

## Area Code Overlay Approved for the South Carolina 803 Area Code

**Get ready to change the way you dial your local calls!** To ensure a continuing supply of telephone numbers, the new 839 area code will be added to the area served by 803. This is known as an area code overlay.

### *What is an area code overlay?*

An overlay is the addition of another area code (839) to the same geographic region as an existing area code (803). **An overlay does not require customers to change their existing area code.**

### *Who will be affected?*

The 803 area code generally covers the west central portion of the state serving communities such as Aiken, Allendale, Chester, Columbia, Lancaster, Orangeburg and Sumter. The new 839 **area code** will serve the same geographic area currently served by the existing 803 area code.

### *What will be the new dialing procedure?*

To complete local calls, the new dialing procedure requires callers to dial **area code + telephone number**. This means that all local calls in the 803 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 assigned to the new 839 area code.

### *When will the change begin?*

Effective **October 26, 2019**, you should begin using the new dialing procedures whenever you place a call from the 803 area code. If you forget and dial just seven digits, your call will still complete.

Beginning **April 25, 2020**, you **must** use the new dialing procedures, as described above. On and after this date, if you do not use the new dialing procedures, your calls will not complete. A recorded message will instruct you to hang up and dial again, including the area code.

Beginning **May 26, 2020**, new telephone lines or services may be assigned numbers using the new 839 area code.

### *What will you need to do?*

In addition to changing your dialing procedures, 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 use the new dialing procedures. Some examples are life safety systems, stored telephone numbers in contact lists in phones, PBXs, fax machines, Internet dial-up numbers, alarm and security systems or gates, speed dialers, call forwarding settings, voicemail services, etc. You may also want to check your business stationery or advertising materials 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.
- If 211, 311, 411, 511, 611, 711 or 811 are currently available in your community, you will still dial these codes with just three digits.

### *Who may you contact with questions?*

If you have any questions regarding information provided in this notice, please contact <https://psc.sc.gov/>.

