

# IURC News Release

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## **Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission to Accept Video Franchise Applications Monday**

A new era in providing video service to Hoosiers begins Monday, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, when the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC, Commission) begins accepting applications for state issued video franchises. The change in the way cable and competing video providers, are authorized to do business in Indiana was defined in HEA 1279, which was passed by the General Assembly and recognized as the telecommunication package destined to move Indiana into a leadership position among states and promote additional investment and jobs, when it was signed by Governor Mitch Daniels, March 14, 2006. The new video franchising process is expected to lead to more television service options in Indiana.

"Our new telecom law, the best in the country, is already producing more choices for consumers and making Indiana more competitive for future economic investment," said Governor Mitch Daniels. "The IURC's diligence in fulfilling its statutory obligations is commendable."

An internal Implementation Team including representatives of Telecom, Consumer Affairs, Administrative Law Judges, General Counsel and Public Information Divisions have been working to identify internal changes that needed to be made, as well as developing an action plan to implement those changes since the bill was passed. Also during the implementation phase the Commission met with industry representatives to discuss the transition process.

The Commission has identified and dismissed pending cases that no longer are jurisdictional due to the new law. It has begun the process of rulemakings necessary to implement the new law which address such issues as the Disconnection of a Local Exchange Carrier by Another Local Exchange Carrier; Notice of Bankruptcy; Relinquishment of Service; Revocation of Certificate of Territorial Authority. The IURC has simplified the Certificate of Territorial Authority process for telecom carriers and created and adopted a Video Franchise form. The Commission has also created forms for incumbent providers to request to be released from Provider of Last Resort responsibilities.

Extensive system changes were also required to enable the Commission to effectively and efficiently implement its new tasks. The Commission's Information Technology Division has updated the Consumer Affairs data base to make it possible to track the addition of wireless and video complaints required by the new law, which will enable the IURC to provide that information to the public and the legislature. The Commission's Electronic Case Management System has been updated to accept the new information from Video Providers as necessary. The IURC's Website has a new section to provide technical information and forms to potential telecom and video providers.

The IURC is laying the groundwork necessary to implement the Lifeline Assistance Program requirements, designed to help qualified Hoosiers afford telephone service, which take effect July 1, 2009. This process will include a proceeding, rulemaking and workshops.

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