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MEMORANDUM

TO: All Local Exchange Carriers

FROM: Telecommunications Staff

DATE: September 1, 2022

RE: Telecommunications Relay Service Rule

The Georgia Public Service Commission recently adopted Commission Rule 515-12-1-.38 Telecommunications Relay Service (attached). The rule was filed with the Secretary of State on August 30, 2022 and will become effective on September 19, 2022.

The rule includes two significant changes from the current regulations and process:

1. Beginning in October 2022, the surcharge should appear on customer bills as **“Georgia Telecommunications Relay Service Fund”** or **“Georgia TRS Fund.”**

Previously authorized billing language such as “Dual Party Relay for hearing/speech impaired” is not compliant with the new rule and should no longer be used.

2. The process for contributions will shift from monthly to quarterly beginning in the fourth quarter (October-December) of 2022. The purpose of this change is to reduce regulatory burden and to synchronize the TRS contribution process with the Universal Access Fund contribution process, which is also quarterly.

Please note that the surcharge should still be collected on a monthly basis from customers. Only the remission of funds to the GPSC is changing to quarterly.

September 2022 will be the final month that funds are remitted monthly to the GPSC. Beginning in the fourth quarter of 2022, TRS surcharges collected from customers should be held until January 2023. The first contributions under the new quarterly process will be due January 30, 2023. A new TRS contribution form will be available at that time on the GPSC's website at <https://psc.ga.gov/utilities/telecommunications/>.

Questions?:

Please direct all questions regarding the TRS rule to the Staff of the Commission's Telecommunications Unit via email at telecomstaff@psc.ga.gov or telephone at (404) 651-9402.

Rule 515-12-1-.38. Telecommunications Relay Service

- (1) **Monthly Maintenance Surcharge.** All local exchange telephone companies in this state, except those operated by telephone membership corporations, shall impose a monthly maintenance surcharge on all residential and business local exchange access facilities. “Exchange access facility” means the access from a particular telephone subscriber’s premise to the telephone system of a local exchange telephone company. “Exchange access facility” includes local exchange company provided access lines, private branch exchange trunks, and centrex network access registers, all as defined by tariffs of telephone companies as approved by the Commission or where approval is not required as published online on the telephone companies’ websites. The amount of the surcharge shall be determined by the Commission based upon the amount of funding necessary to accomplish the purposes of O.C.G.A. § 46-5-30 and provide the services on an ongoing basis: however, in no case shall the amount exceed 20¢ per month.
- (2) **Surcharge Language.** The Monthly Maintenance Surcharge shall appear on customer bills as “Georgia Telecommunications Relay Service Surcharge.” If the number of characters in “Georgia Telecommunications Relay Service Surcharge” exceeds the number of characters in the local exchange carrier’s billing software or if the full text will not fit on one line, “Georgia TRS Surcharge” may be used instead.
- (3) **Quarterly Reports and Remission of Funds.** Each local exchange carrier that is required to impose the Monthly Maintenance Surcharge shall submit quarterly via email a report to the Commission Staff indicating the monies collected from its customers during each quarter. The report shall be submitted to Staff and the monies collected from customers shall be remitted to the fund designated for the Telecommunications Relay Service no later than the thirtieth calendar day following the close of each quarter beginning with the fourth quarter of calendar year 2022.

Statutory Authority: O.C.G.A. §§ 46-2-20, 46-2-30, 46-5-30.