

BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

IN RE: Amendment of Rule) DOCKET NO. 910506-TL
25-4.073, F.A.C.,) ORDER NO. PSC-92-0997-NOR-TL
Answering Time.) ISSUED: 09/16/92
_____)

NOTICE OF RULEMAKING

NOTICE is hereby given that the Commission, pursuant to section 120.54, Florida Statutes, has initiated rulemaking to amend Rule 25-4.073, F.A.C., relating to answering time.

The attached Notice of Rulemaking will appear in the September 18, 1992, edition of the Florida Administrative Weekly. If requested, a hearing will be held at the following time and place:

9:30 a.m., Tuesday, October 27, 1992
Room 122, Fletcher Building
101 East Gaines Street

Written requests for hearing and written comments or suggestions on the rule must be received by the Director, Division of Records and Reporting, Florida Public Service Commission, 101 East Gaines Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399, no later than October 9, 1992.

By ORDER of the Florida Public Service Commission this 16th day of September, 1992.

STEVE TRIBBLE, Director
Division of Records & Reporting

(S E A L)
WEW

by: Kary Flynn
Chief, Bureau of Records

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FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

DOCKET NO. 910506-TL

RULE TITLE:

RULE NO.:

Answering Time

25-4.073

PURPOSE AND EFFECT: The purpose of these revisions to Rule 25-4.073, F.A.C., is to promulgate new standards for telephone answering time which accomodate the use of automated interactive answering systems by local exchange telephone companies, while being consistent with the public interest. The effect of these rules will be the employment of new procedures and methodologies by the Commission in measuring quality of service.

SUMMARY: The revisions to the rule primarily address automated interactive answering systems and the standards those systems will be tested against. One of the most important features of the new requirements is the option of transferring to a live attendant. The revisions also create a differentiation, for local operator answering time standards, between those areas which are totally served by 911 emergency service and those areas not totally served by 911. Finally, under the revised rule the answering time will be measured from the time the last digit, or zero only, is dialed.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY: 350.127(2), F.S.

LAW IMPLEMENTED: 364.03, F.S.

WRITTEN COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS ON THE PROPOSED RULE MAY BE

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SUBMITTED TO THE FPSC, DIVISION OF RECORDS AND REPORTING, WITHIN 21 DAYS OF THE DATE OF THIS NOTICE FOR INCLUSION IN THE RECORD OF THE PROCEEDING.

IF REQUESTED WITHIN 21 DAYS OF THE DATE OF THIS NOTICE, A HEARING WILL BE HELD AT THE DATE AND PLACE SHOWN BELOW:

TIME AND DATE: 9:30 A.M., October 27, 1992

PLACE: Room 122, 101 East Gaines Street, Tallahassee, Florida.

THE PERSON TO BE CONTACTED REGARDING THIS RULE AND THE ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT IS: Director of Appeals, Florida Public Service Commission, 101 East Gaines Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399.

THE FULL TEXT OF THE RULE IS:

25-4.073 Answering Time.

(1) Each telephone utility shall provide equipment designed and engineered on the basis of realistic forecasts of growth, and shall make all reasonable efforts to provide adequate personnel so as to meet the following service criteria under normal operating conditions:

(a) If emergency services for the LEC's total serving area is currently answered by the 911 system, at least ninety (90%) percent of the all-toll calls offered to the LEC provided operator each-toll-office shall be answered within thirty (30) ten-(10) seconds after zero only is dialed the start of the audible ring.

(b) If emergency services for the LEC's total serving area

is not currently answered by the 911 system, at least ninety (90%) percent of all the calls offered shall be answered within 20 seconds after zero only is dialed.

