Area Code Overlay Approved for the Washington, DC 202 Area Code

To ensure a continuing supply of telephone numbers, the Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia approved the addition of the new 771 area code to the geographic region served by the 202 area code. This process is known as an area code overlay.

What is an area code overlay?

An overlay is the addition of another area code (771) to the same geographic region as an existing area code (202). An overlay does not require customers to change their existing area code or telephone number, but does require using a new dialing procedure to complete calls.

Who will be affected?

Anyone with a 202 area code telephone number will be affected. The 202 area code serves the District of Columbia. The new 771 area code will be superimposed over the entire geographic area currently served by the existing 202 area code.

What will be the new dialing procedure?

The new dialing procedure will require that all calls in the 202 area code that are currently dialed with seven digits will need to be dialed using area code + telephone number. The same dialing procedure will apply to telephone numbers that are assigned with the new 771 area code.

When will the change begin?

Effective **April 10, 2021**, if you have a 202 area code, you should begin dialing the area code + telephone number whenever you place a call. If you forget and dial just seven digits, your call will still be completed.

Beginning **October 9, 2021**, if you have a 202 area code, you must dial the area code + telephone number on all calls, including calls within the same area code. On and after this date, if you do not dial the area code + telephone number, your calls will not complete and a recording will instruct you to hang up and dial again, including the area code.

Beginning **November 9, 2021**, new telephone lines or services may be assigned numbers with the new 771 area code. If you have a 771 area code, you must dial the area code + telephone number or the call will not complete.

What will you need to do?

In addition to dialing the area code + telephone number for all local calls, all services, automatic dialing equipment, or other types of equipment that are programmed to dial a 7-digit number will need to be reprogrammed to include the area code. Some examples are life safety systems and medical monitoring devices, fire or burglar alarm and security systems or gates, PBXs, fax machines, Internet dial-up numbers, speed dialers, call forwarding settings, voicemail services and similar functions, etc. You may also want to check your websites, personal and business stationery and checks, advertising materials, personal and pet ID tags and other such items to ensure the area code is included.

What will remain the same?

- Your telephone number, including current area code, will not change.
- The price of a call, coverage area, or other rates and services will not change due to the overlay.
- What is a local call now will remain a local call regardless of the number of digits dialed.
- You can still dial just three digits to reach 911, as well as 211, 311, 411, 511, 611, 711 or 811 if those are currently available in your community.

Who may you contact with questions?

If you have any questions regarding information provided in this notice, please contact the Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia at https://dcpsc.org.