

**THE STATE CORPORATION COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF KANSAS**

Before Commissioners: Andrew J. French, Chairperson
 Dwight D. Keen
 Annie Kuether

In the Matter of the Application of)
Consolidated Communications of Missouri) Docket No. 24-FCMT-736-TAR
Filing Revisions to its General Exchange Tariff)
No. 1, Residential Voice Features Increases.)

ORDER APPROVING TARIFF REVISIONS

The above-captioned matter comes before the State Corporation Commission of the State of Kansas (Commission) for consideration and determination. Having examined its files and record, and being duly advised in the premises, the Commission finds and concludes as follows:

1. On May 16, 2024, Consolidated Communications of Missouri Company (Consolidated Missouri) filed an Application requesting permission to raise certain residential voice feature rates by \$5.00 per month.

Specifically, Consolidated Missouri requests: an increase in Call Waiting from \$3.30 per month of \$8.30 per month; an increase in Calling Name/Number Identification from \$7.00 per month to \$12.00 per month; and an increase in Telephone Directory Nonpublished Service rate from \$2.10 per month to \$7.10 per month.

Further, Consolidated Missouri requests to increase Voice Advantage II Bundles Calling Feature Rate from \$5.00 per month to \$10.00 per month. Voice Advantage II Bundles includes Caller ID, Call Waiting, Caller ID on Call Waiting, Three Way Calling, Unidentified Call Rejection, Unlimited Automatic Busy Redial, Unlimited Automatic Call Return, and Call Forwarding.

Lastly, Consolidated Missouri indicated sending a notice to customers of these changes on their May 16, 2024 billing cycle. Consolidated Missouri provided a copy of the Notice of Price Increase with the May 16, 2024 billing cycle to its customers.

2. K.S.A. 66-1,190 requires that telecommunications public utilities doing business in Kansas shall:

... publish and file with the commission copies of all schedules of rates, joint rates, tolls, charges, classifications, and divisions of rates affecting Kansas traffic, either state or interstate...and...the commission shall have power to prescribe reasonable rules and regulations regarding the form and filing of all schedules, tariffs and classifications of all rates, joint rates, tolls and charges and all rules and regulations of such telecommunications public utilities.

The Commission derives its authority to review Local Exchange Carrier tariffs from K.S.A. 66-117(d), which reads in part:

...(d) Except as provided in subsection (c), no change shall be made in any rate, toll, charge, classification or schedule of charges or joint rates, or in any rule or regulation or practice pertaining to the service or rates of any such public utility or common carrier, without the consent of the commission.

3. The Commission maintains authority to require telecommunications public utilities to maintain rates that are not unjust or unreasonably discriminatory.¹ Accordingly, the Commission conducts its investigation regarding the reasonableness of Consolidated Missouri's request to modify its tariff language to raise certain residential voice feature rates.

4. The Commission Staff (Staff) issued a Report and Recommendation dated May 23, 2024, advising the Commission to grant the tariff revisions proposed by Consolidated Missouri.

5. The Commission adopts Staff's analysis and recommendations of May 23, 2024, as stated in the Report and Recommendation, which is attached hereto and made a part hereof by

¹ K.S.A. 66-1,189.

reference and finds that Consolidated Missouri’s request should be granted. In conjunction with the request, the Commission finds that the effective date shall be June 16, 2024.

IT IS, THEREFORE, BY THE COMMISSION ORDERED THAT:

A. Consolidated Communications of Missouri Company’s request filed in this matter on May 16, 2024, is hereby granted with the effective tariff date occurring on June 16, 2024.

B. Any party may file and serve a petition for reconsideration pursuant to the requirements and time limits established by K.S.A. 77-529(a)(1).²

C. The Commission retains jurisdiction over the subject matter and the parties for the purpose of entering such further order, or orders, as it may deem necessary.

BY THE COMMISSION IT IS SO ORDERED.

French, Chairperson; Keen, Commissioner; Kuether, Commissioner

Dated: 06/11/2024



Lynn M. Retz
Executive Director

PZA

² K.S.A. 66-118b; K.S.A. 77-503(c); K.S.A. 77-531(b).

