

Tuesday, February 14, 2006

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T.R.A. DOCKET ROOM



Tennessee Regulatory Authority
Attn: Chief Darlene Standley
460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, TN 37243-0505

RE: TNAIRS petition for statewide 2-1-1 coverage, Docket No. 04-00342

Dear Chief Standley,

Here are the answers to questions posed in your letter dated February 9, 2006. Thank you for considering the TNAIRS petition for statewide coverage and please let me know if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Doug Fluegel
State 2-1-1 Director
615-780-2430

1. When will 2-1-1 petition for the counties listed in the TNAIRS petition but not currently assigned by the TRA?

- a. Nashville is submitting its Amended Petition on February 14, 2006. This includes the following counties: Benton, Campbell, Chester, Clay, Cumberland, Decatur, DeKalb, Fentress, Giles, Hardin, Henry, Hickman, Humphreys, Jackson, Lawrence, Lewis, Lincoln, Macon, Marshall, Overton, Perry, Pickett, Putnam, Smith, Van Buren, Warren, White, Wayne, Claiborne, Cocke, Hamblen, Hancock, Monroe, Morgan, and Scott.
- b. Memphis is mailing their Amended Petition on February 14, 2006, directly to the TRA. This includes the following counties: Lake and Obion.
- c. Chattanooga is mailing their Amended Petition on February 14, 2006, directly to the TRA. This includes the following counties: Marion, Grundy, Sequatchie, Bledsoe, Meigs, Bradley, McMinn, and Polk.
- d. These three Amended Petitions should take care of all counties listed in our plan for statewide development that are not currently assigned by the TRA.

2. Will every citizen with phone service in the State of Tennessee be able to access an information & referral call center by dialing 2-1-1 once the statewide plan is completed? Yes. All Tennessee citizens with phone access through a local phone company will be able to dial 2-1-1 from their home phone. However, several barriers to dialing still exist and will probably take years to address:

- a. Business phones block N11 numbers. Companies who make phone equipment (like Nortel or Avaya) block phone systems from N11 dialing from the factory because some N11 numbers charge for their service (like 4-1-1). It is then the buyer's responsibility to remove the block. We have attempted to get the word out to businesses in current 2-1-1 coverage areas via the United Way's company campaigns, chambers of commerce, and professional organizations.
- b. Some payphones work, some don't. It is difficult to find people at many pay phone companies who understand how the phones are programmed and how to remove the block. A mailing by the TRA when 2-1-1 is statewide would certainly help. I know the TRA has sent mailings in the past but I think payphone

companies had difficulty understanding if their phones were in an activated 2-1-1 area or not.

- c. Cell phones can be expensive and difficult to program for 2-1-1. Most cell phone companies will allow 2-1-1 dialing at no charge to the 2-1-1 call center if the programming is done at the switch level. To program at the tower level, there are expensive options available. There are a few cell phone companies who have not responded to requests to activate 2-1-1 service.

3. Please provide the projected completion date of the statewide plan for information and referral services 2-1-1 dialing. The

completion date depends on the date funding is approved. From that date, TNAIRS will begin the process of ordering and installing equipment, activating central offices at ILEC's and CLEC's throughout the state, and database development. Phone service should be available within six weeks from the date funding is approved.

Database development will likely take longer but 2-1-1 calls can be answered while database development is still in progress.

- a. Equipment installation: BellSouth Equipment believes they can have the equipment ordered and installed in 5-8 days.
- b. Central office switching: BellSouth Communications believes they can complete the central office switching in 3-4 weeks. BellSouth is the largest ILEC in the state and has the most central offices to program. It is reasonable to assume that all ILECs can complete switching within this time frame.
- c. Database development: Resource identification, data entry, and database software installation could take longer than 6 weeks but 2-1-1 calls can be answered during this process.