

Decision **PROPOSED DECISION OF ALJs MATHEWS and WILSON**  
(Mailed 5/5/2023)

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

Application of the North American  
Numbering Plan Administrator, on  
behalf of the California  
Telecommunications Industry, for Relief  
of the 530 Numbering Plan Area.

Application 22-09-016

**DECISION GRANTING REQUEST FOR AN ALL-SERVICES AREA  
CODE OVERLAY IN THE 530 NUMBERING PLAN AREA**

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**Attachment A:** Public Education Program for 530 Area Code Relief

## **DECISION GRANTING REQUEST FOR AN ALL-SERVICES AREA CODE OVERLAY IN THE 530 NUMBERING PLAN AREA**

### **Summary**

By this decision, we approve the request of the North American Numbering Plan Administrator to adopt an all-services overlay to resolve the forecasted exhaustion of numbering resources in the 530 Numbering Plan Area, with a nine-month implementation schedule. The overlay will provide additional numbering resources to meet the demand for telephone numbers while minimizing customer inconvenience. We order a public education program, within the timeframes discussed in this decision, to facilitate implementation of the overlay.

No existing customers will be required to change their area code or specific telephone number. After the implementation period, the new overlay area code will be available for new telephone number assignments in the same region as the 530-area code upon exhaust of available prefixes in the existing 530-area code. Customers will continue to dial the three-digit area code for all calls to and from telephone numbers with the 530-area code and new area codes.

Application 22-09-016 is closed.

### **1. Background**

The North American Numbering Plan Administrator (NANPA),<sup>1</sup> on behalf of the California Telecommunications Industry (Industry),<sup>2</sup> filed Application

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<sup>1</sup> As a neutral third-party administrator, NANPA has no independent view regarding the relief option proposed by the Industry in this application.

<sup>2</sup> The Industry is composed of current and prospective telecommunications carriers operating in, or considering operations within, the 530 Numbering Plan Area (NPA or area code).

(A.) 22-09-016, requesting relief in the 530 Numbering Plan Area (NPA).<sup>3</sup>

NANPA alleges that the 530 NPA is projected to exhaust its Central Office codes (often referred to as CO or NXX codes) during the third quarter of 2025, and is in need of relief. NANPA argues that absent relief, the supply of CO codes in the 530 NPA is projected to run out during the projected exhaust quarter.

No protests were filed to the application.

On November 22, 2022, the assigned Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) held a telephonic prehearing conference (PHC) in this matter to discuss and establish the service list for this proceeding, and to determine the scope of the proceeding. The assigned Commissioner issued the Scoping Memo and Ruling on January 13, 2023. On March 3, 2023, the assigned ALJ issued a Ruling Requesting Additional Information, to which the Commission is currently awaiting a response.

Effective January 1, 2019, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) appointed Somos, Inc. (Somos) to replace Neustar, Inc. as the NANPA.<sup>4</sup>

All rulings issued by the assigned Commissioner and ALJ are affirmed herein.

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<sup>3</sup> An NPA, also known as an “area code,” normally represents a geographic area within a state. In the current case, the NPA is 530. Throughout this decision, NPA and area code are used interchangeably.

<sup>4</sup> <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DOC-368493A1.pdf>

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## 2. Jurisdiction

The FCC holds full responsibility over all numbering issues but has delegated to the states area code relief responsibilities.<sup>5</sup> On behalf of the State of California, the California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) is responsible for proactively monitoring area code relief planning and overseeing the integrity and competitive neutrality of the telecommunications industry<sup>6</sup> relief planning process.<sup>7</sup>

## 3. Process for Determining Need for a New Area Code

NANPA's primary responsibility is to ensure numbering resources are available to the telecommunications industry in the United States and Canada.<sup>8</sup> NANPA assigns those resources in the form of area codes and prefixes; tracks

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<sup>5</sup> [http://transition.fcc.gov/Bureaus/Common\\_Carrier/Reports/FCC-State\\_Link/IAD/utilizationdec2000.pdf](http://transition.fcc.gov/Bureaus/Common_Carrier/Reports/FCC-State_Link/IAD/utilizationdec2000.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Within this decision, "telecommunications industry" identifies service providers in general throughout the United States and Canada.

<sup>7</sup> Public Utilities (Pub. Util.) Code Section 7936 states, "The commission shall direct the NANPA to obtain utilization data for any area code for which a relief plan is proposed, prior to adopting a plan for, or setting a date for, relief."

Pub. Util. Code Section 7943(a) states: "It is the intent of the Legislature that when the commission has no reasonable alternative other than to create a new area code, that the commission do so in a way that creates the least inconvenience for customers." Pub. Util. Code Section 7943(c) states: "Before approving any new area code, the commission shall first perform a telephone utilization study and implement all reasonable telephone number conservation measures."

