

**Before the
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of)	
)	
Telephone Number Portability)	CC Docket No. 95-116
)	
Numbering Resource Optimization)	CC Docket No. 99-200

ORDER

Adopted: September 14, 2018

Released: September 14, 2018

By the Chief, Wireline Competition Bureau:

1. On September 10 and 11, 2018, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Department of Homeland Security, announced that the President had signed emergency declarations for North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia due to Hurricane Florence.¹ Hurricane Florence is hitting the East Coast, with life-threatening wind, storm surge, and rainfall expected.² It is anticipated to cause significant damage in the areas within its path, and may result in significant property damage and personal injury. Hurricane Florence is also expected to cause substantial telephone service outages in all areas in its path. To assist telephone subscribers in those areas, we grant, on our own motion, a temporary waiver of the Commission's telephone number "aging" rule. Specifically, we waive section 52.15(f)(ii), which says that service providers may only age telephone numbers that have been disconnected for up to 90 days before assigning them to other customers.³

2. There is good cause for this waiver, as required by Section 1.3 of our rules.⁴ Assisting residential subscribers who are dealing with the effects of a hurricane or major storm is in the public interest and thus warrants a temporary waiver of section 52.15(f)(ii) of the Commission's rules. Waiver of section 52.15(f)(ii) will allow service providers in the affected areas, upon customers' request, to disconnect temporarily customers' telephone service to avoid billing issues, and then reinstate the customers' same numbers when service is reconnected. This waiver applies to all companies that provide service in areas of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia affected by Hurricane Florence. This waiver is in effect immediately and for a nine-month period, expiring on June 13, 2019. This waiver of

¹ See FEMA, President Donald J. Trump Signs Emergency Declaration for North Carolina (Sept. 10, 2018), <https://www.fema.gov/news-release/2018/09/10/president-donald-j-trump-signs-emergency-declaration-north-carolina> (last visited Sept. 12, 2018); see also FEMA, President Donald J. Trump Signs Emergency Declaration for South Carolina (Sept. 10, 2018), <https://www.fema.gov/news-release/2018/09/10/president-donald-j-trump-signs-emergency-declaration-south-carolina> (last visited Sept. 12, 2018); see also FEMA, President Donald J. Trump Signs Emergency Declaration for Virginia (Sept. 11, 2018), <https://www.fema.gov/news-release/2018/09/11/president-donald-j-trump-signs-emergency-declaration-virginia> (last visited Sept. 12, 2018).

² NOAA, National Hurricane Center, Hurricane Florence, <https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/#Florence> (last visited Sept. 12, 2018).

³ 47 C.F.R. § 52.15(f)(ii) ("Aging numbers are disconnected numbers that are not available for assignment to another end user or customer for a specified period of time. Numbers previously assigned to residential customers may be aged for no more than 90 days.")

⁴ 47 CFR § 1.3. This rule provides that "[a]ny provision of the rules may be waived by the Commission on its own motion or on petition if good cause therefore is shown." *Id.*

the aging rule will also apply to residential customers in other areas for which the President declares states of emergency, either due to Hurricane Florence or to later storms during the 2018 hurricane season. These waivers will expire 270 days from the date the President declares a state of emergency for the area affected by the storm.

3. Also, because of substantial damage to telecommunications systems we expect to be caused by Hurricane Florence to areas within its path, we recognize that customers in the affected areas may wish to port numbers to locations outside their rate centers. To facilitate their customers' continued access to telecommunications service following the hurricane, we encourage service providers to port telephone numbers geographically outside a rate center to the extent it is technically feasible. We also encourage all service providers in the areas affected by Hurricane Florence and later storms to waive call forwarding, message center, and voicemail service charges for affected customers, to the extent lawfully permitted, until the customers' service is restored.

4. Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED, pursuant to sections 4(i), 251(b)(2), and 251(e) of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, 47 U.S.C. §§ 154(i), 251(b)(2) and 251(e), and sections 0.291 and 1.3 of the Commission's rules, 47 CFR §§ 0.291, 1.3, that section 52.15(f)(ii), 47 C.F.R. § 52.15(f)(ii), is waived to the extent herein described herein.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

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