

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**OUR Invites Public Comments on Changes to Porting Guidelines**

**(KINGSTON, Jamaica; 2021 December 9):** The Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) is seeking the public's input on its proposals to change the guidelines for the porting of telephone numbers (that is, when customers switch telecommunications service providers but keep their numbers).

The OUR recently issued a Consultation document to review the existing Industry Number Portability Guidelines (INPG). The INPG provides the guiding principles to manage the processes and activities required when a number is being ported. The review of the INPG is the first of a three-phased process to review the number portability framework. Phases two (2) and three (3) will focus on the Telecommunications (Number Portability) Rules, 2014 (the Rules) and the Number Portability Code of Practice respectively.

The review of the INPG considers, among other things, the need to adjust to the evolution of market dynamics while retaining and improving safeguards for consumers, as well as complaints received by the OUR regarding irregularities in the handling of porting requests by telecoms service operators which contravened the INPG and the Rules. Some of the irregularities discovered by the OUR through its investigation of the complaints included:

- The handling of porting requests by service providers' representatives at locations outside of designated points of sale (POS);
- Incidences of multiple ports by the same individual;
- Incidences of unsigned Porting Request Forms (PRFs);
- Lack of identification information on the PRFs; and
- Instances of identification not matching the customer's information on the PRFs.

Proposals in the Consultation document include amending the INPG to:

- Make it clear that the completed PRF must include the name and signature of the service provider's representative undertaking the validation process and the specific location at which the porting process was initiated;
- Require the inclusion of a set of mandatory information that must be included on the PRF;
- Increase the period for retention of customer porting transaction details;
- Make it clear that the PRF may either be hard copy or represented as a soft copy;
- Outline a transparent Repatriation Process for telephone numbers. Presently, there is insufficient information to clearly outline the process of repatriation to protect customers and service providers;
- Permit a porting request to be initiated at additional locations designated by the service provider that is outside of the prescribed POS; and
- Remove any ambiguity regarding the definition of POS.

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Interested persons are invited to submit responses by 2021 December 28 to [NumberPortabilityContacts@our.org.jm](mailto:NumberPortabilityContacts@our.org.jm).

The OUR's Consultation Document on the **Review of the Number Portability Framework Phase One** can be found on the OUR's website: [www.our.org.jm](http://www.our.org.jm).

### **BACKGROUND**

Number portability covers both fixed and mobile networks. The OUR has regulatory oversight of the number portability administration.

Since the implementation of number portability in Jamaica in 2015, the local telecommunications landscape has experienced robust competition. Service providers' offers now include diversified sets of value-added services with competitive tariff packages to potentially entice subscribers to switch to the network offering the best package to suit their needs.

The existing framework that governs the operations of number portability in Jamaica has not been reviewed since its implementation. As the market dynamics change over the years, the framework must be reviewed to continually improve the process. Further, with the recent reports of unauthorised porting of mobile numbers, the regime is at a critical juncture requiring the implementation of additional consumer safeguards and other measures to minimise instances of fraudulent/inappropriate porting and ensure that the efficiency and integrity of the regime are uncompromised.

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