



NEWS

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F 2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION'S REVISED TELEPHONE "SLAMMING" RULES NOW IN EFFECT

Over 30 States Choose to Administer New Slamming Rules

Washington, D.C. – The Common Carrier Bureau of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) announced that the revised telephone slamming liability rules adopted earlier this year will take effect today, November 28, 2000. "Slamming," the single largest source of complaints to the Commission over the last several years, is the unauthorized change of a consumer's preferred telephone carrier.

Under the revised rules, states will be able to "opt in" to become the primary forums for administering the slamming liability rules and resolving consumers' slamming complaints. The FCC noted that state regulatory commissions are better equipped than the industry to resolve slamming disputes and directed that those disputes be brought before state commissions. If a state has not opted in, the FCC will resolve slamming complaints filed by the consumers in that state. As of today, 31 states have formally opted in, and the Bureau expects more states to opt in by the end of the year.

The strengthened slamming liability rules take the profit out of slamming and increase the incentives for authorized carriers to go after slammers. The rules also ensure that, if the FCC or the state commission finds that a slam occurred, the consumer will receive compensation. Where the consumer has not paid the unauthorized carrier, the consumer will be absolved of the obligation to pay for service for up to 30 days after a slam. Where the consumer has paid the unauthorized carrier, the rules require the unauthorized carrier to pay 150% of the charges it received from the consumer to the authorized carrier, which must, in turn, reimburse the consumer 50% of the charges paid by the consumer.

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News about the Federal Communications Commission can also be found
on the Commission's web site www.fcc.gov.