

FACT SHEET

ABBREVIATED DIALING CODES - N11

Summary

- Abbreviated dialing codes enable callers to connect to a location in the phone network that otherwise would be accessible only via a seven or ten-digit telephone number. The network must be pre-programmed to translate the three-digit code into the appropriate seven or ten-digit telephone number and route the call accordingly.

- Among abbreviated dialing arrangements, “N11” codes are three-digit codes of which the first digit can be any digit other than 1 or 0, and the last two digits are both one. There are only eight possible N11 codes, making N11 codes among the scarcest of numbering resources. Following are the existing N11 code assignments:

211: Assigned for community information and referral services
311: Assigned nationwide for non-emergency police and other government services
411: Unassigned, but used virtually nationwide by carriers for directory assistance
511: Assigned for traffic and transportation information
611: Unassigned, but used broadly by carriers for repair service
711: Assigned nationwide for access to Telecom Relay Services
811: Unassigned, but used by local exchanged carriers for business office use
911: Unassigned, but used nationwide for emergency services

- N11 codes “011” and “111” are unavailable because “0” and “1” are used for switching and routing purposes.

Background on N11 Proceeding

- In 1992, the Commission adopted a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (*N11 NPRM*) proposing that incumbent local exchange carriers be required to provide abbreviated dialing arrangements. Subsequent to the *N11 NPRM*, various parties asked the Commission to designate N11 codes to facilitate network access to Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) for individuals with hearing or speech disabilities, to federal and state government services, and to non-emergency police services.

- In 1997, the Commission released the *N11 First Report and Order and FNPRM* in which it assigned 311 on a nationwide basis for non-emergency police services. The Commission also granted the request for an N11 code to reach Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS), assigning 711 nationwide for this use.

Department of Transportation Petition for Assignment

- In March 1999, the U. S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) filed a petition for assignment of a nationwide N11 code to be used by state and local governments to deliver travel-related information to the public.

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- Travel information, including the status of roadway construction, accident locations, and alternate traffic routes, is currently provided by government agencies across the country often with each municipality and transportation agency having its own separate telephone number.
- The U.S. DOT contends that widespread use of an N11 code for travel-related information would reduce vehicular congestion and pollution, lower fuel consumption, provide superior traffic management, and enhance roadway safety.
- According to the U.S. DOT, each year there are six million vehicular accidents, 42,000 deaths, and 5.2 million injuries, at an approximate cost of \$200 billion annually.
- According to the U.S. DOT, at least 43 states and 42 major metropolitan areas, and over 100 transit agencies currently operate traveler information systems, using the telephone as the primary means of communication. In the Washington, DC – New York City corridor there are eleven different telephone numbers through which to obtain traffic and transit status.
- During a three-month period in 1997, when Kentucky residents dialed 211 to reach the traveler information service and Ohio residents dialed 333-3333 to reach the same traveler information, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet reports that 72 percent more calls were made to the abbreviated dialing code than to 333-3333.

Information and Referral Systems Petition for Assignment

- In May 1998, the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems filed a petition for nationwide assignment of an abbreviated dialing code for access to community information and referral services.
- The Information and Referral Petitioners contend that there is a demonstrated need for an easy to remember, easy to use abbreviated dialing code that will enable persons in need to be directed to services providing free information and referrals to community service organizations.
- Information and referrals to community service organizations include, housing assistance, maintaining utilities, food, finding counseling, hospice services and services for the aging, substance abuse programs, or dealing with physical or sexual abuse.
- According to the petitioners, the abbreviated dialing code 211 is currently active in at least one locality in Connecticut and a thirteen-county area in Atlanta, Georgia. Additionally, petitions for 211 had been filed with local public utility commissions in three other states (Massachusetts, Ohio and Wisconsin) and a county in Michigan, and 11 petitions had been approved in three other states (Alabama, North Carolina and Utah). Finally, statewide information and referral models have been developed in three other states (Florida, Texas and Virginia).