

SERVICE DATE
OCT 10 1991

BEFORE THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

In the Matter of Amending)	
WAC 480-120-141(10) (b))	DOCKET NO. UT-910828
Relating to Alternate)	
Operator Services.)	GENERAL ORDER NO. R-348
)	
)	ORDER AMENDING RULE
)	PERMANENTLY
.)	

The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission takes this action under Notice No. WSR 91-17-091, filed with the Code Reviser on August 21, 1991. The Commission brings this proceeding pursuant to RCW 80.01.040 and chapter 80.36 RCW to ~~implement those statutes.~~

This proceeding complies with the Open Public Meetings Act (chapter 42.30 RCW), the Administrative Procedure Act (chapter 34.05 RCW), the State Register Act (chapter 34.08 RCW), the State Environmental Policy Act of 1971 (chapter 43.21C RCW), and the Regulatory Fairness Act (chapter 19.85 RCW).

The Commission scheduled this matter for consideration under Notice No. WSR 91-17-091, at 9:00 a.m., Wednesday, September 25, 1991, in the Commission's Hearing Room, Second Floor, Chandler Plaza Building, 1300 S. Evergreen Park Drive S.W., Olympia, Washington.

The notice provided interested persons the opportunity to submit data, views, or arguments to the Commission in writing until September 16, 1991, and orally at the time and place set for consideration. The Commission received no written comments.

The Commission considered the rule change proposal at its

CODE REVISER'S OFFICE
STATE OF WASHINGTON
FILED

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TIME: 2:36 AM
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September 25, 1991, meeting as scheduled in the notice, before Chairman Sharon L. Nelson and Commissioners Richard D. Casad and A. J. Pardini. No person made oral comments to the Commission.

The rule change affects no economic values.

In reviewing the entire record, the Commission determines that it should amend WAC 480-120-141 to read as set forth in Appendix A, attached to this order. WAC 480-120-141, as amended, will clarify that the Commission may review all elements of charges by alternate operator service companies at the time of registration as a telecommunications company. The rule change shall take effect pursuant to RCW 34.05.380(2).

O R D E R

THE COMMISSION ORDERS The following:

1. WAC 480-12-141, as set forth in Appendix A, is amended as a rule of the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission to take effect pursuant to RCW 34.05.380(2).
2. This order and the attached rule shall be recorded in the order register of the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission and forwarded to the Code Reviser for

filing pursuant to chapter 34.05 RCW and chapter 1-21 WAC.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, this 1st day of October,
1991.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION



SHARON L. NELSON, Chairman



A. J. PARDINI, Commissioner

AMENDATORY SECTION (Amending Order R-345, Docket No. UT-900726, filed 6/18/91, effective 7/19/91)

WAC 480-120-141 ALTERNATE OPERATOR SERVICES. All telecommunications companies providing alternate operator services (AOS), as defined in WAC 480-120-021, shall comply with this and all other rules relating to telecommunications companies not specifically waived by order of the commission.

(1) Each alternate operator services company shall file with the commission at least every six months a current list of operator services customers which it serves and the locations and telephone numbers to which such service is provided to each customer. A customer list provided pursuant to this rule is proprietary information and, if identified when filed as required in WAC 480-09-015, is subject to the protections of that rule.

(2) Each AOS company is responsible for assuring that each of its customers complies fully with contract and tariff provisions which are specified in this rule. Failure to secure compliance constitutes a violation by the AOS company.

(a) The AOS company shall withhold on a location-by-location basis the payment of compensation, including commissions, from a call aggregator, if the AOS company reasonably believes that the call aggregator is blocking access to interexchange carriers in violation of these rules.

(b) Violations of tariff, contract or other statements of conditions of service, in commission rules pertaining to AOS company service, or of other requirements contained in these rules, including interexchange carrier access requirements, will subject an aggregator to termination of alternate operator services if the deficiency is not corrected within five days from date of written notification to the aggregator. WAC 480-120-081 (4)(g) shall not apply to such terminations.

(c) AOS company actions in furtherance of this rule may be reviewed by the commission in a formal complaint under WAC 480-09-420 through an adjudicative or a brief adjudicative proceeding under the provisions of chapters 34.05 RCW and 480-09 WAC.