<sup>8</sup> When projecting that an area code will run out of prefixes, NANPA looks at a number of factors, including but not limited to: (1) the history of code assignments in the area code; (2) the current growth rate within the telecommunications industry in the NPA; (3) five years of annual code growth in that area code; and (4) each telecommunications service provider's semi-annual growth forecast in the area code in question to determine future demand for new prefixes. NANPA considers all this information to forecast when an area code will run out of, or "exhaust," all available prefixes. This information is also considered in NANPA's determination of the life expectancy for the relief alternatives being considered. (As of this writing, available at <https://www.nationalnanpa.com/index.html>.)

their use to ensure effective and efficient utilization; and, on a semi-annual basis, forecasts which area codes will soon run out of prefixes.<sup>9</sup> When it determines that an area code is near exhaustion, NANPA, as a neutral third party, initiates and coordinates the planning process for resolving the utilization of available prefixes, which is known as Area Code Relief Planning (relief planning). Such relief planning, which includes the introduction of a new area code within the existing area code in which the exhaust is forecasted to occur, normally begins three years prior to the forecasted exhaust.<sup>10</sup>

After informing the Commission of the forecasted exhaust in an area code, NANPA begins the relief planning process by calling a meeting with Industry to identify viable solutions to the forecasted exhaust. NANPA and Industry are required to follow regulations established by the FCC and the Commission, as well as telecommunications industry guidelines.<sup>11</sup> After the Industry develops feasible alternatives, such as an all-services overlay or a geographic split,<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> A prefix, also known as a central office code (CO code) is the second set of three digits of a telephone number. Prefixes are assigned to rate centers within an area code. Each prefix consists of 10,000 line numbers.

<sup>10</sup> Pub. Util. Code Section 7931(d).

<sup>11</sup> In planning area code relief, the Industry: (1) is required to follow rate center boundaries; (2) may not consider certain types of relief, such as service-specific area codes for cell phones, pagers, or other services, due to current federal regulation; and (3) may consider communities of interest, city and county boundaries, and natural dividing lines like mountains or rivers. Industry then measures these items against established Industry criteria such as minimizing customer confusion, ensuring that relief plans have adequate projected lives, and maintaining competitive neutrality among service providers. ATIS-0300061-NPA Code Relief Planning and Notification Guidelines at Section 2.4, Section 6.1, Section 6.3.4, and Section 6.4, Alliance for Telecommunications Industry Solutions. (FCC 00-104 at 3.)

<sup>12</sup> An all-services overlay is a plan in which the original and new area codes apply to the same geographic area. A geographic split divides an area code into two area codes, each assigned to a specific geographic area, with one area retaining the original area code and the other area changing to a new area code.

Industry then strives to reach consensus on the best plan to resolve the forecasted exhaust in the area code in question.

NANPA then submits its application to the Commission seeking relief for the exhausting area code recommending Industry's consensus solution. After the Commission has made its decision on a relief plan, telecommunications service providers are required to implement the relief plan within a specified period adopted in the decision.

Prior to 2017, Pub. Util. Code Section 7931(e)(2) required Commission staff to conduct at least one public meeting for the local jurisdictions and the public affected by the area code relief activities. Pub. Util. Code Section 7931(e)(2) was subsequently revised to no longer require public meetings for area code relief.<sup>13</sup> Public meetings may be conducted at the discretion of the Commission but are not required. For the 530 area code relief proceedings, the public meetings that have been held in the past are replaced with a webcast posted on the Commission website.

NANPA alleges that absent NPA relief, the supply of CO codes in the 530 NPA is projected to run out during the projected exhaust quarter. In this Application, the Industry reached consensus to recommend to the Commission an additional all-services distributed overlay plan as its choice of relief for the 530-area code.

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<sup>13</sup> In 2017, [Senate Bill 385 \(2017-2018\)](#) revised Pub. Util. Code Section 7931(e)(2) to require commission staff to notify representatives of local jurisdictions and the public in affected areas, but instead of requiring them would authorize them, at the discretion of the commission, to conduct one or more meetings both for representatives of local jurisdictions and for members of the public in affected geographic areas for those same purposes. The purpose of the revision is to "repeal obsolete auditing, reporting, and other similar requirements on the commission."

### **3.1. Basics of the Telephone Numbering System**

In each area code in the United States, telephone numbers are made up of an area code, a three-digit prefix, and a four-digit line number (for *example*, 530-555-1234).<sup>14</sup> Specific geographic areas are assigned an area code, while each individual phone line is assigned a line number. Each area code is divided up into local serving areas called exchanges; within each exchange is a rate center. The 530-area code is in the northeastern portion of California and covers all or portions of Alpine, Butte, Colusa, El Dorado, Glenn, Humboldt, Lassen, Modoc, Mono Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Solano Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Yolo, and Yuba counties. It serves communities including, but not limited to, Chico, Davis, El Dorado Hills, Oroville, Paradise, Placerville, Red Bluff, Redding, South Lake Tahoe, Truckee, Woodland, and Yuba City.

Originally, telephone numbers were assigned to service providers in 10,000 block groups. Thousand-block number pooling implemented a new resource allocation system to divide a prefix or central office code (NXX code or CO code), which is a group of 10,000 telephone numbers, into 10 sequential blocks or groups of 1,000 telephone numbers allowing the allocation of telephone numbers in blocks of 1,000. This system allows multiple service providers operating in the same rate center to share the 10,000 numbers in a prefix at the thousand-block level.

