

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

In the Matter of)	
)	
Telephone Number Portability)	CC Docket No. 95-116
)	
Numbering Resource Optimization)	CC Docket No. 99-200
)	

ORDER

Adopted: August 28, 2020**Released: August 31, 2020**

By the Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau:

1. Beginning on August 21, 2020, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Department of Homeland Security, announced that the President has signed emergency declarations for Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi, Puerto Rico, and Arkansas¹ due to Hurricane Laura.² Hurricane Laura has brought damaging winds and flooding rainfall over central and northern portions of Louisiana and is forecast to intensify with high water levels along the Gulf Coast of the U.S.³ It is expected to cause significant damage in the areas within its path, and may result in significant property damage and personal injury. Hurricane Laura may also cause substantial telephone service outages in all affected areas. To assist telephone subscribers in those areas, we grant, on our own motion, a temporary waiver of the Commission's telephone number "aging" rule. Specifically, we waive section 52.15(f)(ii), which states that service providers may only age telephone numbers that have been disconnected for up to 90 days before assigning them to other customers.⁴

¹ See FEMA, President Donald J. Trump Approves Emergency Disaster Declaration for Louisiana (Aug. 23, 2020), <https://www.fema.gov/press-release/20200824/president-donald-j-trump-approves-emergency-disaster-declaration-louisiana> (last visited Aug. 27, 2020); see also FEMA, President Donald J. Trump Approves Texas Emergency Declaration (Aug. 24, 2020), <https://www.fema.gov/press-release/20200824/president-donald-j-trump-approves-texas-emergency-declaration> (last visited Aug. 27, 2020); see also FEMA, President Donald J. Trump Approves Emergency Disaster Declaration for Mississippi (Aug. 24, 2020), <https://www.fema.gov/press-release/20200824/president-donald-j-trump-approves-emergency-disaster-declaration-mississippi> (last visited Aug. 27, 2020); see also FEMA, President Donald J. Trump Approves Emergency Disaster Declaration for Commonwealth of Puerto Rico (Aug. 24, 2020), <https://www.fema.gov/press-release/20200824/president-donald-j-trump-approves-emergency-disaster-declaration> (last visited Aug. 27, 2020); see also <https://www.fema.gov/press-release/20200827/president-donald-j-trump-approves-emergency-disaster-declaration-arkansas> ("Specifically, FEMA is authorized to identify, mobilize and provide at its discretion, equipment and resources necessary to alleviate the impacts of the emergency. Emergency protective measures (Category B), limited to direct federal assistance under the Public Assistance Program, will be provided at 75 percent federal funding.").

² Hurricane Laura encompasses all references to Tropical Storms Marco and Laura and Hurricanes Marco and Laura.

³ NOAA, National Hurricane Center, Hurricane Laura Public Advisory, <https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/text/MIATCPAT3.shtml> (last visited Aug. 27, 2020).

⁴ 47 C.F.R. § 52.15(f)(ii) ("Aging numbers are disconnected numbers that are not available for assignment to another end user or customer for a specified period of time. Numbers previously assigned to residential customers

(continued....)

2. There is good cause for this waiver, as required by section 1.3 of our rules.⁵ Assisting residential subscribers who are dealing with the effects of a hurricane or major storm is in the public interest and thus warrants a temporary waiver of section 52.15(f)(ii) of the Commission's rules. Waiver of section 52.15(f)(ii) will allow service providers in the affected areas, upon customers' request, to disconnect temporarily customers' telephone service to avoid billing issues, and then reinstate the customers' same numbers when service is reconnected. This waiver applies to all companies that provide service in areas of Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, Arkansas, and Puerto Rico affected by Hurricane Laura. This waiver is in effect immediately and for a nine-month period, expiring on May 28, 2021. This waiver of the aging rule will also apply, without need for further action by the Wireline Competition Bureau, to residential customers in other areas for which the President declares states of emergency, either due to Hurricane Laura or to later storms during the 2020-21 hurricane season. These waivers will expire 270 days from the date the President declares a state of emergency for the area(s) affected.

3. Also, because of substantial damage to telecommunications systems we expect to be caused by Hurricane Laura to areas within its path, we recognize that customers in the affected areas may wish to port numbers to locations outside their rate centers. To facilitate their customers' continued access to telecommunications service following the hurricane, we encourage service providers to port telephone numbers geographically outside a rate center to the extent it is technically feasible. We also encourage all service providers in the areas affected by Hurricane Laura to waive call forwarding, message center, and voicemail service charges for affected customers, to the extent lawfully permitted, until the customers' service is restored.

4. Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED, pursuant to sections 4(i), 251(b)(2), and 251(e) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. §§ 154(i), 251(b)(2) and 251(e), and sections 0.291 and 1.3 of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR §§ 0.291, 1.3, that section 52.15(f)(ii), 47 CFR § 52.15(f)(ii), is waived to the extent herein described herein.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

Kris A Monteith
Chief
Wireline Competition Bureau

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may be aged for no more than 90 days.”).

⁵ 47 CFR § 1.3 (providing that “[a]ny provision of the rules may be waived by the Commission on its own motion or on petition if good cause therefore is shown”).