**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION
UTILITIES DIVISION**

TO: Andrew J. French, Chairperson
Dwight D. Keen, Commissioner
Annie Kuether, Commissioner

FROM: Hemant Bhagat, Senior Telecommunications Analyst
Steve Garrett, Deputy Chief of Telecommunications
Jeff McClanahan, Director of Utilities

DATE: May 23, 2024

RE: Docket No. 24-FCMT-736-TAR
In the Matter of the Application of Consolidated Communications of Missouri
Filing Revisions to its General Exchange Tariff No. 1, Residential Voice Features
Increases.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

On May 16, 2024, Consolidated Communications of Missouri Company (Consolidated Missouri) filed an Application requesting permission to raise certain residential voice feature rates by \$5.00 per month. In addition, the Company also requested permission to raise Voice Advantage II Bundles Calling Feature rate by \$5.00 per month. The filing included revision to its General Exchange Tariff relating to the above rate increase affecting Section 6 - Original Sheet 16, Section 9 - Original Sheet 8, and Section 15 - Fourth Revised Sheet 22.

Consolidated Missouri indicated sending a notice to customers of these changes on their May 16, 2024 billing cycle. Commission action on this matter is required no later than Thursday, June 13, 2024, in order to comply with K.S.A. 66-2007(b). Consolidated Missouri's proposed effective date is June 16, 2024.

Staff recommends approval of the Application.

BACKGROUND:

K.S.A. 66-117(c), in part, states:

The commission shall not delay the effective date of the proposed change in rate, joint rate, toll, charge or classification or schedule of charges, or in any rule or regulation or practice pertaining to the service or rates of any such public utility or common carrier, more than

240 days beyond the date the public utility or common carrier filed its application requesting the proposed change. If the commission does not suspend the proposed schedule within 30 days of the date the same is filed by the public utility or common carrier, such proposed schedule shall be deemed approved by the commission and shall take effect on the proposed effective date.

K.S.A. 66-2007(b) states:

The commission shall approve, upon not more than 120 days' notice, any basic local exchange price increases that in the aggregate in any one year are \$1.50 or less per access line per month, that are proposed by any rural telephone company which is subject to traditional rate of return regulation and that comply with the requirements of this section. Any such proposed price increases shall be presumed reasonable and not subject to commission investigation and review if the rural telephone company has followed the notice requirements set forth below. However, the commission shall initiate an investigation if more than 15% of the subscribers subject to the rate increase request such an investigation within 60 days of the date of distribution of the notice of the proposed change.

Upon filing such an application for a rate increase, any rural telephone company seeking expedited approval of the proposed rate under this section shall send a notice to its subscribers by regular mail, which may be included with regular subscriber mailings. Such mailings shall include the name, mailing address and telephone number of the commission. The notice shall include a schedule of the proposed local exchange rates, the effective date of the rates and a description of the procedures by which the subscribers can petition the commission to determine the reasonableness of the proposed rates, including a provision specifically stating that protest by 15% or more of subscribers subject to the proposed rate increase would require the commission to initiate an investigation concerning the reasonableness of the proposed rate increase.

Consolidated Missouri provided a copy of the Notice of Price Increase with the May 16, 2024 billing cycle to its customers.¹ The Customer Notice included the customer service contact phone number.

ANALYSIS:

Consolidated Missouri requests approval to increase the following residential voice feature rates:

- Call Waiting rate will increase by \$5.00 per month from \$3.30 to \$8.30.
- Calling Name/Number Identification rate will increase by \$5.00 per month from \$7.00 to \$12.00.
- Telephone Directory Nonpublished Service rate will increase by \$5.00 from current \$2.10 to \$7.10.

¹ Application, Customer Notice, Pg. 1, May 16, 2024

- Voice Advantage II Bundles rate will increase by \$5.00 per month from \$5.00 to \$10.00. Voice Advantage II Bundles includes Caller ID, Call Waiting, Caller ID on Call Waiting, Three Way Calling, Unidentified Call Rejection, Unlimited Automatic Busy Redial, Unlimited Automatic Call Return, and Call Forwarding. The Company indicated that not all features might be available in all areas.

Staff evaluated Consolidated Missouri's Customer Notice and finds it is appropriate and in compliance with K.S.A. 66-2007.

RECOMMENDATION:

The evaluation of Consolidated Missouri's Application and Customer Notice, Staff has determined that they are in compliance with K.S.A. 66-2007(b). Therefore, Staff recommends that the Commission approve Consolidated Missouri's filing as stated in the Company's Application, increasing certain residential voice feature rates by \$5.00 per month and increasing Voice Advantage II Bundles rates by \$5.00 per month.

Staff further recommends the Commission accept the revised tariff with an effective date of June 16, 2024, as requested by the company.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

24-FCMT-736-TAR

I, the undersigned, certify that a true copy of the attached Order has been served to the following by means of electronic service on 06/11/2024.

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/S/ KCC Docket Room

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