

DIAL ASSISTANCE CALLS

1. **General.** The Assistance Operator is the designated representative of the Company to aid customers in using the dial system. While in some cases many of the calls you handle are routine connections, nevertheless, you are also the operator to whom the customer has been directed when he is in difficulty or in doubt. You are expected, therefore, not only to use judgment and consideration in dealing with the customer but also to exercise latitude in applying the practice to the particular request within the limitations authorized for your office.

In general, the function of the assistance operator is served by accepting requests with minimum restrictions. Accordingly all requests will be handled as provided in appropriate sections of the practice except as modified by this section, without any attempt to have the customer try the call himself. This contemplates that the practice given in "8" will not be applied except when, and to the extent, specifically authorized for your office. These restrictive practices are intended to inform customers when it is observed that there is an increasing tendency not to make full use of the direct channels provided, and they may, therefore, be applied to certain types of calls only, such as requests for Information or certain well-known numbers or codes, or they may be applied to all requests for connection which the customer could dial himself on which he does not indicate having experienced any difficulty.

2. **Calling party asks for directions regarding the use of a dial telephone or the making of a call of a specified class.** Carefully explain the particular feature of dial operation involved in the request, proceeding in general in accordance with the directions for making the various classes of calls which appear in the telephone directory or in other instructions for customers. On such calls from coin lines, always emphasize depositing the coin before dialing when deposit is required. If the calling party asks where he will find instructions for making the various classes of calls, say, "You will find directions on how to use your telephone in the front of your telephone directory," or "In the first few pages of your directory."

Do not undertake to give other than brief instructions. While you are giving the explanations or directions, if it is necessary for you to leave the connection in order to give attention to a signal which would otherwise be seriously delayed, say for example, "One moment, please?" or "Will you excuse me just a moment, please?" using the phrase best suited to the circumstances, before leaving the connection. If you anticipate that the explanation will be too involved for you to handle with your other work, refer it to your supervisor.

SUPERVISOR: Try to obtain an idea of the particular difficulty the customer is experiencing and direct your explanation accordingly. If you think it advisable, suggest to the customer that you will have a representative call to give him personal instruction. If he agrees, write a memorandum of the case and refer it to your chief operator.

3. **Calling party mentions in giving his order that he found the called number busy.** Proceed as on a request for a busy verification in Sec. 11, 1.

4. **Calling party complains in giving his order that he can not get the called number.** Try to establish connection in the regular way but if you receive a busy signal and the calling party does not hang up promptly, disconnect the front cord, say, "Just a moment, please?" and verify the condition as in Sec. 11, 1b.

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DIAL ASSISTANCE CALLS—Continued

5. **Request for credit on a call dialed by the calling party or inquiry regarding such credit.** Proceed as for the same condition on a message rate call in Section 72 or 73.
6. **Calling party requests assistance on a call which he dialed in his extended direct dialing area.** Proceed as for the same condition on an "A" board toll call in Section 103.
7. **In reporting a wrong number the calling party indicates incorrect dialing.** Whenever the customer indicates in his report that the wrong number was caused by his inadequate knowledge of the use of the dial, explain the correct procedure, as for example, that for the number Beacon 5678 he dials the letters "B" and "E," or that he can not dial "A" board toll points direct.
 - a. If he then volunteers to try again or asks if he should do so, say for example, "If you will, please?" or "All right, sir." If he dials without hanging up, say, "Will you hang up for a moment, please, and then start again?" When he hangs up, disconnect.
 - b. If he asks you to try it for him, do so.
 - c. Prepare a credit ticket if the call was from a message rate line and file or scratch it, depending on whether you complete the call, as in the sections on message rate calls.
8. **Informative practice.** This practice is to be used only on the types of requests and in the offices for which it has been specifically authorized.

If the calling party does not offer any reason for seeking your assistance, inform him that he can dial the desired number direct by saying for example, "You can dial that number direct," "You can reach Information by dialing 411 (113)," or "The code for Information is 411 (113). You can dial that direct."

- a. If the calling party hangs up immediately, disconnect at once.
- b. If the calling party still gives no reason for asking your assistance, add for example, "Will you dial it, please?" or "Will you try it?" and wait for him to hang up. If he starts to dial without hanging up, say, "Will you hang up for a moment, please, and then make your call?" When he hangs up, disconnect at once.
- c. If the calling party asks you to try it for him or gives some reason for seeking your assistance, acknowledge the request and try to establish connection.

DIAL ASSISTANCE CALLS - Continued

8. INFORMATIVE PRACTICE. (Supplementing Paragraph 8, opposite.)
- a. This practice shall be applied on the following types of calls:
1. Requests for connection to local numbers.
 2. Requests for Long Distance.
 3. Requests for Information.
 4. Requests for Time.
- b. This practice shall not be applied on the following types of calls:
1. Repair Service Calls.
 2. Official Calls.
 3. Emergency Calls.
 4. Calls for Western Union and Pacific Telegraph if from a coin station.
9. DURING PERIODS OF HEAVY OVERLOAD IN THE TOLL OFFICE, CALLING PARTY REPORTS INABILITY TO REACH LONG DISTANCE AND ASKS FOR EXPLANATION OF DIFFICULTY. Where authorization has been given, the following practice may be used:
- Say, for example, "I'M SORRY, THE LONG DISTANCE OFFICE IS VERY BUSY," and add, "WILL YOU TRY YOUR CALL AGAIN, PLEASE?" or "WILL YOU DIAL '211' AGAIN A LITTLE LATER, PLEASE?" If appropriate also add, "AND WAIT FOR THE LONG DISTANCE OPERATOR TO ANSWER." If the calling party is not satisfied with this report, refer the call to your supervisor.
- SUPERVISOR: Explain that the Long Distance office is very busy and is having difficulty in answering all calls promptly. Suggest that the calling party try his call again and wait for Long Distance to answer.