

STATE OF NEW YORK

# Public Service Commission

Garry A. Brown, Chairman

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## **PSC APPROVES NEW AREA CODE FOR NYC OUTER BOROUGHS — Existing 718/347 Telephone Numbers Remain Unchanged —**

Albany, NY—12/16/09—The New York State Public Service Commission (Commission) today directed Verizon New York Inc., and all other carriers providing local exchange service in the 718/347 area of New York City to activate a new area code for this service area.

“The demand for telephone numbers is driven in large part by the emergence of new telecommunication technologies, cell phones, and portable computers,” said Commission Chairman Garry Brown. “Years ago, each household would have only one telephone number. That’s no longer the case today. Now, each individual family member might have one or two phone numbers of their own. This expansion requires us to look for ways to expand the numbers that can be made available.”

The goal of long-term area code relief is to balance the provision of additional telephone numbering resources while minimizing possible disruption to consumers and businesses. With the introduction of a new area code, in tandem with a comprehensive outreach and education program for consumers, the overlay plan adopted by the Commission today for the Outer Boroughs of New York City is the least confusing for consumers and the most efficient option for the industry to implement area code relief.

Under the overlay plan, which is being done in cooperation with the federal North American Numbering Plan Code Administrator (NANPA), an all-services distributed overlay would be implemented to ensure the continued availability of telephone numbers in the area currently served by the 718 and 347 area codes.

A new area code will be assigned to the Boroughs of the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island, which are served by the existing 718 and 347 area codes. All local calls within and between the 718 and 347 area codes and the new area code would continue to be dialed by using 1+10 digit dialing. The actual three-number area code will be assigned by NANPA at a later date.

An overlay occurs when a new area code is superimposed on an existing calling area which results in more than one area code serving the same calling area or region. As noted above, with an overlay, calls would not be completed without first dialing 1, plus the 3-digit area code, and then the 7-digit number. This dialing pattern is already in effect in the New York City area. Also, under an overlay plan, all existing telephone numbers remain unchanged, while new telephone numbers would be assigned the new area code.

In October 2008, NANPA indicated that the geographic area served by area codes 718 and 347 were running out of assignable telephone numbers. Demand for central office codes in this area is expected to result in the depletion of available central office codes by 2012.

In May of 2009, the Commission issued a Notice inviting comments from interested parties which included two proposed relief options involving overlays that would superimpose a new area code on the present 718/347 region.

The Commission's written decision, when issued, may be obtained by visiting the Commission Document section of the Commission's Web site at [www.dps.state.ny.us](http://www.dps.state.ny.us) and entering Case Number 09-C-0058 in the input box labeled "Search for Case/Matter Number." Many libraries offer free Internet access. Commission Orders may also be obtained from the Commission's Files Office, 14<sup>th</sup> floor, Three Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY 12223 (518-474-2500).