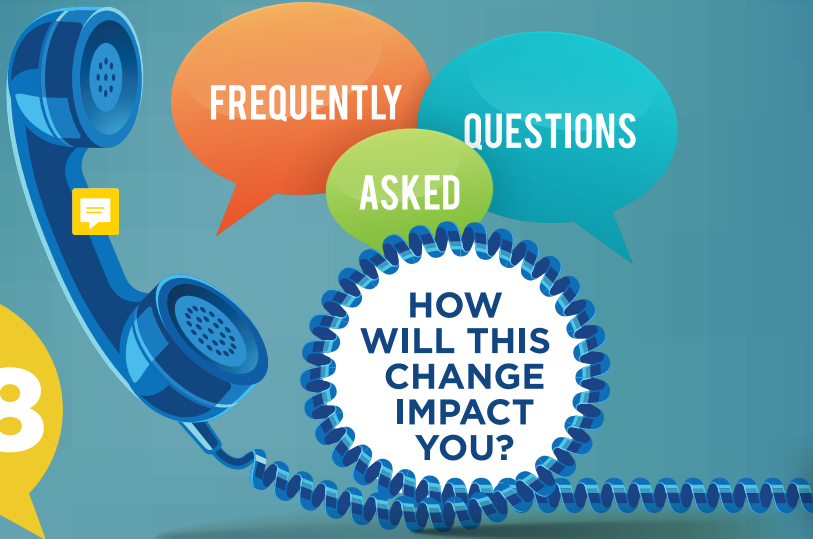


658



- You will **not** have to change your current numbers if you are an existing customer.
- With early notification, this change will pose little or no economic burden on existing businesses.
- Directory costs may increase to re-format and print 10-digit numbers.
- If you are a business operator, you may have to revise your printed materials (e.g., stationery, business cards, labels, bills) or signage (commercial or public display signs).
- You will need to re-programme/ update your equipment that stores and analyses telephone numbers, e.g., PBXs, cellular phones, modems, speed call lists, alarm company automatic diallers, and other automatic diallers, voice messaging systems and Call Detail Recording (CDR) Software.
- Businesses will also have to notify customers of any changes to their numbers, if assigned numbers under the new area code.

For further information, contact the OUR at: nparelief@our.org.jm,
Tel: 876-968-6053 or check our website: www.our.org.jm



OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION



**Regulating
Utilities for the
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FREQUENTLY

QUESTIONS

ASKED

On May 31, 2018 Jamaica will have a new area code '658' to supplement the existing '876' code. As a result this will move us from the current seven (7) digit to a mandatory ten (10) digit dialling for local calls.



**FREQUENTLY
ASKED
QUESTIONS**

Q WHAT IS NUMBERING PLAN AREA (NPA) RELIEF?

A When the available numbering resources within an NPA are almost exhausted, provisions must be made to boost the supply of those resources. Providing relief to such an NPA normally means assigning an additional NPA code to the area; this is done through a process called NPA Relief. This ensures that there is an adequate supply of telephone numbers for the local telecommunications industry.

Q WHAT NPA RELIEF METHOD WILL BE USED IN JAMAICA?

A The **standard overlay method** is used in Jamaica. Under this method, an additional area code is opened to serve the same geographic area currently served by the existing area code. This method is favoured by telecommunications carriers and service providers due to cost considerations (e.g., no number changes in Operations Support Systems (OSSs), no need to reprogram wireless devices).

Q HOW WILL THE INTRODUCTION OF 10-DIGIT DIALLING FOR LOCAL CALLS CHANGE HOW I MAKE PHONE CALLS?

A When an additional area code is activated within an area, mandatory 10-digit dialling (the 3-digit area code + the last seven digits of the phone number) will be required for all local calls within that area. This is so because the last seven digits of a number currently being used will no longer identify a unique address as those digits will be replicated under the new area code.

Q WHEN WILL THE NEW AREA CODE COME INTO EFFECT?

A The new area code will come into effect as at 12:01 a.m. May 31, 2018.

Q WILL I HAVE TO CHANGE MY PHONE NUMBER BECAUSE OF THE NEW AREA CODE?

A Not at all. You will not be required to change your number. The only adjustment is that when a person is calling you from within Jamaica that person will have to dial '876' before your current 7-digit phone number.

Q WILL COSTS TO MAKE CALLS INCREASE?

A No, the introduction of 10-digit dialling will not result in an increase in call charges.

Q ONCE THE NEW AREA CODE IS INTRODUCED, WILL I IMMEDIATELY HAVE TO BEGIN USING THE 10-DIGIT DIALLING FORMAT?

A There will be a permissive dialling period, to give phone users enough time to familiarise themselves with the new calling method. During that period, both 7-digit and 10-digit dialling will be allowed. However, once the permissive dialling period has ended, only 10-digit dialling will be allowed.

Q WHEN IS THE PERIOD FOR PERMISSIVE DIALLING?

A The permissive dialling period starts on 12:01 a.m. May 31, 2018 and ends on 12:01 a.m. October 30, 2018.

As of October 30, mandatory 10-digit dialling will begin.

Overall Impact

- NPA relief will not affect the dialling plan for calls terminating outside of the Jamaican NPAs. You will still need to use the prefixes ('1' and '011') applicable to your call destination when dialling the relevant numbers (including non-local toll-free numbers).
- The '1' prefix will not be required to make local calls (e.g., you will dial 876-968-6053 to call the OUR from your local phone number).
- The '1' prefix will no longer be needed when dialling local toll-free numbers (888-xxx-xxxx)
- The introduction of an additional area code will move the country from the current standardized 7-digit to a mandatory 10-digit dialling for all local calls. Currently, 10-digit dialling for local calls is possible on the mobile networks.

