



California Public Utilities Commission

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

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CPUC ESTABLISHES SERVICE QUALITY RULES FOR TELECOMMUNICATION COMPANIES

SAN FRANCISCO, August 18, 2016 - The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), in its ongoing commitment to consumer protection and safety, today adopted service quality rules for telephone corporations.

Today's decision imposes automatic fines of up to \$25,000 per day for failure to meet three service quality measures: 1) Out-of-Service Repair Interval, 2) Customer Trouble Reports, and 3) Answer Time for Trouble Reports and Billing and Non-billing Inquiries. Fines accrue when a company fails to meet prescribed standards for three consecutive months. Accrued fines may be suspended if the company makes investments designed to cure service quality deficiencies in an amount equal to twice the fine. Federally mandated outage reports must also be submitted to the CPUC.

“Our decision today provides additional protection for those who have traditional landline telephone service, and it also calls for continued monitoring of the Federal Communications Commission’s proceeding on rural outages, and allows for workshops on how to deal with 911 service and other safety related issues,” said CPUC President Michael Picker, the Commissioner assigned to the proceeding. “There are many other actions underway that will continue our efforts to look at telecommunication issues, including a competition study, and a network exam. Clearly we’re not at the end of the discussion.”

Added Commissioner Catherine J.K. Sandoval, “California law states that all Californians, regardless of whether they live in rural or urban areas, deserve high-quality communications service, and ensures that Californians can call 911 and reach friends, family, neighbors, and businesses. In



California, our largest industries are technology, agriculture, goods movement, and entertainment, and millions of Californians live in rural areas. This decision advances the CPUC’s work to protect communities and compliance with California law.”

The service quality rules apply to companies who provide traditional landline service (often referred to as Plain Old Telephone Service or POTS), as well as those companies who offer the CPUC’s low income program, California LifeLine.

The proposal voted on is available at:

<http://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/Published/G000/M166/K210/166210946.pdf>.

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