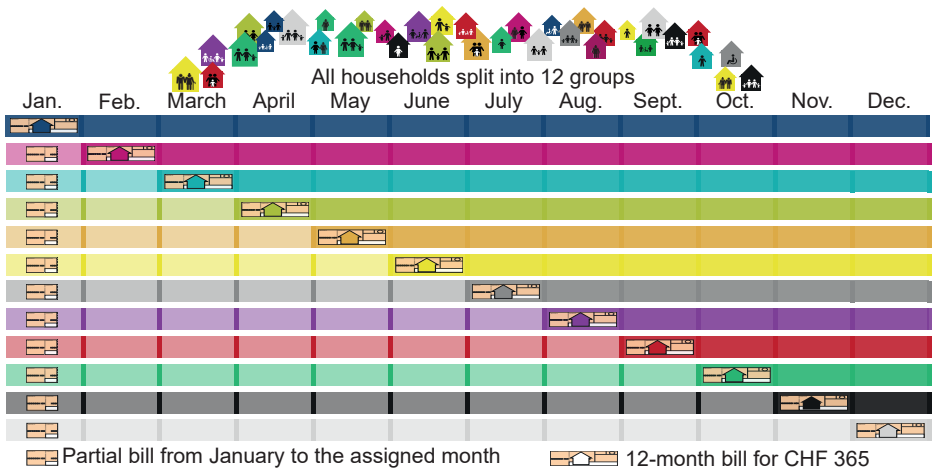
Households can pay the fee as an e-bill, a giro, a direct debit or with a paying-in slip. They can also request quarterly bills. Households which wish to receive a bill in paper form must pay CHF 2 per bill in addition to the fee. Further information is available on Serafe's bills.



Partial bills and annual bills

In 2019, the first year of collection of the new fee, billing takes place in two stages, with a partial bill and an annual bill. In order to ensure a constant cash flow and to make administration as efficient as possible, each household is being allocated on a random basis to one of twelve billing groups. Each month the collection agency sends out the annual bill for CHF 365 to all households in the respective group. To ensure that the households in the February to December groups also pay the fee for the months before the annual bill, they initially receive a partial bill.

This means that the households in the first group will receive an annual bill for CHF 365 in January. The households in the second group will receive a bill in January for this month only followed by the annual bill in February. A household in the third group will pay the bill for the months of January and February in January and the annual bill for the following twelve months in March, and so on.



Two examples:

- The **Smith family** has been assigned to the May group. In January it receives a partial bill for four months (January to April) and in May the first annual bill for CHF 365. The next annual bill for CHF 365 will be sent out to the Smiths in May 2020.
- The **Jones married couple** belongs to the January group and receives its annual bill in January 2019. The next annual bill will then follow in January 2020.



The fee for businesses

From 1 January 2019, companies subject to VAT with a domicile, residence or business premises in Switzerland have to pay a new fee graduated according to annual turnover. Businesses with a turnover of less than CHF 500,000 or which are not liable for value-added tax do not have to pay the fee.

Annual turnover (in CHF)	Fee/year (in CHF)
Less than half a million	Exempt from the fee
0.5 to 0.99 million	365
1 to 4.99 million	910
5 to 19.99 million	2280
20 to 99.99 million	5750
100 million to 0.99 billion	14,240
1 billion and over	35,590

Business fee according to turnover

The business fee is collected by the Federal Tax Administration (FTA). As soon as all turnover data for the preceding year is available, the FTA issues the annual bills between February and October. In 2019 the first bills is sent out in January. Businesses which meet the conditions for liability for the fee automatically receives a bill; no further steps are necessary.

Relief for certain businesses

A group of companies pays only one fee. The level of the fee is calculated according to the total turnover of all companies in the group. To constitute such a group, one of the following conditions must be met:

- It is a value-added tax group.
- At least 30 companies under joint management have combined into a business tax group for the purposes of the fee.
- At least two autonomous administrative units (of a municipality, a canton or the Confederation) have combined for the purposes of the business fee.

A business in the lowest fee category, i.e. one with a turnover of less than CHF 1 million, will on application receive a refund of the fee if it has made no profit or only a small profit in the year in question.



How the fee revenue is used

The fee is used to finance the SSR SRG as well as local radio and regional television stations in all of Switzerland's language regions.



The SSR SRG receives the largest share of the fee - CHF 1.2 billion - in order to provide its radio and television programme services throughout Switzerland and in all the national languages. Local radio stations and commercial television stations with a performance mandate receive six per cent of the total yield, i.e. CHF 81 million from 2019 onwards.

Also supported are the national press agency Keystone-SDA, new technologies, the subtitling of news on regional television, the archiving of programmes, audience research and the training and professional development of programme makers.



Additional information

Federal Office of Communications OFCOM

Zukunftstrasse 44

Postfach 256

2501 Biel

<https://www.bakom.admin.ch/fee>

Serafe AG

Postfach

8010 Zürich

www.serafe.ch

Federal Tax Administration FTA

Main Division Value Added Tax

Schwarztorstrasse 50

3003 Bern

www.estv.admin.ch