Every prefix, which is assigned to a specific rate center, includes 10,000 line numbers. The FCC has set aside certain prefixes such as 958, 959,

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<sup>14</sup> A line number, which is the last four digits of a customer's phone number, is the number assigned to the phone line that an individual customer uses.

and 555, as abbreviated dialing patterns dedicated to special uses. As of March 16, 2023, the 530-area code has 36 available prefixes remaining.<sup>15</sup>

Once all the available prefixes are used, a new area code is necessary. NANPA initially projected that the 530 NPA was expected to run out of prefixes in the second quarter of 2026.<sup>16</sup> However, based on its most recent data, NANPA projects the 530 NPA to run out of prefixes in the third quarter of 2025.<sup>17</sup>

### **3.2. The 530 Area Code**

In 1997, the Commission approved a geographic split of the 916 NPA and subsequently introduced the 530 NPA in November 1997. As discussed above, the 530 NPA is in the northeastern portion of California and covers all or portions of Alpine, Butte, Colusa, El Dorado, Glenn, Humboldt, Lassen, Modoc, Mono Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Solano Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Yolo, and Yuba counties. It serves communities including, but not limited to, Chico, Davis, El Dorado Hills, Oroville, Paradise, Placerville, Red Bluff, Redding, South Lake Tahoe, Truckee, Woodland, and Yuba City.

The 530 NPA is bordered to the north by the Oregon 541/458 NPA overlay, to the east by the Nevada 775 NPA, to the south by the 209 NPA, the 760/442 NPA overlay, the 916/279 NPA and to the west by the 707 NPA.

## **4. Current Request for a New Area Code**

As required by the FCC, NANPA collects CO code assignment, utilization, and forecasted demand data to determine the projected need for numbering resources. NANPA uses this data to project the exhaust date of each area code and publishes the results twice a year. In April 2022, NANPA published its

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<sup>15</sup> Response to ALJ Ruling, filed March 16, 2023, at 2.

<sup>16</sup> A.22-09-016 at 4.

<sup>17</sup> *Id.*

semi-annual Numbering Resource Utilization/Forecast (NRUF) and NPA Exhaust Analysis (collectively, the April 2022 NRUF Report) which indicated that the 530 NPA would exhaust during the second quarter of 2026.<sup>18</sup> However, due to an increase in CO code assignments in the 530 NPA, NANPA issued a “Delta NRUF” on June 13, 2022, which revised the estimated exhaust date to the third quarter of 2025.<sup>19</sup>

NANPA determined that the only relief alternative which will meet NPA Relief Guidelines is an overlay. All customers within and between NPAs would be required to dial 1+10-digits for local calls. The 530 NPA transitioned to mandatory 1+10-digit local dialing as a result of the FCC’s Order approving the designation of 988 as the three-digit abbreviated dialing code for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (now referred to as the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline).<sup>20</sup> As a result, 1+10-digit local dialing is already in place in the 530 NPA.

## **5. Description of Relief Plan**

Under Pub. Util. Code Section 7936 and Section 7943(c), in order to approve a new area code, the Commission must get utilization data from NANPA for the area code for which relief is proposed, perform a telephone utilization study, and implement all reasonable telephone number conservation measures. When there is no reasonable alternative to creating a new area code, the Commission must do so in a way that is the most convenient for customers.

In this case, the only alternative is an additional overlay. As discussed in Section 3.2 above, 1+10-digit local dialing is already in place in the 530 NPA. In

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<sup>18</sup> A.22-09-016 at 4.

<sup>19</sup> *Id.*

<sup>20</sup> Implementation of the National Suicide Hotline Improvement Act of 2018, Report and Order, FCC 20-100 Irel. July 17, 2020).

addition, the NPA Relief Guidelines were amended to accommodate the impact the national implementation of the 988 abbreviated dialing code will have on area code relief. The amended NPA Relief Guidelines state that “where NPA relief is required for a single NPA area that is scheduled to transition to 10-digit local dialing...the Initial Planning Document, relief planning meeting, and the Industry consensus to recommend an overlay are not required.”<sup>21</sup> Therefore, the only option for relief of the 530 NPA is an all-services distributed overlay.

The all-services distributed overlay would superimpose a new NPA over the same geographic area covered by the existing 530 NPA and is projected to last approximately 45 years. NANPA will also assign CO codes from the new overlay NPA once all assignable CO codes from the 530 NPA are exhausted. All existing customers would retain their current area code in the overlay area and would not have to change their telephone numbers. NANPA argues that since mandatory 1+10-digit local dialing is already in place in the 530 NPA, the only customer education required for this overlay is about the addition of the new NPA.<sup>22</sup> NANPA also argues that since announcement of the new overlay NPA is largely just informational, no paid advertising is necessary to educate customers.<sup>23</sup>

NANPA projected that 530 area code would exhaust in the third quarter of 2025.<sup>24</sup> The study and the data therein satisfy the statutory requirements of Pub. Util. Code Section 7936 and Section 7943(c) and persuade us that there are

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<sup>21</sup> The NPA Relief Guidelines at § 5.63.

