

**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of)
)
Rural Call Completion) WC Docket No. 13-39

ORDER

Adopted: April 24, 2018

Released: April 24, 2018

By the Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau:

1. On April 17, 2018, the Federal Communications Commission (Commission) adopted a Second Report and Order and Third Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (*Second RCC Order*) establishing new measures to address ongoing problems in the completion of long-distance telephone calls to rural areas.¹ In this Order, the Wireline Competition Bureau (Bureau) grants, on its own motion, a temporary waiver of the rural call completion reporting requirements for covered providers until the effective date of the *Second RCC Order*.²

2. In 2013, the Commission adopted a rule requiring covered providers to submit quarterly call completion reports to the Commission.³ In the *Second RCC Order*, the Commission eliminated the reporting requirement, determining that the reporting rules are burdensome on covered providers; and the resulting reports are of limited utility to the Commission in discovering the source of rural call completion issues.⁴ The Commission also specifically indicated that “[r]emoval of the reporting requirement will provide covered providers with prompt relief by obviating the need to spend time and resources compiling and filing reports that would otherwise be due to the Commission on May 1, 2018.”⁵ This rule change, however, is not yet effective. The portion of the *Second RCC Order* eliminating the reporting requirements will only become effective 30 days after publication of the summary of the *Order* in the Federal Register⁶—which post-dates the May 1 filing deadline for the next round of call completion reports.

3. To prevent covered providers from incurring burdens and costs compiling and filing reports that would otherwise be due to the Commission on May 1, 2018, we grant, on our own motion, a temporary waiver of the rural call completion reporting requirements⁷ to effectuate the Commission’s

¹ *Rural Call Completion*, WC Docket No. 13-39, Second Report and Order and Third Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, FCC 18-45 (Apr. 17, 2018) (*Second RCC Order* or *Order*).

² The *Second RCC Order* will be effective 30 days after publication of a summary in the Federal Register. *Id.* at para. 123.

³ *Rural Call Competition*, WC Docket No. 13-39, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 28 FCC Rcd 16154, 16181, para. 65 (2013) (*RCC Order*).

⁴ *Second RCC Order*, at paras. 59-63.

⁵ *Id.* at para. 63; *see also id.* at para. 57 (“Our removal of the reporting requirements will provide prompt relief to covered providers, obviating the need to spend time and resources compiling and filing reports that would otherwise be due on May 1, 2018.”).

⁶ *Second RCC Order*, at para. 123.

⁷ *See* 47 CFR § 64.2105.

intent to relieve covered providers of the need to submit the otherwise-required May 1, 2018, quarterly filing. Section 1.3 of our rules authorizes the Commission to suspend, revoke, amend, or waive a Commission rule for good cause shown.⁸ The Bureau finds good cause to grant a temporary waiver under the circumstances presented.⁹ As noted above, the Commission specifically intended to relieve covered providers of the burden of filing the May 1, 2018 reports. In addition, the Commission found that the burden of preparing the quarterly reports outweighs their usefulness.¹⁰ The Commission also observed that the obligation to comply with the reporting obligations can divert funds that could otherwise be used to improve providers' service offerings.¹¹ We therefore find good cause to temporarily waive this rule, as it will allow covered providers to avoid incurring the unnecessary expense of preparing and filing these reports, pending the effectiveness of the *Second RCC Order*, which eliminates the reporting requirement entirely. This temporary waiver will apply to all covered providers subject to the reporting requirements.

4. Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED that, pursuant to sections 1, 4(i), 201(b), 202(a), 217, 218, 220(a), 251(a), and 403 of the Communications Act as amended, 47 U.S.C. §§ 151, 154(i), 201(b), 202(a), 217, 218, 220(a), 251(a), and 403, and section 1.3 of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR § 1.3, the call completion reporting requirements in section 64.2015 of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR § 64.2105, ARE WAIVED to the extent described herein.

5. This Order is issued pursuant to authority delegated by sections 0.91 and 0.291 of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR §§ 0.91, 0.291.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Kris Anne Monteith
Chief
Wireline Completion Bureau

⁸ See 47 CFR § 1.3 ("Any provision of the rules may be waived by the Commission on its own motion or on petition if good cause therefore is shown.").

⁹ See *Northeast Cellular Telephone Co. v. FCC*, 897 F.2d 1164, 1166 (D.C. Cir. 1990) (citing *WAITRadio v. FCC*, 418 F.2d 1153, 1159 (D.C. Cir. 1969) (waivers must show special circumstances warranting a deviation from the general rule, and show such a deviation will serve the public interest)).

¹⁰ See *Second RCC Order*, at paras. 59-63.

¹¹ *Id.* at para. 61.