

A new 730 area code is coming to Southern Illinois

The Illinois Commerce Commission has announced a new area code is coming to southern Illinois. The new 730 area code will “overlay” the existing 618 area code to address the depletion of prefixes available for assignment within the region.

The first prefix in the new area code will not be introduced until after July 7, 2023.

The 618 area code covers all or parts of 37 counties in Illinois and includes communities such as Alton, Belleville, Cairo, Carbondale, Centralia, East St. Louis, Edwardsville and Marion.

The 618 area code is one of the original, 86 area codes in the United States, assigned by Bell Laboratories in 1947. It has not undergone any substantive changes to its boundaries since then.

730 Area Code, 22 Years in the Making

NeuStar (now Somos) under contract by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to administer the nation’s telephone numbering resources, originally filed a petition on behalf of the Illinois Telecommunications Industry seeking a new area code for 618 on Oct. 19,

2000. On Jan. 4, 2006, in Docket No. 00-0677, the ICC approved the addition of area code 730, to be deployed in the geographic area now served by area code 618. The Commission sought to delay implementation for as long as possible.

Ongoing conservation efforts have forestalled the need for the new 730 area code until now. While many individual 618 telephone numbers remain unassigned, an area code is deemed to be “exhausted” when the last available prefix has been assigned. While 730 telephone numbers will begin to appear in the second half of 2023, there will continue to be an ongoing supply of available 618 telephone numbers in most areas.

Starting on July 7, 2023, customers in the 618 area code overlay region may be assigned a number in the new 730 area code when they request new service or an additional line. The 730 area code will co-exist everywhere in this region with the 618 area code. Customers receiving the 730 area code will be required to dial 10 digits (the area code and phone number) for all local calls, just as customers with telephone numbers from the 618 area code do today.

Telephone customers should know the following key facts about the 618/730 area code overlay:

Telephone numbers, including the current area code, 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.

Customers in the overlay region will continue to dial 10 digits for local calls within and between the overlay area codes, and 1+10 digits for long-distance calls.

Customers can still dial just three digits to reach 911 and 988, as well as 211, 311, 411, 511, 611, 711 or 811 if those are currently available in their community.

Customers should continue to identify their telephone number as a 10-digit number (3-digit area code + 7-digit telephone number), and include the area code when giving the number to friends, family, business associates and customers, etc.

Customers should ensure that all services, automatic dialing equipment, or other types of equipment recognize the new 730 area code as a valid area code and should continue to store or program telephone numbers as 10-digit numbers. Some examples include but are not limited to: stored telephone numbers in contact lists in wireless and cordless phones, PBXs, fax machines, Internet dial-up numbers, speed dialers, call forwarding settings, voicemail services, medical alert devices, safety alarm security systems and gates, ankle monitors, and or other similar equipment.

Customers should also ensure their websites, personal and business stationery and printed checks, advertising materials, contact information, and personal or pet ID tags include the area code.

For more information, please contact your local telephone service provider or visit the Illinois Commission website at <https://www.icc.illinois.gov/programs/Area-Codes>.

OSF HealthCare increases minimum wage for employees for fourth time in seven years

In this season of Thanksgiving and in recognition of the continued hard work of its employees, effective Nov. 27, 2022, OSF HealthCare has increased its minimum wage from \$15 to \$16 per hour (\$18.08/hour in the Chicago Metro region). This is the fourth time in seven years OSF HealthCare has raised its minimum wage.

In addition to the minimum wage increase, OSF is giving pay increases to all Mission Partners (employees) within eligible job classifications. This will enable OSF to attract and retain Mission Partners while at the same time addressing staffing needs in positions critical to the health care Ministry.

“OSF knows our Mission Partners have been through a lot over the past two years throughout the pandemic coupled with the increasing pressure of inflation,” said Shelley Nguyen, chief human resources officer for OSF HealthCare. “Our Sisters recognize the personal worth and dignity of every person served and the need to help even in a small way.”

The positive economic impact on the communities served by OSF HealthCare will amount to an additional \$13 million per year.

The minimum wage and pay increases for eligible job classifications do not apply to Mission Partners under a collective bargaining agreement in Michigan.

OSF HealthCare is an integrated health system owned and operated by The Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis, based in Peoria, Ill., consisting of 15 hospitals in Illinois and Michigan, employing nearly 24,000 Mission Partners.



DENNIS TERRY RETIRES - First Mid Bank & Trust hosted an open house on Dec. 14, 2022, at their Goshen Road location in Edwardsville to honor the career and service of Dennis Terry, who retired after 50 years in the industry at the end of 2022. The lobby was packed full of well-wishers throughout the afternoon, among them were many former colleagues and lifelong friends. Terry (in the photo on the right) began with Mercantile Trust in St. Louis in 1970, moving to Edwardsville National Bank in 1973, which later merged with Mark Twain Bank, then Mercantile Bank, then Firststar Bank. He joined Clover Leaf Bank as their President and CEO in 2000, a position he continued when Clover Leaf Bank merged with First Federal Saving & Loan in 2006 to become First Clover Leaf Bank. In 2016, FCLB merged with First Mid Bank & Trust. Over the years, he has been active in several community organizations and nonprofit boards, serving as treasurer and board member of the EGHM Foundation, past president of the SIUE Foundation, and past president of the Edwardsville YMCA Board of Directors. An Edwardsville native and a graduate of Edwardsville High School and SIUE, Terry and his wife Linda have four grown children and 12 grandchildren. (Photo by Melissa Crockett Meske/Illinois Business Journal)



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