<sup>22</sup> A.22-09-016 at 6.

<sup>23</sup> *Id.*; See also A.22-09-016, Attachment #1, Industry Statement for the Record and Recommended Public Education Plan (PEP).

<sup>24</sup> A.22-09-016 at 4.

no reasonable alternatives for relief of the 530 NPA other than an all-services distributed overlay. Accordingly, NANPA distributed a notice to the Industry on August 3, 2022, containing a draft relief application for review prior to the Industry relief meeting.<sup>25</sup> The Industry met on August 24, 2022, and approved NANPA's application for an all-services distributed overlay of the 530 NPA.<sup>26</sup>

In order to allow sufficient time for completion of the selected relief plan prior to exhaust of CO codes in the 530-area code, NANPA and the Industry proposed a public education program (PEP) for customers in the current 530-area code and requests that the Commission approve the nine-month implementation schedule and PEP program outlined in its application.

## **6. Discussion**

The 530-area code is projected to exhaust in the third quarter of 2025, requiring the Commission and NANPA to act before exhaustion occurs. NANPA utilized data in the Number Resource Utilization Forecast (NRUF) in forecasting the 530-area code exhaustion in accordance with Pub. Util. Code Section 7936.<sup>27</sup> There is no indication that conservation measures will adequately address this exhaustion as outlined in Pub. Util. Code Section 7943(c). In this application, NANPA provided one relief option, concluding that the only relief alternative which will meet NPA Relief Guidelines is an overlay.

An overlay is less confusing and less costly for existing customers because all customers retain the same area code and telephone number. An overlay would not require existing residential or business customers to incur the time

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<sup>25</sup> A.22-09-016, Exhibit A.

<sup>26</sup> A.22-09-016, Exhibit B.

<sup>27</sup> NANPA is required to collect, store, and maintain NRUF data. In accordance with FCC rules, assignees holding geographic and/or certain non-geographic (NPA 5XX and 900) telephone numbers must report on their holdings February 1 and August 1 of each year.

and expense to inform family, friends, customers, and business associates of a new area code, or incur the cost of reprinting stationery and other materials. The overlay option is the least inconvenient and most equitable for customers, and has the least impact on local services, including emergency and government services.

Therefore, we adopt an overlay to resolve the forecasted exhaust in the 530-area code. Implementation of the overlay shall be completed by the forecasted exhaust date of the 530-area code in the third quarter of 2025.

## **7. Public Education Program**

### **7.1. Overview**

In Decision (D.) 96-12-086, in Rulemaking (R.) 95-04-043 and Investigation (I.) 95-04-044, the Commission decided that an appropriate customer education program was necessary when instituting overlays to explain the concept of an overlay, the fact that the new dialing procedure will not affect the distinction between local and toll calls or the rates charged for the calls, and the mandatory 1+10-digit dialing instructions on payphones and in directories.

In D.98-05-021, also in the R.95-04-043 and I.95-04-044 proceedings, the Commission:

- Required service providers to institute an instructional announcement directing callers to dial 1+10-digits indefinitely after implementing the overlay;
- Required the PEP to communicate changes associated with the overlay to children, the elderly, the disabled community, and the various ethnic groups in the region;
- Prioritized the education of those entities that will need to reprogram equipment due to the new dialing procedure, such as alarm companies;

- Required the PEP to inform customers how to dial directory assistance to locate numbers applicable to different area codes within the overlay region;
- Required the use of press releases, television and radio announcements, billing inserts and the updating of telephone directories; and
- Extended the coverage of the PEP to include not only the region in which the overlay will be implemented, which should be the first priority, but also the adjacent area codes and, to a lesser extent, the whole state.

In D.98-12-081 and in the R.95-04-043 and I.95-04-044 proceedings, the Commission set four major objectives for the PEP:

- Public awareness of the change in dialing patterns and area code identification resulting from implementation of the overlay;
- Public understanding of how they will be affected by the change and the rationale behind the change;
- Public assurance that the cost and quality of service will not be adversely affected; and
- Promotion of positive acceptance by customers of the change.

To achieve those goals, the Commission required:

- The operation of a call center for consumers to obtain information regarding the overlay;
- Targeted paid advertising in the relevant zoned editions of major newspapers as well as newspapers targeted to ethnic communities;
- Bill insert notices to the adjacent area codes;
- Limited use of billboard and radio advertising; and
- Mailing of letters, brochures, and collateral materials to local government officials in the overlay and adjacent area codes.

In D.05-08-040, and in the R.95-04-043 and I.95-04-044 proceedings, the Commission required:

- The activities and standards previously required for the 310-area code and 408-area code overlay PEPs to achieve at least 70 percent public awareness level;
- Outreach to specifically target key governmental agencies, community leaders, chambers of commerce, major airports, hospitals, alarm providers, pay telephone providers and the state coordinator for E-911; and
- Special outreach to senior citizens, children, the disabled, and ethnic minorities including targeted newspaper, billboard, radio, and television advertising.

