

Decision 26-10-057 October 29, 2026

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Lawanna Jake,

Complainant,

vs.

Pacific Bell d/b/a AT&T California
(U1001C),

Defendant.

(ECP)

Case 25-09-017

DECISION DENYING RELIEF AND DISMISSING COMPLAINT

Summary

The decision denies the requested relief and dismisses the expedited complaint on the grounds that Complainant has failed to establish that Defendant violated an applicable rule, law, or Commission order.

This proceeding is closed.

1. Factual and Procedural Background

On September 18, 2025, Lawanna Jake (Ms. Jake or Complainant) filed the instant complaint against Pacific Bell d/b/a AT&T California (AT&T or Defendant). Complainant alleges that she has been without landline or internet service at her residence since August 2024, which resulted in relocating her

mother to another residence. On November 6, 2025, Defendant filed an answer to the complaint.

On February 9, 2026, an evidentiary hearing was held. On February 10, 2026, Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) Sasha Goldberg issued a ruling requesting additional information and memorializing the hearing. On February 17, 2026, AT&T filed a response to the ALJ's ruling (AT&T Response). On April 24, 2026, ALJ Golberg issued a ruling ordering updated billing information. On April 30, 2026, AT&T filed a response to the ALJ's ruling on updated billing information.

On August 3, 2026, the proceeding was reassigned from ALJ Golberg to ALJ Debbie Chiv. On August 18, 2026, ALJ Chiv issued a ruling seeking a joint response on the status of the proceeding. On September 1, 2026, AT&T and Ms. Jake filed a Joint Response to the ALJ's ruling on the status of the proceeding (Joint Response).

2. Complainant's Contentions

Complainant contends that beginning in August 2024, AT&T stopped providing landline and internet service to her residence.¹ Ms. Jake states that although she was not receiving service, she was being billed for the service. Ms. Jake states that her elderly mother also lived at the residence and that Ms. Jake used the landline and Wi-Fi-enabled cameras to monitor her mother. Without internet or landline service at her residence, Ms. Jake contends that this has been a safety concern for her mother, that the connection issues have caused financial strain, and that she was forced to relocate her mother. Ms. Jake asserts that AT&T has stated that the power outage was due to copper theft.

¹ Complaint at 3.

Ms. Jake requests the following relief: (1) to have her landline reconnected with a dial tone, and (2) to have her internet reconnected without interruption.

In the Joint Response, Ms. Jake asserts that she still does not have landline service.² In response to the offer outlined by AT&T in the Joint Response, Ms. Jake contends that she did not receive AT&T's offer from the February 9, 2026 hearing in writing.

3. Defendant's Contentions

Defendant contends that Ms. Jake's internet and wireline service was disrupted by copper theft and vandalism.³ AT&T asserts that it adjusted her bills from the beginning of the outage and will continue to issue bill credits until services are restored. AT&T contends that Ms. Jake was offered alternative products but declined these products. AT&T states that it is working diligently to restore service, but that "restoration requires extensive work due to the significant damage caused by the copper theft and vandalism."⁴

AT&T asserts that the Commission lacks jurisdiction over broadband service. AT&T denies that Ms. Jake is entitled to any relief and requests the complaint be dismissed.

In the February 17, 2026 AT&T Response, AT&T states that it offered Ms. Jake the following at the hearing: (1) temporarily providing Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP) service until AT&T can provide landline service, (2) credits to Ms. Jake's monthly bill to receive the same price for VoIP as she would have paid for landline service, and (3) an additional \$10 in monthly credits to VoIP service

² Joint Response at 1.

³ Answer at 1.

⁴ *Id.*

so that VoIP service would cost \$10 less than the lifeline service rate.⁵ In the Joint Response, AT&T states that it outlined this offer in its February 17, 2026 AT&T Response but that Ms. Jake did not accept the offer.

In the Joint Response, AT&T memorialized a timeline of events, as summarized below:

1. September 19, 2024: AT&T became aware of an outage caused by copper theft that affected many customers, including Ms. Jake. AT&T determined there was no working copper cables available to the service terminal, which means there was no available copper wiring to Ms. Jake's home.
2. November 5, 2024: AT&T asserts that Ms. Jake initially contacted AT&T regarding the outage and was told the outage was due to copper cable theft.
3. July 3, 2025: As multiple cable thefts occurred in the same area as Ms. Jake's home in the same time period, AT&T grouped the outages under one repair ticket. Work on the repair ticket began in July 2025.
4. August 7, 2025: AT&T identified that the cable damage that caused Ms. Jake's outage was inside a manhole that feeds the serving area interface.
5. November 4-5, 2025: AT&T sent a technician to Ms. Jake's residence but she was not home. AT&T communicated to Ms. Jake as to the location of the damage. AT&T identified a working pair of fiber and was able to connect broadband over copper to Ms. Jake's home to restore internet service and VoIP. Ms. Jake declined the VoIP service.
6. November 8, 2025: Ms. Jake's internet service was restored.