(d) An AOS company shall refuse to provide operator services to a call aggregator who the commission has found to have knowingly and repeatedly violated commission rules regarding the provision of alternate operator service until the commission has found that the call aggregator will comply with relevant law and rule.

(3) For purposes of this section, "consumer" means the party initiating and/or paying for an interexchange or local call. "Customer" means the call aggregator, i.e., the hotel, motel, hospital, prison, campus, pay telephone, etc., contracting with an AOS for service.

(4) An alternate operator services company shall require, as a part of any contract with its customer and as a term and condition of service stated in its tariff, that the customer:

(a) Post on the telephone instrument in plain view of anyone using the telephone, in eight point or larger **Stymie Bold** type, the information provided in the following notice:

SERVICE ON THIS INSTRUMENT MAY BE PROVIDED AT RATES THAT ARE HIGHER THAN NORMAL. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO CONTACT THE OPERATOR FOR INFORMATION REGARDING CHARGES BEFORE PLACING YOUR CALL. INSTRUCTIONS FOR REACHING YOUR PREFERRED CARRIER ARE ALSO AVAILABLE FROM THE OPERATOR ((F-W))₂

(b) Post and maintain in legible condition on or near the telephone:

(i) The name, address, and without-charge number of the alternate operator services company, as registered with the commission;

(ii) Dialing directions so that a consumer may reach the AOS operator without charge to receive specific rate information; and

(iii) Directions to allow the consumer to reach the consumer's preferred carrier and to make it clear that the consumer has access to the other providers.

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(c) Provide access from every instrument to 1-800 services and all available interexchange carriers; and

(d) Shall post, on or near the instrument, a notice stating whether a location surcharge or any other fee is imposed for telecommunications access through the instrument, the amount of any fee or location surcharge, and the circumstances when it will apply.

(e) Posting under these rules shall begin no later than October 1, 1991, and shall be completed no later than January 31, 1992. In the interim, posting in compliance with the immediate prior posting provisions of WAC 480-120-141 is required and shall constitute compliance with this rule.

(5) The alternate operator services company shall:

(a) Identify the AOS company providing the service audibly and distinctly at the beginning of every call, and again before the call is connected, including an announcement to the called party on calls placed collect.

(i) For purposes of this rule the beginning of the call is no later than immediately following the prompt to enter billing information on automated calls and, on live and automated operator calls, when the call is initially routed to the operator.

(ii) The message used by the AOS company shall state the name of the company as registered with the commission whenever referring to the AOS company. Terms such as "company," "communications," "incorporated," "of the northwest," etc., when not necessary to clear consumer identification of the entity providing service may be omitted when authorized by letter from the secretary of the commission.

(iii) The consumer shall be permitted to terminate the telephone call at no charge before the call is connected.

(iv) The AOS company shall immediately, upon request, and at no charge to the consumer, disclose to the consumer:

(A) A quote of the rates or charges for the call, including any surcharge;

(B) The method by which the rates or charges will be collected; and

(C) The methods by which complaints about the rates, charges, or collection practices will be resolved.

(b) Provide to the local exchange company such information as may be necessary for billing purposes, as well as an address and toll free telephone number for consumer inquiries.

(c) Reoriginate calls to another carrier upon request and without charge, when equipment is in place which will accomplish reorigination with screening and allow billing from the point of origin of the call. If reorigination is not available, the AOS company shall give dialing instructions for the consumer's preferred carrier.

(d) Assure that a minimum of ninety percent of all calls shall be answered by the operator within ten seconds from the time the call reaches the carrier's switch.

(e) Maintain adequate facilities in all locations so the overall blockage rate for lack of facilities, including as pertinent the facilities for access to consumers' preferred interexchange carriers, does not exceed one percent in the time consistent busy hour. Should excessive blockage occur, it shall be the responsibility of the AOS company to determine what caused the blockage and take immediate steps to correct the problem. This subsection does not apply to blockage during unusually ((heaving-[heavy])) heavy traffic, such as national emergency, local disaster, holidays, etc.

(6) The alternate operator services company shall assure that persons are not billed for calls which are not completed. For billing purposes, calls shall be itemized, identified, and rated from the point of origination to the point of termination. No call shall be transferred to another carrier by an AOS which cannot or will not complete the call, unless the call can be billed in accordance with this subsection.