In D.16-07-014 and subsequent area code relief decisions, the Commission did not require the Industry to conduct a public awareness survey. The Commission reasoned that because the content of the adopted program would contain the same activities used in prior PEPs that have met the 70 percent minimum customer awareness requirement established in D.05-08-040, there would be little possibility that the 70 percent threshold would not be met with the same amount of effort put forth by the Industry. However, the Commission continued to require the Industry to achieve the previously established 70 percent minimum customer awareness requirement.<sup>28</sup> Telecommunications service providers must develop a detailed PEP that is consistent with those adopted in D.17-05-019. The Commission's Communications Division Director (CD Director) is authorized to oversee the finalization and implementation of the PEP and authorized to take all actions necessary, including requiring the Industry to achieve a 70 percent awareness level of the overlay in all major

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<sup>28</sup> D.16-07-014 approving boundary elimination overlay of 213/323 area codes; D.17-02-010 approving an overlay for the 916-area code; D.17-05-019 approving an overlay for the 805-area code; and D.17-04-027 approving boundary elimination overlay of 619/858 area codes.

customer and telephone user groups. Such actions may include additional educational efforts, obtaining outside professional services, reviewing, and approving all educational materials, overseeing the customer awareness assessment process.

As the Commission explained in D.17-05-019, the bureaucracy that a PEP creates is outweighed by the broader responsibility of oversight and accountability provided to the people of California.<sup>29</sup>

Therefore, as in previous decisions, the Commission will require a Task Force.<sup>30</sup> to implement the PEP. The Task Force shall consist of representatives from the service providers holding numbering resources in the 530-area code as of the effective date of this decision, as well as Commission staff to oversee the implementation. All service provider representatives on the Task Force should contribute to the implementation effort and those unwilling to participate shall be reported to the Commission. The Commission requires the Task Force to develop a reasonable means of delineating the division of responsibility for the public education activities to ensure adequate tracking and compliance.

The Task Force will be responsible for developing the materials and content of the PEP, maximizing the use of prior education efforts, and conforming to the requirements of this order. The PEP should contain the same activities used in prior programs that have achieved the 70 percent customer awareness requirement, which result in customer awareness, prior to exhaustion anticipated to occur during the third quarter of 2025. There is no requirement for

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<sup>29</sup> D.17-05-019 at 26-27. (*See also* Section 2(c).)

<sup>30</sup> The Task Force is a separate group from the Industry.

either the Industry or the Task Force to formally report the 70 percent customer awareness to the Commission.

Educational, outreach, and advertising materials should explain the type of area code change being implemented and the new dialing procedure and explain that the cost and quality of telephone service will not be adversely affected by the change. The materials should also address the permissive dialing period, the mandatory dialing period, the tasks consumers should do in preparation for the overlay, and the reasons for the area code change. The Task Force shall submit all public education outreach materials to the CD Director for review and approval.

Telecommunications service providers must develop a detailed PEP that is consistent with those adopted in D.17-05-019. (*See Attachment A to this decision.*) The CD Director is authorized to oversee the finalization and implementation of the PEP and authorized to take all actions necessary, to achieve a 70 percent awareness level of the overlay in all major customer and telephone user groups. Such actions may include additional educational efforts, obtaining outside professional services, reviewing, and approving all educational materials, overseeing the customer awareness assessment process.

## **7.2. Discussion**

As part of this application, NANPA attached Exhibit A, which includes the final minutes of the California 530 NPA Draft Petition Review Meeting via Conference Call Final Minutes (Minutes) held August 24, 2022.<sup>31</sup> These Minutes became final on September 14, 2022.<sup>32</sup> Within Exhibit B, Industry consensus is

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<sup>31</sup> A.22-00-016, Exhibit A.

<sup>32</sup> A.22-09-016, Exhibit B.

documented, stating that the Industry approval by the Commission of the requested implementation of the 530 overlay and approval of the proposed PEP should not require paid advertising.

As requested by NANPA in A.22-09-016, paid advertising is not necessary for the following reasons:

1. Mandatory 1+10-digit dialing is already in place;
2. There is no need for a permissive dialing period or customer education about 1+10-digit dialing.
  - a. Educating 530 customers about the new overlay area code is just an informational exercise. Californians are already very familiar with multiple area codes and mandatory 1+10-digit dialing;
  - b. The Industry is quite experienced in educating customers about the introduction of new overlay area codes when mandatory 10-digit or 1+10-digit dialing is already in place; and
  - c. For the 530 overlay with its simple informational messaging, paid advertising and a funded PEP is not necessary because mandatory 1+10-digit dialing is already in place. It would be virtually impossible to implement a funded PEP within the recommended 9-month implementation schedule.

The Commission agrees that a paid advertising effort is not necessary for the reasons explained above. However, the Commission recognizes the importance of customer notification. In addition to the news release issued by the Commission after the decision herein is issued (which is not considered a PEP news release), the following notifications regarding the 530 overlay shall be issued as follows: as noted in the proposed PEP, (1) one customer notice will run for two billing cycles; (2) one special outreach notice will be issued; and (3) three news releases will be issued, at the one-month mark, at the four-month mark,

and at the eight-and-a-half-month mark of the nine-month implementation period.

