

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**OUR Assigns a Central Office Code under 658 Area Code**

**(KINGSTON, Jamaica; 2023 May 17):** The Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR) recently assigned a Central Office Code (a number block which contains 10-thousand telephone numbers) under Jamaica’s new area code, “658”. A Central Office Code is the first three digits which are dialled after the area code when seeking to place a telephone call. The OUR assigns Central Office Codes to telecommunications service providers who then distribute the telephone numbers within a particular code to customers, as needed. The recent assignment became necessary as the OUR has run out of Codes to assign under the 876 area code.

This means that ten-digit 658 telephone numbers will now become available to the public once telecommunications providers have fully allocated the numbers available to them under the 876 area code. The last seven digits of those telephone numbers may match the last seven digits of numbers previously assigned by operators under the “876” area code.

The OUR is reminding everyone, including business operators and advertisers, to ensure that the ten-digit format is used in the publishing and displaying of all local mobile and landline numbers using the correct area code for each number i.e. “876” or “658”. Persons are also urged to adjust the way they record or store phone numbers, to make it clear which area code is applicable to their telephone numbers.

Persons are also reminded that ten-digit dialling extends to local toll-free numbers. Therefore, for all local toll-free numbers, the “1” before the numbers should be removed. An example of this is OUR’s local toll-free number, which is displayed as 888-CALL-OUR (888-2255-687).

**BACKGROUND**

The OUR is responsible, under the Telecommunication Act, for the administration and management of numbering resources in Jamaica and for ensuring that sufficient telephone numbers are available to satisfy the needs of telecommunications carriers and service providers. This includes the assignment of Central Office Codes to telecommunications providers.

Accordingly, and pursuant to its **Determination Notice: Document No. 2014/TEL/011/DET.003 – Relief Implementation for NPA (Area Code) “876”**, the OUR introduced an additional area code, “658”, to supplement the supply of numbers provided under the existing area code “876”. Mandatory 10-digit dialling was implemented on 2019 March 31 following the 2018 May 30 introduction of the new area code, “658”.