(7) For purposes of emergency calls, every alternate operator services company shall have the following capabilities:

(a) Automatic identification at the operator's console of the location from which the call is being made;

(b) Automatic identification at the operator's console of the correct telephone numbers of emergency service providers that serve the telephone location, including but not limited to, police, fire, ambulance, and poison control;

(c) Automatic ability at the operator's console of dialing the appropriate emergency service with a single keystroke;

(d) Ability of the operator to stay on the line with the emergency call until the emergency service is dispatched.

No charge shall be imposed on the caller by the telephone company or the alternate operator services company for the emergency call.

If the alternate operator services company does not possess these capabilities, all calls in which the consumer dials zero (0) and no other digits within five seconds shall be routed directly to the local exchange company operator, or to an entity fully capable of complying with these requirements. AOS companies lacking sufficient facilities to provide such routing shall cease operations until such time as the requirements of this section are met.

(8) Complaints and disputes shall be treated in accordance with WAC 480-120-101, Complaints and disputes.

(9) Charges billed to a credit card company (e.g., American Express or Visa) need not conform to the call detail requirements of this section. However, the AOS shall provide specific call detail in accordance with WAC 480-120-106 upon request.

(10) "Public convenience and advantage"; surcharges; variable rates.

(a) For services, public convenience and advantage means at a minimum that the provider of alternate operator services offers operator services which equal or exceed the industry standards in availability, technical quality and response time and which equal or exceed industry standards in variety or which are particularly adapted to meet unique needs of a market segment. In the absence of other persuasive evidence, a demonstration that operator service equals or exceeds that provided by U S WEST Communications for intraLATA services or AT&T for interLATA services will be accepted as demonstrating public convenience and advantage.

(b) Charges no greater than the prevailing ((operator--service)) charges in the relevant market - intraLATA or interLATA - will be accepted as demonstrating that charges are for the public convenience and advantage. In the absence of persuasive contrary evidence, the charges for U S WEST for intraLATA service and AT&T for interLATA service will be accepted as the prevailing charges.

(c) Surcharges; variable rates. No location surcharge may be added to without-charge calls nor to a charge for directory assistance. No tariff may provide for rate levels which vary at the option of a call aggregator, provided, that an aggregator may waive application of the surcharge to calls from its instruments, and provided further, that an AOS company may establish a tariff rate for high-cost locations if the conditions for application of the rate confine it to locations with substantially higher than average operating costs.

(11) Rates to the consumer for the provision of alternate operator services, including directory assistance, shall not exceed the prevailing rates for such services in the relevant market - intraLATA or interLATA - unless need for the excess to produce rates which are fair, just and reasonable is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the commission. In the absence of persuasive contrary evidence, rate levels of U S WEST for intraLATA service and AT&T for interLATA service will be considered the prevailing rate.

(12) Fraud prevention.

(a) A company providing interexchange telecommunications service may not bill a call aggregator for charges billed to a line for calls which originated from that line through the use of 10XXX+0; 10XXX+01; ((95-###)) 950-XXXX; or 1-800 access codes, or when the call originating from that line otherwise reached an operator position, if the originating line subscribed to outgoing call screening and the call was placed after the effective date of the outgoing call screening order.

(b) A company providing interexchange telecommunications service may not bill to a call aggregator any charges for collect or third number billed calls, if the line serving to which the call was billed was subscribed to incoming call screening and the call was placed after the effective date of the call screening service order.

(c) Any calls billed through the local exchange carrier in violation of subparagraphs (a) or (b) above must be removed from the call aggregator's bill by the local exchange company upon identification. If investigation by the local exchange company determines that the pertinent call screening was operational when the call was made, the local exchange company may return the charges for the call to the interexchange telecommunications company as not billable.

(d) Any call billed directly by an alternate operator service company, or through a billing method other than the local exchange company, which is billed in violation of subparagraphs (a) and (b), above, must be removed from the call aggregator's bill. The telecommunications company providing the service may request an investigation by the local exchange company. If the local exchange company, after investigation, determines that call screening which would have protected the call, which is offered by the LEC and was subscribed to by the call aggregator, was not operational at the time the call was placed, the AOS company shall bill the LEC for the call.