

Area Code Overlay and 10-Digit Local Dialing Approved for the Washington 360, 206, 253 and 425 Area Codes

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 to the same geographic region as an existing area code. An overlay does not require customers to change their existing area code, but does require a new dialing procedure.

Who will be affected?

All of western Washington will be affected. The 564 area code overlay will be introduced initially in the existing 360 area code region, and then expanded to the 206, 253, and 425 area codes when those area codes are nearing exhaust.

What will be the new dialing procedure?

To complete local calls in western Washington, the new dialing procedure requires callers to dial the area code + the 7-digit telephone number. This means that all calls in the 206, 253, 360, and 425 area codes that are currently dialed with 7 digits will need to be dialed using 10 digits. The same dialing procedure will apply to telephone numbers assigned from the new 564 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?

Beginning **January 28, 2017**, you should start using the new dialing procedure whenever you place a call from the 206, 253, 360, and 425 area codes. If you forget and dial 7 digits, your call will still be completed.

Beginning **July 29, 2017**, you must use the new dialing procedure, as described above for all local calls. After this date, if you do not use the new dialing procedure, your call will not be completed and a recording will instruct you to hang up and dial again.

Beginning **August 28, 2017**, new telephone lines or services may be assigned numbers using the new 564 area code.

What will you need to do?

In addition to changing your dialing procedure, all services, automatic dialing equipment, or other types of equipment that are programmed to dial a 7-digit number will need to be reprogrammed to use the new dialing procedure. Some examples are stored telephone numbers in contact lists in phones, PBXs, fax machines, Internet dial-up numbers, speed dialers, call forwarding settings, voicemail services, etc. Medical alert devices, safety alarm security systems and gates, ankle monitors or other similar equipment 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. You may also want to check your website, business stationery and advertising materials, printed checks, contact information, and personal or pet ID tags to ensure the area code is included.

What will remain the same?

- Your current telephone number 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, even when dialed with 10 digits.
- You will still need to dial 1+ area code + telephone number to place long-distance calls.
- You can still dial three digits to reach 911.
- If 211, 311, 411, 511, 611, 711 or 811 are currently available in your community, you can still dial three digits.

Who may you contact with questions?

If you have any questions regarding information provided in this notice, please contact MetTel at 800.876.9823 or visit the website of the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission at www.utc.wa.gov.

