



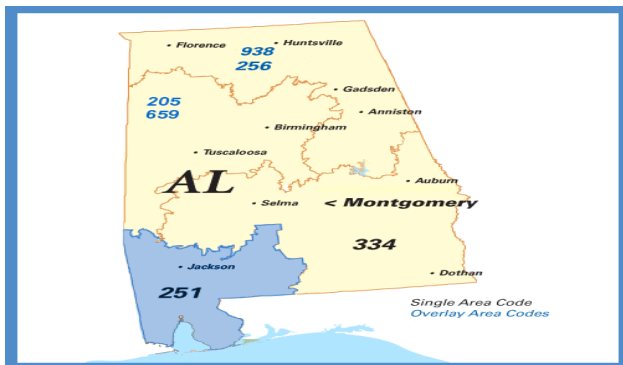
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NEW DIALING PROCEDURE FOR CUSTOMERS IN THE ALABAMA 251 AREA CODE!

On July 16, 2020, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) adopted an Order (FCC 20-100) approving 988 as the 3-digit abbreviated dialing code for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. Activation of the new abbreviated dialing code is scheduled for **July 16, 2022**. The Order requires all telecommunications carriers to ensure their network connects 988 calls to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline by the activation date.

Nationwide, a significant number of geographic areas wherein only one area code is used and wherein the central office code 988 is already assigned to a telecommunications carrier, such areas must convert to mandatory 10-digit dialing so that 988 can be activated as an abbreviated dialing code for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. Area code 251, in the geographic area surrounding Mobile, falls into that category. Consequently, mandatory 10-digit dialing for all calls (local and long distance) in the 251 area code will begin on October 24, 2021.

Beginning **April 24, 2021**, consumers within the 251 area code may start dialing 10-digits (area code + telephone number) for all local calls. This is known as a "permissive dialing period" and is intended as an opportunity for consumers to become accustomed to the new dialing procedures. Local calls dialed using the area code plus the 7-digit number will be completed. Nevertheless, those local calls dialed using only 7-digits will also be completed during this period.

Beginning **October 24, 2021**, all consumers within the 251 area code must dial 10-digits (area code plus the 7-digit telephone number) to complete local calls. On and after this date, local calls dialed with only 7 digits will not be completed, and a recording will inform the caller that their call cannot be completed as dialed. Upon receiving the recording, the caller should simply hang up and re-dial the number using the area code with the 7-digit telephone number.

Beginning **July 16, 2022**, dialing "988" will route callers to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. Until that date, callers must continue to dial 1-800-273-8255 (TALK) to reach the Lifeline.

For additional information, please refer to the Alabama Public Service Commission's website at: <http://psc.alabama.gov/>.

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