



- 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, devices, etc., 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](mailto:nparelief@our.org.jm),  
Tel: 876-968-6053 or check our website: [www.our.org.jm](http://www.our.org.jm)



OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION

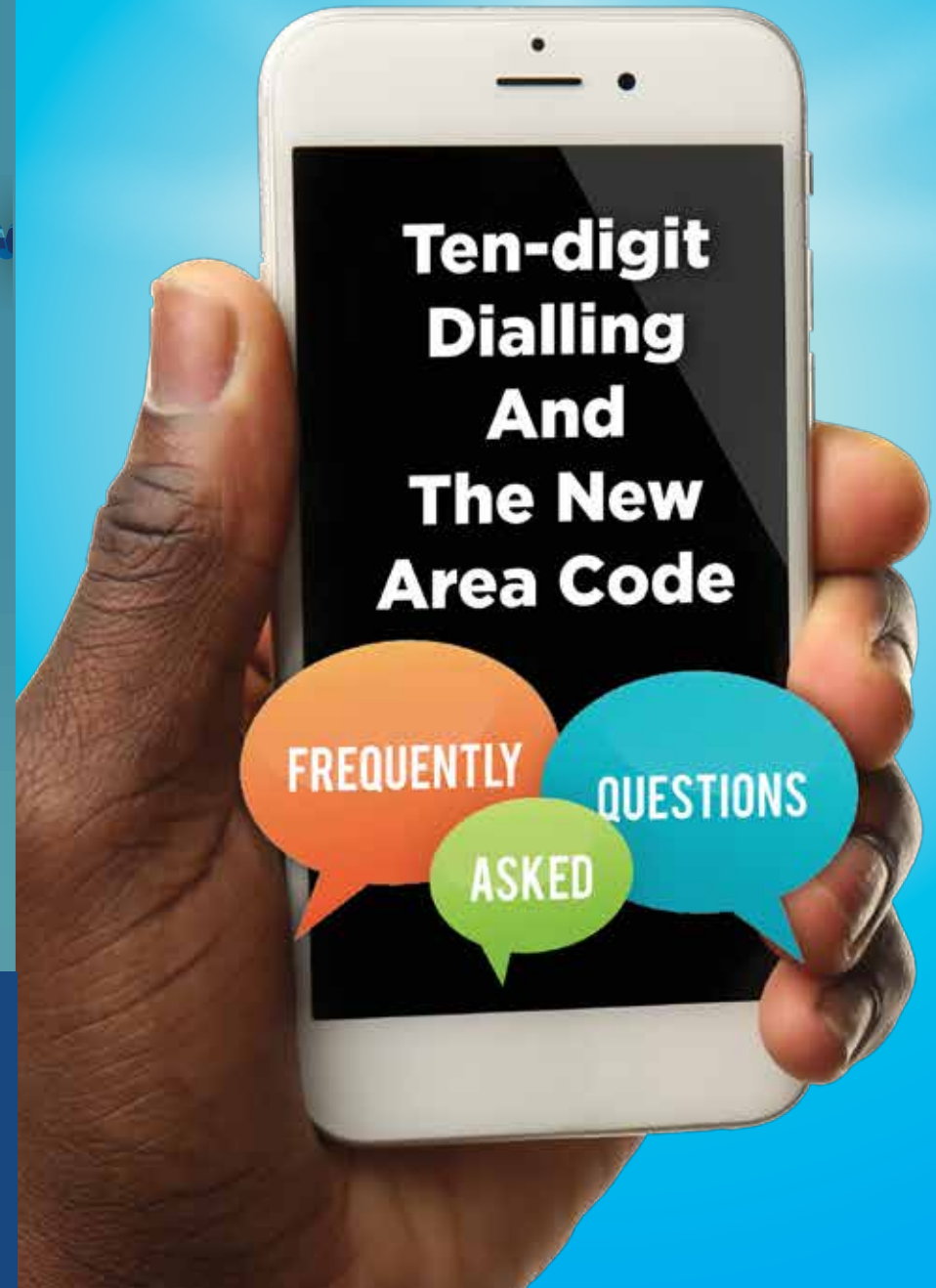


**Regulating  
Utilities for the  
Benefit of All.**

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OFFICE OF UTILITIES REGULATION



Jamaica's '876' Numbering Plan Area – NPA (or area code) was activated on Thursday, May 1, 1997. It was thought then that the area code would provide enough numbering capacity for the next 20 years of demand growth.

Jamaica will introduce a new area code to supplement the existing '876' numbering space and, consequently, move from the current standardized 7-digit to a mandatory 10-digit dialling for all local calls.



FREQUENTLY  
QUESTIONS  
ASKED

### WHAT IS NUMBERING PLAN AREA (NPA) RELIEF?

When the available numbering resources within an NPA is 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.

### WHAT NPA RELIEF METHOD WILL BE USED IN JAMAICA?

The **standard overlay method** will be used. Under this method, an additional area code will be 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).

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

When an additional area code is activated within an area, mandatory 10-digit dialling (new 3-digit area code or the existing 876 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.

### WILL COSTS TO MAKE CALLS INCREASE?

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

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

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.

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

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. Please use only the 10-digit dialling format once the new area code is introduced.

### WHO WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE OVERSIGHT OF THE INTRODUCTION OF THE ADDITIONAL AREA CODE IN JAMAICA?

The introduction of the additional area code will be overseen by the Office of Utilities Regulation (**OUR**). Under the Telecommunications Act, the OUR has full responsibility for the assignment, usage and control of the new area code.

### WHAT HAS THE OUR DONE SO FAR TOWARDS IMPLEMENTING THE NEW AREA CODE?

The **OUR** has had consultations with the telecommunications industry as well as discussed issues relating to subscribers, network operators and other industry concerns. The **OUR** has placed a formal request to the North American Numbering Plan Administration (NANPA) for the assignment of an additional area code, and has commenced the NPA implementation process.

The **OUR** is the NPA Relief Planning Coordinator, with input from the NANPA, and moderates industry relief planning meetings, fairly and impartially, ensuring that all participants have a chance to express their views.

## 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 still 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.