(c) ~~(b)~~ At least ninety (90%) percent of all calls directed to intercept, directory assistance and repair services and eighty (80%) percent of all calls to business offices shall be answered within thirty (30) ~~twenty (20)~~ seconds after the last digit is dialed ~~start of the audible ring.~~

(d) Notwithstanding (c) above, when a company utilizes a menu driven, automated, interactive answering system (referred to as the system), at least (95%) percent of the calls offered shall be answered within 15 seconds after the last digit is dialed. The initial recorded message presented by the system to the customer shall only identify the company and the general options available to the customer. The option of transferring to a live attendant shall be included in the initial message. For subscribers electing the option of transferring to a live assistant, except for business office calls, at least ninety-five (95%) percent of all calls shall be transferred by the system to a live attendant prepared to give immediate assistance within fifty-five (55) seconds after the last digit of the telephone number listed in the directory for the company's service(s) was dialed. Eighty-five (85%) percent of all such calls directed to any business office shall be transferred by the system to a live

attendant within fifty-five (55) seconds after the last digit is dialed. At any time during the call, the customer shall be transferred to live assistance if the customer fails to interact with the system for a time period of ten (10) seconds following any prompt. For the purposes of this section, interaction means responding to a customer prompt offered by the system by keying (pressing) a number or character of a Dual-Tone Multiple-Frequency (DTMF) keypad associated with a telephone.

(e) In accordance with Rule 25-4.0770, when a menu driven, automated, interactive, answering system is utilized, provisions shall be included to allow the customer to make an appointment or to negotiate with a live attendant, or with the system, any appointment or commitment offered to the customer by the system. The subscriber shall be able to renegotiate appointments using the system.

(f) Automated systems shall not contain promotional or merchandising material unless the customer selects and chooses to receive such information.

(g) (e) The terms "answered" as used in subparagraphs (a) and (b) above shall be construed to mean more than an acknowledgment that the customer is waiting on the line. It shall mean that the operator, or service representative, or automated system is ready to render assistance and/or accept the information necessary to process the call, except that with

respect to calls to business office services where the company practice provides that such calls are directed to an operator position, an additional twenty (20) seconds will be allowed to extend the call excluding the time required for the customer to provide sufficient information to the operator in order to process the call. In those instances where the call cannot be extended within the allotted interval, the calling party is to be given the option of placing the call again or providing a number by which a company representative will return the call within ten (10) minutes or at a time mutually convenient to the parties.

(2) Answering time studies using actual data or any statistically valid substitute for actual data shall be made to the extent and frequency necessary to determine compliance with this rule. The company shall add ten (10) seconds to the answer time for each call. This ten (10) second constant will substitute for actual data on the time required for the call to connect to the company's facilities. Monthly summary results of such studies shall be filed with the Commission promptly after the end of each calendar quarter.

(3) All telephone companies are expected to answer their main published telephone number on a twenty-four (24) hour a day basis. Such answering may be handled by a special operator at the toll center or directory assistance facility when the company offices are closed. Where after hours calls are not handled as

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described above, at least the first published business office number will be equipped with a telephone answering device which will notify callers after the normal working hours of the hours of operation for that business office. Where recording devices are used, the message shall include the telephone number assigned to handle urgent or emergency calls when the business office is closed.

Specific Authority: 350.127(2), F.S.

Law Implemented: 364.03, F.S.

History: New 12/1/68, formerly 25-4.73, Amended 3/31/76, _____.

NAME OF PERSON ORIGINATING PROPOSED RULE: Alan Taylor, Division of Communications

NAME OF SUPERVISOR OR PERSON(S) WHO APPROVED THE PROPOSED RULE: Florida Public Service Commission.

DATE PROPOSED RULE APPROVED: September 1, 1992

If any person decides to appeal any decision of the Commission with respect to any matter considered at the rulemaking hearing, if held, a record of the hearing is necessary. The appellant must ensure that a verbatim record, including testimony and evidence forming the basis of the appeal is made. The Commission usually makes a verbatim record of rulemaking hearings.

Any person requiring some accommodation at this hearing because of a physical impairment should call the Division of Records and Reporting at (904) 488-8371 at least five calendar days prior to

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the hearing. If you are hearing or speech impaired, please contact the Florida Public Service Commission using the Florida Relay Service, which can be reached at: 1-800-955-8771 (TDD).