⁵ AT&T Response at 2.

7. November 19, 2025: Another copper theft outage was reported in Ms. Jake's neighborhood and AT&T dispatched a repair crew.
8. November 20-December 31, 2025: Additional theft outages occurred in Ms. Jake's neighborhood that expanded the scope of the cable repair.
9. February 17, 2026: AT&T estimated that Ms. Jake's wireline service would be repaired by April 3, 2026.

In the Joint Response, AT&T states that on April 23, 2026, AT&T reported to Ms. Jake via email that her landline service issue was resolved. However, due to additional copper thefts, Ms. Jake "has experienced intermittent landline service interruptions since that time."⁶ AT&T contends that on August 26, 2026, it restored Ms. Jake's landline service "using a temporary restoration method that will require a permanent restoration solution that is in progress. As of the date of this filing, Ms. Jake's landline service is working."⁷

AT&T contends that additional interruptions to Ms. Jake's landline service may occur during completion of the permanent solution, and that the current estimated completion date for the area-wide resolution is October 9, 2026; however, this is not a guaranteed completion date. AT&T asserts that it applied service credits to Ms. Jake's account to cover landline services through September 12, 2026.

4. Discussion

In a complaint proceeding, the Public Utilities Code requires that a complaint allege, "any act or thing done or omitted to be done by any public

⁶ Joint Response at 2.

⁷ *Id.*

utility ... in violation or claimed to be in violation, of any provision of law or of any order or rule of the commission.”⁸ The burden of proof in a complaint proceeding is on the Complainant to demonstrate that Defendant has violated an applicable provision of law, rule, or Commission order.

Ms. Jake’s landline and internet services have been disrupted since on or around August 2024 due to multiple copper cable thefts and subsequent restoration work in her neighborhood. AT&T began repairs to restore Ms. Jake’s landline and internet services in July 2025 but additional copper cable thefts led to further disruptions. For example, AT&T states that on November 8, 2025, Ms. Jake’s internet service was restored but from November 19 to December 31, 2025, additional copper thefts were reported in Ms. Jake’s neighborhood, which expanded the scope of the cable repair. AT&T states that it informed Ms. Jake on April 23, 2026 that her landline service was restored but additional copper theft outages and restoration work led to more service disruptions. AT&T states that on August 26, 2026, Ms. Jake’s landline service was restored using a temporary restoration method and that her landline service was working as of September 1, 2026. AT&T asserts that the estimated completion date for area-wide restoration is October 9, 2026.

While the Commission recognizes Ms. Jake’s frustration that her landline service has been disrupted numerous times over the past two years due to several copper thefts in her neighborhood, the Commission does not find that Ms. Jake has demonstrated that AT&T has violated an applicable rule, order, or law. AT&T undertook repair work in Ms. Jake’s neighborhood on several

⁸ Public Utilities Code § 1702.

occasions following reports of the copper cable theft outages. AT&T offered Ms. Jake VoIP service on November 5, 2025 and at the February 2026 hearing as an alternative until restoration could be completed; however, Ms. Jake declined VoIP service. AT&T provided service credits to Ms. Jake's account to cover landline services billed through September 12, 2026. AT&T states that area-wide restoration is expected to be completed by October 9, 2026. The Commission encourages AT&T to keep Ms. Jake apprised of any developments in the area-wide restoration of her landline service.

The Commission concludes that Ms. Jake has failed to meet her burden of proof to demonstrate that AT&T has violated any applicable rule, law, tariff, or Commission order. A complaint must allege, "...any act or thing done or omitted to be done by any public utility ... in violation or claimed to be in violation, of any provision of law or of any order or rule of the commission."⁹ Ms. Jake has failed to state a claim upon which relief may be granted. Accordingly, the complaint is dismissed.

5. Assignment of Proceeding

Christine Harada is the assigned Commissioner, and Debbie Chiv is the assigned Administrative Law Judge and Presiding Officer, in this proceeding.

6. Waiver of Comment Period

Pursuant to Rule 14.7(b), the 30-day public review and comment period required by Section 311 of the Public Utilities Code and the opportunity to file comments on the proposed decision is not applicable in Expedited Complaint Proceedings. Accordingly, this decision was placed on the Commission's agenda directly.

⁹ Public Utilities Code § 1702.

O R D E R

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. Complainant fails to state a claim upon which relief may be granted and the requested relief is denied.
2. Case 25-09-017 is dismissed.
3. Case 25-09-017 is closed.

This order is effective today.

Dated October 29, 2026, at San Francisco, California.

JOHN REYNOLDS

President

DARCIE L. HOUCK

KAREN DOUGLAS

MATTHEW BAKER

CHRISTINE HARADA

Commissioners