

STATE OF NEW YORK

# Public Service Commission

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FOR RELEASE: IMMEDIATELY

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## **CONSUMER ALERT: MANDATORY DIALING OF WESTERN NEW YORK'S 585 AREA CODE BEGINS ON AUGUST 17, 2002**

Albany, N.Y. – 08/12/02 – New Yorkers are reminded that, effective August 17, 2002, calls into the new 585 area code region must be dialed using that area code. This region includes all of Orleans, Monroe, Genesee, and Wyoming Counties and parts of Allegany, Steuben, Livingston, Ontario, Yates, and Wayne Counties. This region was previously served by the 716 area code. The 716 area code continues to serve Erie, Niagara, Chautauqau, and Cattaraugus Counties and the Tonawanda and Oil Springs Indian Reservations.

The Federal Communications Commission's North American Numbering Plan Administrator notified the New York State Public Service Commission (Commission) on April 23, 1998, that a new area code was needed because the region served by the 716 area code was running out of available telephone numbers. This was due to an increase in recent years in the demand for new telephone numbers, including those needed for fax machines, computer modems, cell phones, and pagers. On May 17, 2000, the Commission determined that a geographic division along an easily recognized border was the most effective means of introducing a new area code to provide additional local telephone numbers for the western region of New York State originally served by the 716 area code.

The 585 area code was introduced on November 15, 2001, the start of a "permissive dialing period." During that period, calls could be made into the 585 area code region by dialing either the 716 area code or the new 585 area code. However, under "mandatory dialing," all calls into this new region must be dialed using the 585 area code. Through the first nine months of this mandatory period -- from August 17, 2002, to May 16, 2003 -- callers who do not use 585 to reach a number in the new region will hear a message advising them that they must use 585 to complete the call. After May 16, 2003, failure to dial the correct area code will result in the caller either reaching the wrong party or hearing a recorded message indicating that the number dialed has not been assigned to anyone.

Some things will stay the same:

- ⇒ It is not necessary to dial an area code between numbers located within the same area code – only the 7-digit number needs to be dialed.
- ⇒ Someone outside of the 716 area code who dials a telephone number in Erie, Niagara, Cattaraugus and Chautauqua counties and the Tonawanda and Oil Springs Indian Reservations will not have to change any dialing patterns since the area code will remain the same.
- ⇒ Telephone numbers will not change. Customers in both area code regions will keep their 7-digit telephone number.
- ⇒ Rates will not change. The cost of a local telephone call will remain the same.

Remember:

- ✓ Certain pre-programmed equipment – computer modems, fax machines, pagers, and alarms, for example – may have to be reprogrammed if calls are made from one area code to another.
- ✓ Customers with wireless telephones with numbers assigned to the new 585 area code will have until November 15, 2004, to have their equipment reprogrammed. During that time, calls made to wireless telephone numbers in the new 585 area code may be completed by dialing either the 585 or the 716 area code and the 7-digit number. These wireless telephones should be brought into the local service center to be reprogrammed. If someone is unsure if the phone will need to be reprogrammed, the customer should check with the service provider.

For a copy of the map showing the 716 and 585 area code regions or for more information about area codes, one may:

Access the Department of Public Service's website at  
**www.AskPSC.com**  
 Many libraries offer free Internet access.

Write to the  
**New York State Department of Public Service**  
**Office of Consumer Education and Advocacy**  
**3 Empire State Plaza**  
**Albany, New York 12223-1350**  
 and request written information.

Call the Department's toll-free information line at  
**1-888-Ask-PSC1**  
**(1-888-275-7721).**