All the news releases will reach various media sources such as television stations, which in turn may announce the 530-area code overlay on their respective media platforms.

To further ensure customer awareness of the overlay, the Commission requires the Industry to provide to the Commission staff confirmation indicating that the above referenced announcements of the overlay are made on the local major broadcast television stations within the 530 area code. The confirmation shall be either in an e-mail or other written communication from the Industry, confirming that local major television stations have carried the announcement of the overlay. This notification shall be provided to the CD Director.

The Applicant does not believe special outreach notices, originally required pursuant to D.05-08-040, are necessary to groups including community-based organizations such as senior, consumer and other advocacy/activist organization; chambers of commerce, city councils, and other key government agencies; and alarm service providers. Out of an abundance of caution and to ensure the groups listed above are informed of the overlay requested herein, the Commission adds this previously authorized requirement for special outreach notices to the Applicant's proposed PEP plan in Exhibit B to A.22-08-009. The PEP plan adopted herein is attached to this decision as Appendix A.

The PEP requirements adopted for the 530-overlay implementation do not set a precedent for future area code relief implementations. The Commission may adopt different PEP requirements for future overlays.

### **7.3. Conclusion**

The Commission finds that the PEP plan attached as part of Attachment 1 to the Application is adopted, with the addition of issuing special outreach notices, as discussed above. This adopted PEP plan is attached as Attachment A to this decision. The completion dates listed in this plan shall be adjusted to reflect the actual exhaustion date, when determined. The overlay shall be implemented over a nine-month period.

The notifications discussed above comply with the requirements of a NPA overlay, given the reasons detailed above, specifically because mandatory 1+10-digit dialing education is already underway in the 530-area code due to the federal 988 implementation requirement.

### **8. Categorization and Need for Hearing**

In Resolution ALJ 176-3516, dated October 20, 2022, the Commission preliminarily categorized this application as ratesetting. The Commission received no protests, and this application is unopposed. Therefore, hearings were not held.

### **9. Comments on Proposed Decision**

Rule 14.6(c)(2) of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (Rules) provides that, in a proceeding in which the Proposed Decision grants the relief requested in the application, and there are no protests to the application, the Commission may waive public review or comment. Although public review is not required for this application, the Commission is mailing this decision for comments by the NANPA, or other interested persons, in accordance with Pub. Util. Code Section 311 and Rule 14.3.

No comments were filed on the Proposed Decision in this proceeding.

## **10. Assignment of Proceeding**

Darcie L. Houck is the assigned Commissioner and Seaneen Wilson and Suman Mathews are the assigned ALJs in this proceeding.

### **Findings of Fact**

1. Effective January 1, 2019, the FCC appointed Somos to replace Neustar, Inc. as the NANPA.
2. In 1997, it was determined that area code relief was necessary due to substantial growth in the 916 NPA. The Commission approved a geographic split of the 916 NPA, and the 530 NPA was introduced in November 1997.
3. On September 30, 2022, NANPA filed A.22-09-016 to request Commission authority to implement an additional all-services distributed area code overlay to relieve the 530-area code.
4. As of March 16, 2023, the 530-area code has 36 available prefixes remaining.
5. The 530 NPA is in the northeastern portion of California and covers all or portions of Alpine, Butte, Colusa, El Dorado, Glenn, Humboldt, Lassen, Modoc, Mono, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Solano, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Yolo, and Yuba counties. It serves communities including, but not limited to, Chico, Davis, El Dorado Hills, Oroville, Paradise, Placerville, Red Bluff, Redding, South Lake Tahoe, Truckee, Woodland, and Yuba City.
6. Pub. Util. Code Section 7936 requires the Commission to direct NANPA to obtain utilization data for any area code for which a change is proposed before approving any new area code.
7. NANPA utilized data from its April 2022 NRUF and NPA Exhaust Analysis (collectively, the April 2022 NRUF Report) to project that the 530-area code will be exhausted in the second quarter of 2026.

8. Due to an increase in CO code assignments in the 530 NPA, NANPA issued a “Delta NRUF” on June 13, 2022, which revised the estimated exhaust date to the third quarter of 2025.

9. Pub. Util. Code Section 7943(c) requires the Commission to perform a telephone utilization study and implement all reasonable telephone number conservation measures.

10. NANPA convened a relief planning meeting with Industry on August 24, 2022, to identify viable solutions to the forecast exhaust.

11. For the relief planning meeting, Industry followed regulations established by the FCC, this Commission, and telecommunications industry guidelines.

12. An additional all-services distributed area code overlay alternative is Industry’s recommended consensus solution to address the projected exhaustion of the 530-area code.

13. The additional all-services distributed area code overlay option will cause the least impact on residential and business customers, as well as emergency and government services.

14. For the 530-area code relief proceedings, a webcast was posted on the Commission website. The webcast replaced public meetings because in-person gatherings were not permitted due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

15. A PEP is needed to implement the 530-area code overlay.

16. In D.05-08-040, the Commission required that special outreach notices be issued.

17. The Commission issues a news release subsequent to issuance of this decision that is not part of the PEP plan.

18. The PEP does not need to include paid advertising because mandatory 1+10-digit dialing education is already in place in the 530-area code pursuant to D.16-07-014.

