

STATE OF NEW YORK
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

PETITION OF THE CHAMPLAIN TELEPHONE COMPANY FOR WAIVER OF 16
NYCRR § 602.10(b) REGARDING DISTRIBUTION OF TELEPHONE DIRECTORIES

PETITION FOR WAIVER OF 16 NYCRR SECTION 602.10(b)

TO THE COMMISSION:

The Champlain Telephone Company, Inc. (CTC), or the Company, through its attorney, hereby respectfully petitions for waiver of the provisions of 16 NYCRR § 602.10 (b) which require CTC to print and distribute telephone directories to customers within its franchise service territory. CTC is seeking relief similar to that previously granted to Newport Telephone Company, Pattersonville Telephone Company, State Telephone Company, Nicholville Telephone Company, Verizon New York and the Frontier Communications Local Exchange Carriers. In support thereof, it is respectfully shown as follows:

1. CTC is a Rural Incumbent Local Exchange Carrier (RLEC) located in Champlain, New York. It provides local telephone services to approximately 1,205 residential and 207 business customers, and approximately 1,827 access lines, in Clinton County.
2. 16 NYCRR Section 602.10 (a) requires all telephone service providers to “publish” directories, or cause their customer numbers to be published, at approximately yearly intervals. The form of such publication is not specified.

3. 16 NYCRR Section 602.10 (b) requires each service provider to “distribute at no charge” to its customers a “copy” of the local exchange directory for its area, and to provide an additional copy for each working telephone number upon request.

4. In accordance with those requirements, the Company has been publishing and delivering to its customers a single “hard copy” directory listing residential and business subscribers, along with yellow page listings. For the past several years, the Company has self-published the directory. . The costs of producing the directory have been borne by CTC and were partially offset by revenue from yellow page listings. As revenue from yellow pages listings has declined, the Company made various changes to the directory to decrease costs. The costs to produce a paper directory place an unnecessary financial burden on the Company at a time when incumbent local exchange carriers face increasing costs of operation, loss of customers to competitors, and declining revenue from traditional services, such as access revenues.

5. CTC finds itself in similar circumstances to Newport Telephone Company, Oneida County Rural Telephone, Pattersonville Telephone, State Telephone, Nicholville Telephone, Verizon, and Frontier with respect to directory publishing costs, expenses, and usefulness. CTC proposes to employ a new approach for directory publishing to further reduce the costs of publishing its directory. A single business/residential white page and yellow page directory would be produced by CTC itself. To lower costs, copies of a printed directory would not be delivered to customers. Instead, an electronic version of the directory will be placed on the Company’s website, and a copy of the directory in electronic form will be transmitted to customers, or a hard copy printed form will be made available, on request without charge. This proposal will apply, as required by the Commission in its

Oneida County Rural Telephone Order in Case 22-C-0585 cited below, to all customers, both those of the Company and CLECs in the Company's local exchange area who rely on the Company for distribution of their directories.

6. CTC will inform customers of the availability of the online directory, and the option to obtain the directory in electronic form (which will be transmitted electronically to requesting customers), or a printed hard copy, on request without charge, via bill inserts and/or customer billing statements, as well as on the Company's website and through a press release.

7. Technological advances, such as internet directories and the directories in wireless and wireline devices, have made customers much less reliant on, and interested in, printed directories. CTC is committed to carrying out its public service responsibilities in a manner that conserves natural resources, lessens its "carbon footprint", and reduces waste, all of which are consistent with Public Service Law Section 5. CTC proposes to adopt a more customer-focused and environmentally conscious approach to the distribution of both residential white page and business directories.

8. This Commission has previously authorized Oneida County Rural Telephone Company, State Telephone Company, Pattersonville Telephone Company, Nicholville Telephone Company, Verizon and the Frontier Local Exchange Companies to discontinue the distribution of residential white page directories to customers who do not request them. See Case 10-C-0215, Petition of Verizon New York, Inc., for Waiver of NYCRR Title 16, § 601.10 (b) Pertaining to the Distribution of Telephone Directories, "Order Granting Waiver with Conditions", October 15, 2010; Case 12-C-0060, Petition of Frontier Communications Local Exchange Carriers for Wavier of NYCRR Title 16,

§601.10 (b) Regarding the Distribution of Telephone Directories, Memorandum from the Office of Telecommunications to the Commission, May 2, 2012, Filed Session of May 17, 2012, Approved as Recommended and So Ordered, May 22, 2012; Case 20-C-0127, Petition of Nicholville Telco LLC d/b/a Nicholville Telephone Company for a Waiver of the Requirements of 16 NYCRR section 602.10(b) “Order Granting Waiver Subject to Conditions”, Issued August 20, 2020; Case 20-C-0281, Petition of State Telephone Company for a Waiver of the Requirements of 16 NYCRR Section 602.10(b) “Order Granting Waiver Subject to Conditions”, Issued September 22, 2020; Case 21-C-0054, Petition of Pattersonville Telephone Company for a Waiver of the Requirements of 16 NYCRR Section 602.10(b), “Order Granting Waiver Subject to Conditions”, May 17, 2021; Case 22-C-0585, Petition of Oneida County Rural Telephone Company for a Waiver of 16 NYCRR Section 602.10(b) Regarding the Distribution of Telephone Directories, “Order Granting Waiver Subject to Conditions”, January 20, 2023.

9. In approving Frontier’s request for waiver in 2012, the Commission accepted Staff’s analysis as follows:

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

“Customers today have many options in terms of locating telephone numbers; and future technologies may make this task even easier. Statistics suggest that telephone directories are not nearly as valuable to consumers as they were even a decade ago. In addition, telephone books, by their very nature, are large and cumbersome and utilize a significant amount of natural resources to produce and distribute. Given the notification requirements for all customers in the Frontier Companies’ service territories to advise

them of their options and the fact that any customer who wants to receive the residential white pages will be able to obtain them, Staff recommends that the Commission grant the Frontier Companies' waiver request. See Case 12-C-0060, ARSO Order, at page 5-6."

10. In the years since the Frontier Order, the general public has become even more familiar with, and reliant upon, internet resources to secure information, including telephone numbers. The process of obtaining numbers, as envisioned by Staff, through new technologies, has become even easier. And, for those who are unable to utilize the internet, the availability of free electronic and printed copies of the directory will assure the availability of, and easy access to, directory listings. The Verizon and Frontier waivers applied to distribution of white page residential directories. However, that was at a time printing and distribution of business directories and yellow pages was profitable, and generally done by outside publishers. That is no longer the case in the CTC service territory which, like Nicholville, Pattersonville, Oneida County Rural Telephone, and State Telephone, is a small RLEC serving rural territory. Facing significant costs (instead of income) for the printing and distribution of its combined residential and business directory – costs which would have to be passed on to subscribers – CTC's proposed solution as described herein is in the best interests of its customers; preserves and protects the environment; maintains the availability of telephone listings at no charge to customers; and promotes the public interest.

11. To conserve resources and better serve its customers, CTC respectfully urges the Commission to act on this Petition at its first opportunity, so that CTC is not required to prepare and

fully distribute a 2026 printed version of its directory, which in the normal course would occur in August, 2026.

WHEREFORE, in light of the foregoing, The Champlain Telephone Company respectfully requests the Commission issue an order waiving the requirements of 16 NYCRR § 602.10 (b) with respect to all printed directories to all customers, under the terms and conditions described herein, at its first opportunity.

Respectfully submitted,
The Champlain Telephone Company.

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