

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

IN RE: MCIMETRO ACCESS TRANSMISSION :
SERVICES LLC dba VERIZON ACCESS :
TRANSMISSION SERVICES WAIVER : DOCKET NO. 22-35-TL
REQUEST FOR NUMBER BLOCK RELEASE :
ENCOMPASS HEALTH :

ORDER

On September 28, 2022, MCImetro Access Transmission Services LLC dba Verizon Access Transmission Services (Verizon RI) filed a request with the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) for a waiver from the denial by the Number Pooling Administrator of Verizon RI's request to release a block of numbers for its customer, Encompass Health (customer). Specifically, Verizon RI had requested 400 consecutive numbers in a one thousand block in the Providence Central Office, specifically 401-587-XXXX, to meet the customer's organizational growth. Verizon RI indicated that it does not have 400 consecutive numbers in its current inventory.¹ Verizon RI explained that the customer required the last four digits that did not start with a zero or a nine in order to accommodate its addition of direct inward dial service.²

In this instance, although Verizon RI has less than 5 months-to-exhaust its existing inventory, it has a utilization rate of only 61.9% which does not meet the utilization threshold for the release of numbers. Therefore, because the Federal Communications Commission Rules require a carrier to show that its months to exhaust are six or less and that it has put at least 75% of its existing numbers into service, Verizon RI's request for the specific block was denied. In other words, Verizon RI is not allowed, unless granted a waiver by the Commission, to obtain new blocks of numbers in the

¹ Verizon RI only has 274 numbers in a thousands block that begins with 9 (401-277-9). Filing Letter and Attachments (Sept. 28, 2022); <https://ripuc.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur841/files/2022-10/2235-MCImetro-NANPA-WaiverRequest%209-28-22.pdf>.

² *Id.*

geographical area needed. The purpose of this rule is to preserve Rhode Island's available telephone numbers, thus preserving the 401 area code.

According to an attachment to Verizon RI's filing, the customer is ready, willing, and able to utilize 40% of the requested numbers in the thousand block. The customer requires 400 consecutive numbers to add direct inward dial service to the hospital phone system, in which the first digit of the last four digits cannot begin with a zero or nine.³

The purpose of the utilization rate and months-to-exhaust rules is to conserve unused numbers and thereby extend the life of the area code. In light of the importance of conserving numbers and preserving the area code, the Commission has previously set initial minimum standards that must be met by a carrier in order for the Commission to consider a request for a waiver.⁴ Verizon meets the utilization rate. However, Verizon RI does not meet the second standard requiring at least 60% of the numbers in the block to be put into service by the customer. In this case, however, Verizon RI has shown that there is not a reasonable alternative to the waiver due to its existing inventory. The granting of this waiver will assist in economic development by allowing the customer to expand its services within its existing network configuration. Furthermore, the most recent area code exhaust projection shows the 401 area code not being exhausted until Quarter 4 of 2045.⁵ Therefore, based on prior Commission decisions and given the adequacy of available numbers in the 401 area code, the Commission finds that approval

³ Customer Letter (attached to the Filing Letter).

⁴ The PUC found that a carrier must have a utilization rate over 50% and must have a customer ready, willing and able to utilize at least 60% of the numbers within the requested blocks either immediately, or in the very near future. The PUC stated that it must review each request on a case by case basis for reasonableness and to keep some control on the release of blocks. (Order No. 22085 (Sept. 8, 2015)). In unique circumstances, the Commission has departed from these standards where the evidence presented is compelling that there is no other reasonable alternative to the waiver.

⁵ April 2022 NPA Exhaust Analysis; https://nationalnpanpa.com/reports/2022-1_NPA%20Exhaust_Projections.pdf. The Commission notes that the projected time to exhaust the 401 area code has been reduced over the past two reporting periods by two decades based on historical and projected demand.

of the waiver will not unduly affect the availability of numbers in the 401 area code. However, the Commission suggests that Verizon RI work with NANPA to determine if there is a contaminated block that may provide the requisite 400 numbers available and again cautions that carriers should make every effort to work with customers to avoid the need to seek a waiver and maximize the utilization of the numbers to which the carrier is assigned.

Accordingly, it is

(24509) ORDERED:

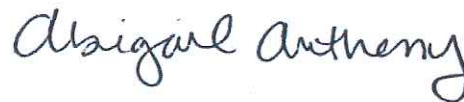
MCImetro Access Transmission Services LLC dba Verizon Access Transmission Services request for a waiver from the denial of the release of 400 consecutive numbers in one block of the 401-587 NPA-NXX is approved.

EFFECTIVE AT WARWICK, RHODE ISLAND ON OCTOBER 11, 2022 PURSUANT TO AN OPEN MEETING DECISION. WRITTEN ORDER ISSUED ON OCTOBER 13, 2022.

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION



Ronald T. Gerwatowski, Chairman



Abigail Anthony, Commissioner



John C. Revens, Jr., Commissioner