19. The PEP approved with Industry input requires the following notifications regarding the 530 overlay: (1) one customer notice will run for two billing cycles; (2) one special outreach notice will be issued; (3) three news releases will be issued, at the one-month mark, and the four-month mark, and at the eight-and-a-half-month mark of the nine-month implementation period.

20. The Industry is composed of current and prospective telecommunications carriers operating in, or considering operations within, the 530 NPA.

21. The Task Force is a separate group from the Industry. The Task Force consists of representatives from the service providers holding numbering resources in the 530-area code as of the effective date of this decision, as well as Commission staff to oversee the implementation.

22. There is no requirement for either the Industry or the Task Force to formally report the 70 percent customer awareness to the Commission.

23. The FCC holds full responsibility over all numbering issues but has delegated responsibilities surrounding area codes to the states. The Commission is responsible for proactively monitoring area code relief planning and oversees the integrity and competitive neutrality of the Industry relief planning process in California.

### **Conclusions of Law**

1. The NANPA and Industry complied with Pub. Util. Code Section 7936 and considered utilization data from the April 2022 NRUF and NPA Exhaust Analysis (collectively, the April 2022 NRUF Report), as modified by the June 2022 “Delta NRUF”, in forecasting the 530-area code exhaustion and

determining a consensus alternative to resolve the forecasted exhaust of the 530-area code.

2. The all-services overlay in the 530-area code should be completed by the forecasted exhaust of the 530-area code in the third quarter of 2025.

3. In accordance with Pub. Util. Code Section 7943(c), NANPA, Industry, and Commission staff considered all reasonable telephone number conservation and rationing measures in the 530-area code.

4. Since the statutory requirements of Pub. Util. Code Section 7936 and Section 7943(c) have been satisfied, the Commission should adopt the overlay option to resolve the forecasted exhaust for the 530-area code.

5. Pub. Util. Code Section 7931(e)(2) states that area code relief no longer requires public meetings, and that public meetings may be conducted at the discretion of the Commission but are not required.

6. The PEP plan as modified by this decision is consistent with the program requirements adopted in D.17-05-019, and prior Commission decisions D.08-04-059 and D.08-10-038, as modified in D.16-07-014.

7. The PEP attached as Attachment A to this decision should be adopted. This PEP is based on the PEP proposed in A.22-09-016, modified to include special outreach notices.

8. All the news releases will reach various media sources such as television stations, which in turn may announce the 530-area code overlay on their respective media platforms.

9. As part of the adopted PEP, the Industry should provide the CD Director with confirmation indicating that the above-referenced announcements of the overlay are made on the local major broadcast television stations within the 530-area code. The confirmation should be either an e-mail or other written

communication from the Industry, confirming that local major television stations have carried the announcement of the overlay.

10. Paid advertisement should not be required in the PEP.

11. The Task Force should be utilized to implement the PEP. The Task Force should include Commission staff and representatives from the service providers holding numbering resources in the 530-area code as of the effective date of this decision.

12. The Task Force should be responsible for developing the materials and content of the PEP, maximizing the use of prior education efforts, and conforming to the requirements of this order.

13. The Task Force should contribute to the implementation effort, and those unwilling to participate shall be reported to the Commission.

14. The CD Director should be authorized to oversee the finalization and implementation of the PEP and authorized to take all actions necessary, including requiring the Industry to achieve a 70 percent awareness level of the overlay in all major customer and telephone user groups.

15. An evidentiary hearing is not necessary.

16. It is appropriate to mail this decision for comments in accordance with Pub. Util. Code Section 311 and Rule 14.3.

17. This proceeding should be closed.

## **O R D E R**

**IT IS ORDERED** that:

1. The proposed all-services distributed area code overlay in the 530-area code is adopted.

2. The Task Force, comprised of California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) staff and representatives from the service providers holding

numbering resources in the 530-area code as of the effective date of this decision, shall implement the public education program. All service provider representatives on the Task Force shall contribute to the implementation effort and those unwilling to participate shall be reported to the Commission.

3. The all-services distributed area code overlay in the 530-area code shall be completed by the forecasted exhaust of the 530 area code in the third quarter of 2025.

4. The public education program (PEP), consistent with the PEP attached herein as Attachment A, is adopted for the all-services distributed area code overlay for the 530-area code. The PEP adopted herein is a modification of the PEP proposed in Application 22-09-016 in order to include special outreach notices.

5. The California Telecommunications Industry, which is composed of current and prospective telecommunications carriers operating in, or considering operations within, the 530 Numbering Plan Area, shall issue notifications regarding the 530 overlay as follows:

- (a) one customer notice that shall run for two billing cycles;
- (b) one special outreach notice shall be issued;
- (c) three news releases shall be issued, at the one-month mark, the four-month mark, and the eight-and-a-half-month mark of the nine-month implementation period; and
- (d) All the news releases will reach various media sources such as television stations, which in turn may announce the 530-area code overlay on their respective media platforms.

