

## - BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF UTAH -

In the Matter of the Petition of the  
Community Services Council for  
Assignment of 211 Dialing Code

DOCKET NO. 99-999-03

REPORT AND ORDER

ISSUED: December 7, 1999

SYNOPSIS

The Commission found that assignment of the 211 dialing code was in the public interest as providing the public with a single source for information regarding public assistance programs and resources. Additionally, the Commission found the assignment was in the public interest as relieving pressure on the 911 emergency assistance system. Accordingly, the Commission granted the petition.

By the Commission:

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On August 20, 1999, the Community Services Council petitioned the Commission for the assignment of dialing code 211 for the use of a community information and referral service for needy Utah residents. The matter was referred for review and recommendation to the Division of Public Utilities, Utah Department of Commerce (DPU), which filed a memorandum supporting the petition October 22, 1999. No opposition having emerged in the interim, and no such opposition appearing likely, and an evidentiary hearing appearing to be neither necessary nor helpful in disposing of this matter, we have determined to dispose of the same without further proceedings. The Administrative Law Judge, having been fully advised in the matter, now enters the following Report, containing proposed findings of fact, conclusions of law, and the Order based thereon.

FINDINGS OF FACT

- The purpose of the Petition is to establish a community information and referral service for persons in need in the state of Utah. The Community Services Council's ("Petitioner") goal is to develop a National Information and Referral Center that can be accessed by dialing 211. It is the Council's belief that the establishment of the 211 dialing code will foster more efficient use of available community resources, by providing an easily used and easily remembered point of access for those persons who are in need of the State's human services agencies and the various private not-for-profit agencies.
- In discussions with the area code administrator for Utah, the DPU found that the 211 area code is available for assignment. However, it is the DPU's Staff's understanding that the Vice President of the United States has requested the code for travel congestion reporting and information, but at this time no action has been taken by the federal government. Therefore, if the 211 code is assigned on a "Statewide" basis and then requested nationally, it will be necessary for the state to relinquish the number immediately
- The DPU found that 911 receives a multitude of calls from those seeking information on agencies that can help a person in need (other than "emergency" types of assistance). For example, a family seeking information about an alcohol rehabilitation center for a family member, who is in need of help. The Council proposes, that the assignment of the 211 area code will aid in the relief of 911 congestion.
- United Way has officially requested that the FCC assign the 211 code on a national level. However, it is the belief of the Council, that the request will be put on an extended time frame due to other pressing activities at the FCC.

- Therefore, it was decided that it would be more expeditious to pursue approval on a national "Statewide" basis.
- Information available to the DPU indicates that in Colorado the issue is still pending. Alabama and Texas have approved the assignment of the 211 area code and the Nebraska PUC has collaborated with the United Way, in its proposal to the FCC and the Nebraska Legislature. Furthermore, Nebraska's Commissioner Boyle has met with Vice-President Gore in an attempt to champion the cause, and has requested that he relinquish his initial plan for the 211 code. Results of Commissioner Boyle's endeavor are not known at this time.
  - According to representations in the Petition, the Community Services Council recognizes the issues and risks associated with state assignment of the 211 area code and is willing to take the chance that the number may be unavailable in the future for the Council's proposed use.

#### DISCUSSION

Based on the record before us, we agree with Petitioner that this endeavor is in the public interest and will aid in the relief of access congestion to the 911 dialing code. Nevertheless, in view of the uncertainty regarding future availability of the number, any Order we issue must be conditional, allowing for revocation in the event the 211 code is re-assigned on a national level.

#### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The petition should be granted with the conditions outlined above.

#### ORDER

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, that:

- Dialing Code 211 be, and it is, assigned to the Community Services Council for the purpose of establishing a community information and referral service for persons in need in the state of Utah; provided, nevertheless, that should said Code be assigned by the Federal Government, or any agency thereof, at the national level, to any other entity, or for any other purpose, then, and in that event, the foregoing grant shall be immediately null and void without further proceedings or action by this Commission.
- Any person aggrieved by this Order may petition the Commission for review within 20 days of the date of this Order. Failure so to do will forfeit the right to appeal to the Utah Supreme Court.

DATED at Salt Lake City, Utah, this 7th day of December, 1999.

/s/ A. Robert Thurman  
Administrative Law Judge

Approved and Confirmed this 7th day of December, 1999, as the Report and Order of the Public Service Commission of Utah.

/s/ Stephen F. Mecham, Chairman

/s/ Constance B. White, Commissioner

/s/ Clark D. Jones, Commissioner

Attest:

/s/ Julie Orchard  
Commission Secretary