

Area Code Overlay Approved for the Idaho 208 Area Code

To ensure a continuing supply of telephone numbers, the new 986 area code will be added to the area served by 208. This is known as an area code overlay.
Get ready to change the way you dial your local calls!

What is an area code overlay?

An overlay is the addition of another area code (986) to the same geographic region as an existing area code (208). **An overlay does not require customers to change their existing area code.**

Who will be affected?

The 208 area code covers the State of Idaho. The new 986 **area code** will serve the same geographic area currently served by the existing 208 area code.

What will be the new dialing procedure?

To complete local calls, the new dialing procedure requires callers to dial the 10-digit telephone number (**area code + the 7-digit telephone number**). This means that all calls in the 208 area code that are currently dialed with seven digits will need to be dialed using **10-digit telephone number**. The same dialing procedure will apply to telephone numbers assigned to the new 986 area code. Calls that are currently local will continue to be local, even though 10-digit dialing will be required.

When will the change begin?

Effective **November 5, 2016**, you should begin using the new dialing procedures whenever you place a call from the 208 area code. If you forget and dial just seven digits, your call will still be completed.

Beginning **August 5, 2017**, you must use the new dialing procedures, as described above for all calls. After this date, if you do not use the new dialing procedures, your calls will not be completed and a recording will instruct you to hang up and dial again.

Beginning **September 5, 2017**, new telephone lines or services may be assigned numbers using the new 986 area code.

What will you need to do?

In addition to changing your dialing procedures, all services, automatic dialing equipment, or other types of equipment that are programmed with a 7-digit number will need to be reprogrammed to use the new dialing procedures. Some examples are life safety systems, PBXs, fax machines, Internet dial-up numbers, alarm and security systems, gates, speed dialers, call forwarding settings, voicemail services, etc. You may also want to check your website, business stationery, printed checks, contact information, pet ID tags, or advertising materials to ensure the area code is included. **Important safety and security equipment, such as medical alert devices, and alarm and security systems must be programmed to use 10-digit dialing. Many systems operate on 10-digit dialing by default but some older equipment may still use 7-digits. Please contact your medical alert or security provider if you don't know whether your equipment needs to be reprogrammed to accommodate the upcoming change to 10-digit dialing.**

What will remain the same?

- Your telephone number, including current area code, will not change.
- The price of a call, coverage area, or other rates and services will not change due to the overlay.
- What is a local call now will remain a local call regardless of the number of digits dialed.
- You will still have to dial **1+area code + telephone number** (11-digit dialing) to place long-distance calls within the 208/986 Area Code
- You can still dial just three digits to reach 911.
- If 211, 311, 411, 511, 611, 711 or 811 are currently available in your community, you will still dial these codes with just three digits.

Who may you contact with questions?

If you have any questions regarding information provided in this notice, please call MetTel at 1.800.876.9823 or access the website of the Idaho Public Utilities Commission for more information at www.puc.idaho.gov.

