



609 Area Code All-services Distributed Overlay

Frequently Asked Questions

1) Why is the Board considering a new Area Code for the 609?

In October 2015, the Board was informed that the number of available telephone numbers in the 609 Area Code would run out in the 3rd quarter of 2018 if Area Code Relief was not initiated.

2) What is Area Code Relief?

Area Code Relief occurs when a new Area Code is added to an existing geographic area by either redrawing the existing Area Code boundary lines and added a new Area Code or when a new Area Code is added to the existing geographic area.

3) What is being recommended for the existing 609 geographic area?

The telecommunications industry which is composed of current and prospective telecommunications carriers operating in, or considering operations within, the 609 and 856 Area Codes of New Jersey, is recommending that the Board approve an all-services distributed overlay in order to provide area code relief for the 609

4) What is an all-services distributed overlay?

An all-services distributed overlay would assign a new area code to the same geographic area as the existing 609 Numbering Plan Area (NPA) resulting in two Area Codes serving the same geographic area.

5) What are the benefits of an all services distributed overlay?

An all-services distributed overlay is consider superior to a geographic split in that it is least disruptive, more efficient to implement and does not require a complete redrawing of the existing boundaries as would a geographic split.

6) Who is impacted?

Customers in the existing 609 Area Code and portions of the existing 856 Area Code where special arrangements were made in 1999 to allow 7-digit dialing to continue within communities split between the 609 and 856 Area Codes.

7) How will these customers be affected?

Customers would retain their existing telephone numbers, but new dialing patterns will be implemented. Customers would be required to convert to ten-digit dialing within the existing 609 Area Code/New Code and dial 1 plus 10-digit dialing between Area Codes. The special arrangement that allowed for 7-digit dialing between portions of the 609 and 856 Area Codes would be eliminated.

8) When do the changes begin?

At this time, the Board has not approved the requested all-services distributed overlay. If approved by the Board, the changes would be phased in over a 15-month period consisting of seven months dedicated to Network Preparation and Customer Education, seven months of what is known as Permissive Dialing where a customer has the option to continue using 7-digit or 10-digit dialing. Mandatory dialing begins at the end of the 7-month Permissive Dialing Period.

Actual Area Code activation begins one month after mandatory dialing.

9) What do I need to do?

Other than familiarizing yourself with the new dialing patterns nothing needs to be done. If you have affected phone numbers programmed in your phone, you will need to update those numbers to include ten-digit dialing within the existing 609 Area Code/New Code and dial 1 plus 10-digit dialing between Area Codes.

10) How long the new will Area Code last?

Based upon current forecasts the New Area Code is predicted to last for 46 years

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