6. The public education program shall also include the requirement that the California Telecommunications Industry (Industry) provide to the California Public Utilities Commission's Communications Division Director, confirmation

indicating that the above referenced announcements of the overlay are made on the local major broadcast television stations within the 530-area code. The confirmation shall be either an e-mail or other written communication from the Industry confirming that local major broadcast television stations have carried the announcement of the overlay.

7. The California Public Utilities Commission's Communications Division Director is authorized to oversee the finalization and implementation of the public education program and authorized to take all actions necessary to achieve a 70 percent awareness level of the overlay in all major customer and telephone user groups.

8. Application 22-09-016 is closed.

This order is effective today.

Dated \_\_\_\_\_, at San Francisco, California.

# **ATTACHMENT A**

## **Public Education Program for 530 Area Code Relief**

(Completion dates shall be adjusted to reflect  
the actual exhaustion date, when determined.)

Public Education Program  
(PEP) for 530 Area Code  
Overlay Nine-Month  
Implementation Plan

Activity	Description	Target Audience	Shared or Individual Service Provider Effort	Completion Date	Recommended Due Date
1	Effective date of decision approving an overlay area code for relief of the existing 530 area code.	N/A	N/A	Date of Decision (DOD)	
2	Post-Commission meeting news release announcing the 530 area code overlay relief plan, and the new overlay area code. Post CPUC news release to CPUC website and social media platforms.	All customers	CPUC	DOD	
3	NANPA 530 area code overlay implementation meeting, and request for industry participation on Public Education Plan (PEP) task force. Determination of Implementation Start Date (ISD).	CPUC staff and industry	Industry and CPUC staff	6 weeks after DOD	
4	Implementation Start Date (ISD) - Start Implementation	industry	industry		4/30/2024
5	First news release announcing the 530 area code relief plan, the 530 area code geographic boundaries, and the new overlay area code for issue within the 530 area code and adjacent area codes, to media and key entities, including chambers of commerce and local governments. Post news release to CPUC website and social media platforms.	All customers	Industry and CPUC staff	1 months after ISD	5/30/2024
6	Provide to CPUC Communications Division email or written confirmation from the California Telecommunications Industry identifying media coverage (including major local broadcast television stations) of the 530 area code overlay.	CPUC staff	Industry	2 months after ISD	6/30/2024

7	530 area code overlay information distributed internally as a job aid for customer service representatives to answer customer questions. Representatives should not need to refer questions to the CPUC.	Customer service representatives	Individual service provider	2 months after ISD	6/30/2024
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Activity	Description	Target Audience	Shared or Individual Service Provider Effort	Completion Date	Recommended Due Date
8	Provide by email targeted letters with the information in the Customer Notification, along with PEP Task Force contact information, to (1) community based organizations and key government agencies, including senior, consumer and other advocacy/activist organizations, chambers of commerce, city councils, and other key government agencies, (2) alarm service providers, (3) public safety organizations and PSAPs, providers, (4) telephone directory publishers, and (5) California Relay Services throughout the 530 area code. Request that these organizations distribute the information to their members.	Senior, consumer and other advocacy/activist organizations, chambers of commerce, city councils and other key government agencies, alarm service providers, public safety organizations and PSAPs, telephone directory publishers, and California Relay Services	Industry	2 months after ISD	6/30/2024
9	530 area code overlay update to industry websites.	All customers	Individual service provider	3 months after ISD	7/30/2024
10	Second news release reminding the public of the 530 area code relief plan, the 530 area code geographic boundaries, and the new overlay area code for issue within the 530 area code and adjacent area codes. Post CPUC news release to CPUC website and social media platforms.	All customers	Industry	4 months after ISD	8/30/2024
11	Provide to CPUC Communications Division email or written confirmation from the California Telecommunications Industry identifying media coverage (including major local broadcast television stations) of the 530 area code overlay.	Industry	Industry	5 months after ISD	9/30/2024
12	Third news release reminding the public of the 530 area code relief plan, the 530 area code geographic boundaries, and the new overlay area code for issue within the 530 area code and adjacent area codes. Post CPUC news release to CPUC website and social media platforms.	All customers	Industry and CPUC staff	8.5 months after ISD	1/15/2025

13	Provide to CPUC Communications Division third email or written confirmation from the California Telecommunications Industry identifying media coverage (including local broadcast television stations) of the 530 area code overlay.	Industry	Industry	9.5 months after ISD	2/15/2025
14	Published Directories: Add information on cover to alert 530 area code customers about the new overlay area code	All customers	Individual service provider	9 months after ISD	1/31/2025

Activity	Description	Target Audience	Shared or Individual Service Provider Effort	Completion Date	Recommended Due Date
15	Single customer notification runs for two bill cycles: Announce the 530 area code overlay, indicate the affected areas, and the new area code effective date.	All customers	Individual service provider	9 months from ISD	1/31/2025
16	New NPA/ Area Code effective and implementation completed			9 months from ISD	1/31/2025

(END OF ATTACHMENT A)